



Important notice regarding Coronavirus COVID-19

CVA guidance to office users and hirers at CVA Resource Centre, Cornerstone House and Waterside Centre and Team Croydon shop.

Updated 17 March 2020.

1. Context

This guidance is provided by CVA based on official advice of the UK Government and good practice guidance from the NHS. CVA will review the situation daily and revise the guidance as necessary. Organisations and individuals visiting any of the CVA centres should also take responsibility for their own hygiene and adhere to the guidelines from the government in terms of travel, personal contact with others, etc.

At the time of writing all the CVA centres remain open to the community. However, we have asked all groups to consider postponing public meetings and activities that involve older people (i.e. over 70s) and other vulnerable members of the public such as those with underlying health conditions (particularly heart conditions and respiratory illnesses). Based on the Government's latest statement, we are also discouraging non-essential activities and travel.

All the offices at CVA's centres remain open. However, we are asking each organisation to consider whether their services could be carried out in another way to reduce social contact, such as home working, conferencing or online communication. Most organisations have already taken the Government's advice to work from home wherever possible.

We understand the need for self-isolation and social distancing as a practical way to help delay the spread of this virus. However, CVA will continue to support organisations and volunteers so that self-isolation does not lead to social isolation. CVA will continue to support groups and services to continue by offering meeting space that enables vulnerable clients to receive valuable services whilst maintaining safety for all through social distancing.

CVA will be working with Croydon Council and other voluntary sector organisations to co-ordinate information, outreach and remote services for those who are self-isolating in our community or those who may be isolated due to services being cancelled.

CVA is keen to support those that are most vulnerable and socially excluded in our society and will continue to support our partners who are also trying to achieve that balance, whilst ensuring sensible precautions are followed to maintain public safety.

2. Information about the virus

The incubation period of COVID-19 is between 2 to 14 days. This means that if a person remains well 14 days after contact with someone with confirmed coronavirus, they have not been infected.

3. Signs and symptoms of COVID-19

The following symptoms may develop in the 14 days after exposure to someone who has COVID-19 infection:

- cough
- difficulty in breathing
- fever

Generally, these infections can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people, and those with long-term conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease.

4. How COVID-19 is spread

From what we know about other coronaviruses, spread of COVID-19 is most likely to happen when there is close contact with an infected person.

Respiratory secretions produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes containing the virus are most likely to be the main means of transmission.

There are 2 main routes by which people can spread COVID-19:

- infection can be spread to people who are nearby (within 2 metres) or possibly could be inhaled into the lungs.
- it is also possible that someone may become infected by touching a surface, object or the hand of an infected person that has been contaminated with respiratory secretions and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes (such as touching door handle or shaking hands then touching one's own face)

5. Preventing spread of infection

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus.

Public Health England (PHE) recommends general cold and flu precautions are taken to help prevent people from catching and spreading COVID-19. These include:

- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze.
- put used tissues in the bin straight away. See our posters 'Catch it, Bin it, Kill it'.
- wash your hands with soap and water (for at least 20 seconds) often. Most of the toilets have anti-bacteria soap in the dispensers. There are alcohol and non-alcohol sanitisers in all of the centres.
- try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell. Handshakes, hugs and kisses may be best avoided.
- clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces. There are anti-bacteria surface sprays available in all the centres for anyone to use.
- do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean

It is advised that people should avoid non-essential travel and particularly the use of public transport where there is risk of close physical contact with others and infected surfaces. Many of the organisations in the CVA centres have already adjusted working practices to limit staff travel.

If you are worried about symptoms, please call NHS 111 or ideally go online <https://111.nhs.uk/> Do not go directly to your GP or hospital.

Advice is in place for what to do if you have returned from specific countries including China, Iran, South Korea, Italy (North), Cambodia, Hong Kong, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and other Far East countries where there have been substantial known cases.

6. How long the virus can survive

Under most circumstances, the amount of infectious virus on any contaminated surfaces is likely to have decreased significantly by 72 hours.

Users in our centres are encouraged to utilise the anti-bacteria surface sprays (in the kitchens and meeting rooms) to sanitise areas such as door handles, tables, keyboards, shared desks etc throughout the day. Mats, toys and other equipment should also be sanitised before and after each session.

CVA's daily cleaners are paying special attention to sanitise common areas but we also need support of users to take some collective responsibility to keep areas keep and hygienic throughout the day and evening sessions.

We know that similar viruses are transferred to and by people's hands. Therefore, regular hand hygiene and cleaning of frequently touched surfaces will help to reduce the risk of infection.

See handwashing guidance posters in the toilets for how to wash hands most effectively.

7. Social distancing

If people are coming to our centres and interacting with others, social distancing is one way to help prevent the spread of the virus whilst still going about daily life. It is advised people maintain a two-metre distance from others wherever possible.

CVA is happy to provide meeting space to office users for one-to-one or small meetings where social distancing can be maintained. This will be for free, subject to room availability. Please just ask the Centre Manager on site or email in advance to reserve any meeting space.

Please also discuss with CVA which space may be best for any of your essential activities or meetings where social distancing can be best achieved.

Face masks for the general public are not recommended to protect from infection, as there is no evidence of benefit from their use outside healthcare environments.

