

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Coronavirus (Covid 19) – Guidance for HMO Tenants

Foremost follow the advice published by the Government in respect of Covid-19 available at: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Updated guidance for tenants published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-and-renting-guidance-for-landlords-tenants-and-local-authorities>

Usage of shared spaces

- If you are unwell, you **must** minimise visiting shared spaces such as kitchens, bathrooms and sitting areas.
- Keep shared spaces well ventilated if possible.
- Keep 2 metres from other people and not share a bed with another person (if possible).
- If toilet or bathroom facilities are shared (not ensuite), if provided, use another separate bathroom if possible.
- Bathrooms should be cleaned and disinfected using your regular cleaning products before being used by anyone else.
- If a separate bathroom is not available, consideration should be given to drawing up a rota for washing or bathing, with the person who is unwell using the facilities last, before thoroughly cleaning the bathroom themselves (if they are able or it is appropriate).
- All tenants should only use their own personal body and hand towels and keep them separate from other people.
- Tenants who are unwell must avoid using shared kitchens whilst others are present. They should take their meals back to their room to eat and use a dishwasher (if available) to clean and dry crockery and cutlery, or thoroughly wash up using hot water and detergent.
- **Tenants should ensure that they regularly wash their hands using soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds in line with government guidance**

Should tenants have any concerns regarding their accommodation, please contact Environmental Health - g332@Fareham.Gov.UK (Environmental Health Partnership Support) or by phoning 01329 824399.

In the event of tenants experiencing Coronavirus or Coronavirus-like symptoms:

The Government has issued guidance for households with possible coronavirus (covid-19) infection. The same guidance applies to occupants of shared properties. All the occupants of the home should behave in the same way as a single household if one or more occupants have symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19).

This means that if you are a tenant who shares with people you are not related to and develop symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), you should self-isolate at home for 7 days from when the symptoms started. In line with Government guidance, all other residents of the home must also stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days, providing they remain well for that time. Should they develop symptoms they should then self-isolate for 7 days from the onset of symptoms or longer if symptoms persist. Where possible, individuals should not go out even to buy food or other essentials, and any exercise should be taken within your home.

If you need clinical advice, you should go online to NHS 111 (or call 111 if you don't have internet access). In an emergency, call 999 if you are seriously ill or injured or your life is at risk. You must not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.

Further information is available from the Public Health England website, which will be updated as further information becomes available:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

If any tenants are vulnerable individuals (such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions) they should move temporarily to stay with friends or family (if possible) for the duration of the Coronavirus lockdown period.

If you have to self-isolate, this will obviously be a difficult and stressful time so you should plan ahead to help make it easier, this should include:

- Considering what you are going to need in order to be able to stay at home for the full 14 days
- talking to your employer, friends and family to ask for their help to access the things you will need to make your stay at home a success
- think about and plan how to get access to food and other supplies such as medications required during this period
- create a contact list with phone numbers of neighbours, schools, employer, chemist, NHS 111
- set up an online shopping account if possible
- ask friends or family to drop off anything needed or order supplies online, but make sure these are left outside the home for you to collect
- make sure that you keep in touch with friends and family over the phone or through social media

- think about things you can do during your time at home. People who have successfully completed a period of staying at home have kept themselves busy with activities such as cooking, reading, online learning and watching films
- many people find it helpful to plan out the full 14 days, such as on a make-shift calendar. This could be useful for tenants to create cleaning or cooking rotas. (see below section on use of shared spaces)

If you are unable to pay rent during this time because you cannot work and are not furloughed or in receipt of regular income, you must contact your Landlord and agree a plan to either pay a lower rent during the lockdown period or to pay off arrears at a later date. Landlords will not be able to start possession proceedings during this period without giving three months' notice. A lawful eviction can only be carried out under warrant by a court appointed Bailiff.

Further advice on managing debt and rent issues can be found here.

https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice/money_problems_and_energy_costs/where_to_get_help_with_debts

Landlords still have an obligation to keep properties in good repair free from hazards. You should inform your landlord of any deterioration to the condition of the property. For the purposes of inspection or remedying urgent health and safety issues, landlords and contractors should work together with tenants to arrange access to the property in accord with government guidance on social distancing, and working safely. This could include (but not limited to) leaking roofs, boiler break downs (no heating or hot water) plumbing (affecting washing and toilet facilities) broken windows or damage to external doors. Electrical break downs, broken fridges or washing machines or breakdown or repairs required to equipment relied upon by a disabled person.

If your landlord is refusing to carry out a repair please report it to Environmental Health - g332@Fareham.Gov.UK (Environmental Health Partnership Support) or by phoning 01329 824399.

Use of shared spaces when individuals who live with others in HMO's are required to stay in their room

- If someone is unwell, they should minimise visiting shared spaces such as kitchens, bathrooms and sitting areas as much as possible, and keep shared spaces well ventilated if possible. They should aim to keep 2 metres from other people and not share a bed with another person.
- If toilet or bathroom facilities are shared, they should use a separate bathroom if possible. The bathroom should be cleaned and disinfected using regular cleaning products before being used by anyone else.
- If a separate bathroom is not available, consideration should be given to drawing up a rota for washing or bathing, with the person who is unwell using the facilities last, before thoroughly cleaning the bathroom themselves (if they are able or it is appropriate).
- A person who is unwell should use separate body and hand towels from other people.

- They should avoid using shared kitchens whilst others are present. They should take their meals back to their room to eat and use a dishwasher (if available) to clean and dry crockery and cutlery.