



Branch & Reps Bulletin

Local Government England, Wales & Northern Ireland

New NJC Circular COVID-19: Social Distancing and PPE (3rd April 2020)

There are key points in the latest NJC guidance that branches and representatives can use in negotiations. The guidance in particular highlights the importance of risk assessments. The key points are as follows, but please read the full guidance for detail, which can be found at <https://www.gmb.org.uk/sites/default/files/NJC%20Circ%20Coronavirus-Social-Distancing-PPE-03Apr20.pdf>

Council vehicles

The guidance states that as an urgent priority, if not already happening, employers should be undertaking risk assessments and taking appropriate action. This is to cover the difficulties with social distancing in vehicles.

The importance of social distancing and if it can't happen

Employers have a responsibility to ensure that social distancing rules are adhered to. Where this is not possible it is likely that risk assessments may demonstrate that some employees, particularly those who are vulnerable, will need to remain at home or, where agreeable, be redeployed elsewhere.

For staff with vulnerable family members at home

'Managers will also need to make every effort to understand how the family circumstances of employees may involve other vulnerable people and be flexible in their approach.' This should be useful when discussing volunteers for rotas, and concerns members with vulnerable people in their family have.

PPE equipment

Employers must make every effort to ensure.....where a need is identified through risk assessments, appropriate PPE, including masks, gloves, eyewear and sanitiser and cleaning materials that can be stored, cleaned and disposed of safely, are provided.

General

Employers must ensure that employees are not being placed at risk of harm.