8. What to do if an employee or a member of the public becomes unwell and believe they have been exposed to COVID-19

The latest advice is that if someone has a) a recurring cough or b) fever; then the person should go home and self-isolate for 14 days to see if the symptoms go away. The latest Government advice is that ALL members of the household residing with the individual with symptoms should also self-isolate for 14 days. If the person lives alone, then the advice is still that the person should self-isolate for minimum 7 days and monitor if symptoms go away.

If someone becomes unwell at a CVA centre and needs to wait for transport, then please inform a CVA staff member if someone is on site. The Centre Manager will arrange for the ill person to wait in a safe room with ventilation, and also advise the unwell person which washroom to use, if needed.

9. What to do if a member of the public with suspected COVID-19 has recently been to CVA

For contacts of a suspected case in the workplace, no restrictions or special control measures are required while laboratory test results for COVID19 are awaited. Until the outcome of test results is known and we are advised otherwise by the PHE, CVA centres and offices will remain open.

It is important for all office users and hirers of our centres to inform CVA management of any suspected cases so that appropriate action can be monitored and followed up. Email Bhupendra.solanki@cvalive.org.uk or telephone 020 8253 1268 / 020 8665 0556 / 020 8771 0296 as soon as you can.

10. What to do if a member of staff or the public with confirmed COVID-19 has recently been to CVA

Please inform CVA management of any confirmed cases. Email Bhupendra.solanki@cvalive.org.uk or telephone 020 8253 1268 / 020 8665 0556 / 020 8771 0296 as soon as you can.

CVA will contact the PHE local Health Protection Team to discuss the case, try to identify people who have been in contact with them, and seek advice on any actions or precautions that should be taken.

A risk assessment of each site will be undertaken by the Health Protection Team with CVA. Advice on the management of staff and members of the public will be based on this assessment.

11. When individuals in the workplace have had contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19

If any staff member or volunteer of an organisation hiring office space in a CVA building has had contact with a confirmed case of Coronavirus, it is imperative that CVA management is informed of this. The individual should self-isolate for 14 days and contact NHS 111 for advice. CVA will also follow up with the Health Protection Team.

Staff who have not had close contact with the original confirmed case do not need to self-isolate, unless they have any symptoms, and can continue to attend CVA.

Please note if anyone shows symptoms, then the advice is for the whole household to self-isolate for 14 days and not just the individual with the symptoms.

12. Cleaning offices and meeting spaces

Coronavirus symptoms are similar to a flu-like illness and include cough, fever, or shortness of breath. Once symptomatic, all surfaces that the person has come into contact with will be deep-cleaned including:

- all surfaces and objects which are visibly contaminated with body fluids
- all potentially contaminated high-contact areas such as toilets, door handles, telephones

CVA's cleaners will be paying special attention to sanitise areas on a daily basis but the support and co-operation of users throughout the day after the cleaners have been in will also help to keep areas clean and hygienic.

13. Rubbish disposal, including tissues

All waste that has been in contact with an individual suspected of contracting the virus, including used tissues, should be put in a plastic rubbish bag and tied. The plastic bag should then be placed in a second bin bag and tied. Please pass onto CVA and it will be put in a safe place and marked for storage until the result is available.

14. Cancellations

CVA has revised its cancellation policy to reflect the uncertainty that we are operating in. If you have booked space at any of CVA's centres, and you feel it is necessary to cancel, then this can be done with 48 hours notice without incurring any cancellation charge.

Cancellation must be done in writing by emailing Shalina.alabaksh@cvalive.org.uk (CVA Resource Centre) or Yasmin.simpson@cvalive.org.uk (Cornerstone House and Waterside Centre). However, before cancelling, you may wish to discuss with CVA alternatives such as using a larger room for small meetings where social distancing can be maintained.

15. Supporting community action

CVA is working closely with Croydon Council, the NHS and other voluntary sector partners to ensure that those who are most vulnerable and excluded in our society are supported and not socially isolated any further.

We will be brokering volunteers to support the elderly and those who may be self-isolating in our communities. If you know someone who requires support in the community please phone the Volunteer Support Helpline on 020 8253 7070 and CVA can match volunteers to

provide appropriate support. Similarly, if someone wishes to provide volunteer support to others in our community at this important time please contact the Volunteer Support Helpline on 020 8253 7070 and CVA will match the person up with volunteering opportunities on our database.

We are also talking to individuals and groups about how we can use our premises as community hubs and safe havens for small-scale essential activities, particularly if other organisations and services are on lockdown. One of the ideas is for CVA to act as an information point and a physical collection point for goods to be re-distributed to isolated persons in the community. Contact our helpline at the Resource Centre on 020 8253 1268 if you need space for your service or have ideas on how our premises could be utilised to support vulnerable persons in our community.

Finally, through our e-bulletins CVA will continue to provide regular information on the steps VCS organisations may need to take in responding to the spread of Coronavirus. We will also post useful advice and information on our website – www.cvalive.org.uk. If your organisation is providing some service that you feel would be good to promote, then please email Sara.milocco@cvalive.org.uk for it to be included in our bulletins or website.

16. Further information

Useful websites and links

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus>

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

<https://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus>

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