26. Covid-19 Policy

**Introduction**

The COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic is a continued concern and the effects will continue for some months to come. This document sets out the Organisation’s policy on actions to be taken in response to the pandemic. It should be noted that any advice issued by the Scottish Government or Dumfries and Galloway Council will take precedence over the actions set out in this policy.

We recognise that some of the Young People in our care are among the most vulnerable members of society and so may need additional precautions.

We also recognise that for many of the Young People, the routine and structure of the Organisation is extremely important for their wellbeing, so we aim to maintain normal routine as much as possible.

* The introduction of additional personal hygiene requirements for volunteers and Young People as they move around the premises of where the RH YOUTH ORGANISATION will hold its sessions (e.g. hand washing/sanitising - face masks will be required where necessary);
* The limitation of volunteers travel – volunteers should not attend external events such as conferences, training or exchanges until the Chief Executive and Board decide the risk level is low enough;
* Where applicable, we will introduce a one way system through the premises to limit the number of people coming into contact with one another in the hallways.
* Children/ Young People to only bring essentials such as water bottles and coats.

**Symptoms**

The main symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are:

* a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
* a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
* a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

**What to do if you have symptoms**

If you have any of the main symptoms of COVID-19, even if they're mild:

* Get a PCR test (test that is sent to a lab) to check if you have COVID-19 as soon as possible.
* Stay at home and do not have visitors (self-isolate) until you get your test result – only leave your home to have a test. Check if people you live with need to self-isolate.
* Get a PCR test to check if you have COVID-19 on GOV.UK

For more information visit –   
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/main-symptoms/>

**Coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms in children**

Children can get coronavirus (COVID-19), but they seem to get it less often than adults and it's usually less serious.

The main symptoms of COVID-19 are:

* a high temperature
* a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot, for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours
* a loss or change to sense of smell or taste – this means they cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal
* What to do if your child has symptoms

If your child has any of the main symptoms of COVID-19, even if they're mild:

* Get a PCR test (test that is sent to a lab) to check if they have COVID-19 as soon as possible.
* Your child should stay at home and not have visitors (self-isolate) until you get the test result – they can only leave home to have the test. Check if you and anyone else your child lives with need to self-isolate.

For more information -<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/coronavirus-in-children/>

**The RH Youth Organisation policy towards Volunteers and Young People illness**

* All members of the Organisation will be informed of the symptoms.
* If a volunteers or Young Person shows symptoms that would require ‘self-isolation’ under the current Government guidance, they will be sent home immediately to ‘self-isolate’ and told to request a test.

**Organisation closure**

The organisation will remain open unless advised by the relevant health authorities.

The Chief Executive in conjunction with the Board has the discretion to close the Organisation if in their judgment:

* The overall volunteer ratio absence level is so high that the safety of children cannot be guaranteed and/or
* The rate of Volunteer or Young People illness is excessive.

**Responsibilities**

Chief Executive

The Chief Executive is to maintain and update all information relating to the development of the pandemic and the current advice from the Government, Local Authority and NHS.

The Chief Executive, along with the Board, are responsible for analysing the data and current situation to determine if planned events and sessions can proceed as planned and if a limit of attendees should be implemented.

Volunteers will:

* Follow government guidance on self-isolation;
* Report symptoms immediately (to the Chief Executive or the Executive Team) and leave the organisation to go home, to self-isolate and report any concerns regarding a child/ Young Person displaying relevant symptoms.

**Objectives**

* To minimise the risk to Young People and volunteers during the COVID-19 pandemic.
* To carefully consider and implement ongoing Government advice.
* To maintain full awareness of the vulnerability of a large proportion of our members and to always act accordingly, to maintain full awareness of the fact that for many of our Young People, the routine and structure of the organisation is extremely important for their wellbeing, and aim to maintain as normal a routine as much as possible.

**Hygiene Precautions**

Young People and volunteers will be required to follow the government advice on regular hand washing as being the best method of avoiding transmission of the virus. Hand sanitiser and tissues will be available in the premises. Signs and posters will be used to remind volunteers and Young People of the above.

All equipment used will be cleaned after each session.

Face masks will not be worn where possible unless explicitly advised by Government/Local Authority or NHS officials, as this may cause unnecessary distress to some of our more vulnerable children.

All members will be reminded about cough and sneeze etiquette – coughing into the crook of your elbow and sneezing into a tissue.

All members will be reminded to keep their hands away from their face to prevent the potential spread of the virus.

When in a premises, the RH YOUTH ORGANISATION will limit the number of rooms occupied within the building to prevent any potential spread of the virus. Any rooms not being used will be marked out of bounds.

