



March 2020

# Coronavirus

## GMB advice for Cleaners in Local Government

GMB are concerned that GMB members are being put at risk if they are asked to conduct a 'deep clean' in addition to or instead of their routine cleaning duties as a result of an incidence of COVID-19 (also known as Coronavirus) in their workplace. Worse still is where additional pressure is put on staff to complete this work at speed to get the establishment open quickly again. Not only is this a risk to staff but of course to visitors and service users.

If you are asked to do this work and have any concerns about it please contact your GMB branch or region who will intervene and provide the necessary support to ensure our members are not being put at unnecessary risk.

**Our advice to GMB branches where members are put in a similar situation is to contact the employer and ensure they carry out the following:**

- In advance of a deep clean, conduct a full risk assessment and COSHH assessment (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health)
- Contact their Local Health Protection Team for advice and support: [www.gov.uk/health-protection-team](http://www.gov.uk/health-protection-team)
- Ensure that only fully trained staff are involved, if necessary, a specialist cleaning team may be necessary.
- Ensure that the correct PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) is available.
- Keep staff informed and advised of any developments.

Full details about the Coronavirus for GMB members is available on the following link, which provides an update for GMB members on controlling the risk of the Coronavirus, and full information on your Employers' duty of care to reduce the risks from exposure to biological hazards to as low as is reasonably practicable.

<https://www.gmb.org.uk/coronavirus-what-members-need-know>

Further information is available from the Local Government Association at:

<https://www.local.gov.uk/coronavirus-information-councils>

In addition, the trade unions have negotiated with the NJC employers and agreed the following:

*“An employee who is prevented from attending work because of contact with infectious disease shall be entitled to receive normal pay. The period of absence on this account shall not be reckoned against the employee's entitlements under this scheme”*

In the event that an employee is required to self-isolate or is placed in quarantine, the provision above should be applied.

**If you work for a private contractor and are not sure if this applies to you, contact your local GMB branch.**

If you are affected and need further guidance and support please contact GMB at [publicservices@gmb.org.uk](mailto:publicservices@gmb.org.uk)

