



Contact: Enforcement Team
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Dear Landlord/Property Manager,

CORONAVIRUS (COVID19) AND STAYING SAFE IN HOMES WITH SHARED FACILITIES

The Council is writing to you to update your awareness of the latest Government advice for the coronavirus with particular reference to rented properties for which our records show you may have a responsibility through ownership and/or management. You are advised to regularly check the Government [COVID-19 guidance for landlords and tenants](#) and pay particular attention to the parts that refer directly to Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).

Frequently asked questions about shared houses and Covid-19

Who needs to self-isolate and how does this apply to shared houses (HMOs)?

The Government has issued [guidance for households with possible COVID-19 infection](#). This guidance will be available in several different languages. The same guidance applies to occupants of shared properties.

All the occupants of the same home should behave in the same way as a single household if one or more occupants have symptoms of COVID-19. This means that if a tenant, who shares with people they are not related to, either tests positive for or develops symptoms of COVID-19, they should self-isolate at home for next 10 full days from when the symptoms started. In line with the Government guidance, all other residents of the home must also stay at home and not leave the house for the next 10 full days, providing they remain well for that time. Should anyone else develop symptoms they should then self-isolate for the next 10 full days from the onset of symptoms or longer if symptoms persist. Where possible, individuals should not go out even to buy food or others essentials, and any exercise should be taken within the home.

What does NHS test and trace mean for people living in shared houses (HMOs)?

This service ensures that anyone who develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) can quickly be tested to find out if they have the virus. It also helps trace close recent contacts of anyone who tests positive for coronavirus and, if necessary, notifies them that they must self-isolate at home to help stop the spread of the virus.

If anyone is identified as having close recent contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, they will be notified that they must self-isolate. This applies even if they do not have any symptoms. They must self-isolate for the next 10 full days after they were in contact with the person who has tested positive for COVID-19. This is crucial to avoid unknowingly spreading the virus. Self-isolation means staying at home and not going outside of the home at any time. If you live with other people, they do not need to self-isolate, but they should avoid contact with you as far as possible and follow advice on hygiene.

If anyone in the home (HMO) goes on to develop symptoms or test positive for COVID-19 then all the residents of the house must self-isolate.

Full [guidance on the NHS track and trace](#) explaining how it works is available.

Doncaster Council

Regulation & Enforcement, Civic Office, Waterdale, Doncaster, DN1 3BU

What if the building has shared spaces and facilities such as kitchens, bathrooms and social areas?

Landlords and/or managing agents should help by closing non-essential indoor communal space where it would not be possible to maintain social distancing (e.g. small shared spaces for use by more than one household). Non-essential communal space does not include shared kitchens, bathrooms, toilets or sitting rooms. If essential communal space is shared, the [guidance for households with possible COVID-19 infection](#) should be followed.

If a tenant develops symptoms of coronavirus, then they should not use these non-essential facilities, regardless of whether they remain open. If someone is shielding or clinically vulnerable, they should refer to the latest guidance for [individuals who are shielding](#).

Shared outdoor spaces such as communal gardens may remain open for use by tenants, but the latest Government [guidance on maintaining social distancing](#) must be followed.

What does the current situation mean for repairs and inspections to my property?

Tenants still have a right to a decent, warm and safe place to live – and it is in the best interests of both tenants and landlords to ensure that properties are kept in good repair and free from hazards. Landlords should take account of Government [guidance on working safely in people's homes](#) when carrying out repair and maintenance services in properties occupied by tenants.

Where can I find the details of recent and upcoming changes along with guidance and support on Covid-19?

[Recent and upcoming changes with guidance and support](#) are available on the Government website. We request that you make every effort to ensure that both you and your tenants are aware of and follow this guidance as well as the landlord and tenant information and support available on our own website, which can be accessed at:

<https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/health-wellbeing/coronavirus-covid-19>

What can I do to help get this message out to my tenants?

Whilst we are also providing information directly to the public, we would be grateful if you could ensure that a copy of the attached 'letter to residents of shared houses' (also available on our [website](#)) is forwarded to all your tenants as soon as possible. Wherever it is safe to do so, we also request that you ensure it is displayed in a prominent place at the property for all householders to read.

We would also remind you that as landlord you should ensure that any common parts and shared facilities at the HMO are maintained in a clean condition, and that urgent health and safety matters at your properties must still be dealt with promptly, in line with Government guidance as detailed on the landlord and tenants section of our dedicated webpage above.

We thank you for your continued support and cooperation at this difficult time.

Yours faithfully

P Williams

Paul Williams. Team Manager (Housing) – Enforcement Team