**Young People Travel**

There should be no foreign travel until further notice.

It is recognised that trips into the community (for example to shops, cafes or parks) are an essential part of the organisation for our members. These can continue provided the risk assessment is reviewed and updated to consider the COVID-19 risk.

Additional precautions are to be considered and/or implemented – these are:

* The choosing of destinations based on more/less likely exposure risk.
* Avoiding busy times for visits to reduce exposure.
* Additional hand washing/use of sanitiser as part of any visits.

For more information on how COVID-19 will affect camping, please contact us for our Camping Risk Assessment.

**Volunteer Travel**

Volunteers should not attend external events such as conferences, training and/or

information exchange visits to other organisations unless the Chief Executive, along with the Board, who are responsible for analysing the data and current situation to determine if these events can be attended.

**Parental/Guardians Choice**

The Organisation recognises that some parents/guardians/carers may judge that the risk to a Young Person will be minimised if they do not attend the Organisation. This is most likely to be the case for those members at highest risk from COVID-19.

**Test and Protect**

Everyone who develops symptoms of COVID-19 – a new, continuous cough; fever or loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste - should isolate straight away and arrange a test via[www.nhsinform.scot](https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19/test-trace-and-isolate/coronavirus-covid-19-testing) or, if you can’t get online, by calling 0800 028 2816.

People who live in the same household as a person with symptoms should also isolate straight away.

If the test result for the symptomatic person is negative, and they are not already isolating as a ‘close contact’ of a confirmed case, they can end isolation and return to work or school when they are well enough and have not had a fever for 48 hours. The rest of their household can end isolation straight away.

If the test is positive, the symptomatic person should remain in isolation until 10 days from symptom onset, or longer if certain symptoms persist. The rest of the household should self-isolate and book a PCR test. If they are a partially or non-vaccinated adult, they will be asked to self-isolate for 10 days, whether or not they have symptoms. If they are a fully-vaccinated adult, provided they return a negative PCR test result and remain asymptomatic, they may end self-isolation as a close contact. Fully vaccinated means having received both vaccine doses, with at least two weeks passing since the second dose. If they are younger than 18 years and 4 months or medically unable to get vaccinated, provided they return a negative PCR test result and remain asymptomatic, they may end self-isolation as a close contact. Guidance on how to self-isolate effectively should be followed.

Everyone who tests positive for COVID-19 will be put in touch with the local contact tracing team so that other close contacts can be identified. These close contacts will also be asked to self-isolate for 10 days from symptom onset in the symptomatic person.

It will be important that everyone, and especially the people identified as close contacts, remain in self-isolation for the full length of time they are asked to.

A ‘close contact’ is someone who has been physically close enough to the confirmed case for a long enough period of time, that they may have had the virus transmitted to them. The risk of the virus being transmitted is higher the closer the contact, the greater the exposure to respiratory droplets (for example from coughing), and the longer the duration of the contact.

If you have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, you will be given specific guidance depending on your vaccination status and age.

If you have been identified by NHS contact tracers as having been in close contact with a person with a confirmed case, you will not be told who it is you have been in contact with.

If you do not have symptoms yourself and are required to self-isolate as a close contact of person who is a confirmed case, other people in your own household will normally not be asked to self-isolate along with you – unless they have also been in close contact with a person who is a confirmed case, in which case they will informed by the NHS on specific self-isolation advice. Contact tracers may sometimes ask contacts of close contacts to isolate and book a test. This helps to prevent further spread of the virus.

**Example A: Household self-isolation**

NHS Inform has produced a [guide covering when and how long to self-isolate due to coronavirus](http://www.nhsinform.scot/self-help-guides/self-help-guide-when-and-how-long-to-self-isolate-due-to-coronavirus).

**Example B: Non-household close contact self-isolation**

Person A lives with her family and was a close contact of another person who is a confirmed case while at work and is required to self-isolate.

The partner and children of person A do not need to self-isolate along with her, as long as person A has no symptoms.

They are able to leave the house in line with physical distancing guidance and regulations that apply to the whole population – they could go out for exercise, or to pick up food or medicine.

Person A must stay at home and self-isolate for 10 days from her last contact with the confirmed case.

### Who does not need to self-isolate

#### If you are vaccinated

If you are a fully vaccinated adult, you should get a PCR test as soon as possible. Provided you return a negative PCR test result and remain asymptomatic, you may end self-isolation as a close contact.

If you are younger than 18 years and 4 months you should get a PCR test as soon as possible. Provided you return a negative PCR test result and remain asymptomatic, you may end self-isolation as a close contact. Though, Children under 5 years will be encouraged but not required to take a PCR test. 18 years and 4 months is the age specified to allow 4 months for individuals who turn 18 time to get fully vaccinated.

Even if you’re fully vaccinated, you can still get coronavirus and pass it on to others.

If you’re a close contact who can end self-isolation, you can help protect others by following [our guidance on how to stay safe and help prevent the spread](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-safe-and-protecting-others/).

As well as getting a PCR test, you may also consider:

* limiting close contact with other people outside your household, especially in enclosed spaces
* wearing a face covering in enclosed spaces and where you cannot maintain physical distancing
* limiting contact with anyone who is at [highest risk](https://www.gov.scot/publications/covid-highest-risk/pages/highest-risk-classification/)
* taking part in [twice weekly lateral flow device (LFD) testing](https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19/test-and-protect/coronavirus-covid-19-get-a-test-if-you-do-not-have-symptoms)
* not visiting people in care homes or hospitals until 10 days after contact with a positive case, unless essential and agreed with care home or hospital staff in advance
* if you work in [health and social care, you should follow the guidance specific to these settings](https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19/test-and-protect/coronavirus-covid-19-self-isolation-exemption-for-health-and-social-care-workers)

If you are medically unable to be vaccinated, you should get a PCR test as soon as possible. Provided you return a negative PCR test result and remain asymptomatic, you may end self-isolation as a close contact.

If you return a positive test result, you will still need to isolate for 10 days.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-test-and-protect/pages/who-needs-to-self-isolate/>

**Data Protection**

If any of our members receive a positive test result, they will be told by NHS Contact Tracers to gather any relevant information about any close contacts. In this case, the RH YOUTH ORGANISATION will gather the close contact information for any time spent at the organisation.

The RH YOUTH ORGANISATION will request parents/guardians to ask NHS Contact Tracers to contact us directly to allow us to stay aligned with our Data Protection Policy.

The Test and Protect Tracing Record will be given to NHS Contact Tracers along with personal contact information for the close contacts. This data will include:

* Full Name
* Home Address
* Primary Contact Number
* Secondary Contact Number
* E-mail Address

If it has been necessary to share any personal data with NHS Contact Tracers, the relevant individuals will be notified by the RH YOUTH ORGANISATION by phone.

We will not disclose who has had the positive test result.

**Illness of Member of Staff or Child**

If a volunteer or Young Person becomes ill, the symptoms will be assessed against current Governmental advice. If the symptoms are consistent with a requirement to ‘self-isolate’ the volunteer or Young Person will be sent home. It is recognised that the judgement about whether the symptoms are consistent with the need to self-isolate may be difficult for mild symptoms. Where it is uncertain, the Organisation will err on the side of caution and assume that self-isolation is appropriate, unless medical advice to the contrary is obtained. The Organisation recognises that this is likely to result in a significant increase in volunteer or Young Persons from sessions, but also that this is appropriate to limit the risk to all members of the Organisation and their families.

**Organisation Closure**

The organisation will remain open unless re-advised by the relevant health authorities.

The Chief Executive in conjunction with the Board has the discretion to close the Organisation if in their judgment.

* The overall volunteering absence level is so high that the safety of children cannot be guaranteed and/or
* The rate of volunteer or Young Persons illness is excessive.

**Volunteer Ratios**

The safety of our Young People while in the Organisation is our overriding priority. The varying needs of our young people means that it is not possible to specify a simple number of volunteers that are needed to ensure the safety of our children. Our ability to ensure the safety of our Young People will be assessed weekly and on a ‘per session’ basis and in careful consideration of the individual needs of each child and/or each session. If, in the judgement of the Chief Executive, there are insufficient volunteers to ensure the safety of all children, one or more sessions may be closed for a period and the relevant Young People sent home.

**Communication**

All communications will be electronic through our website, Facebook, e-mails and group texts.

Our main email address is [rhyouthorg@hotmail.com](mailto:rhyouthorg@hotmail.com)

**Executive Team**

It is necessary to maintain many of the administrative functions of the Organisation, even if the Organisation is closed. If there is significant volunteer absence in the administrative functions, precautions to reduce the risk of not meeting the essential requirements will be implemented.

These may include for example:

* The separation of key personnel into different offices
* Volunteers being required to work from home.

The Executive Team are responsible for carrying out a risk assessment review every 3 weeks.

**Review Period**

This policy and risk assessment shall be reviewed as significant new advice becomes available.

If you require a copy of our most recent risk assessment, please contact the Executive Team.

**References**

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

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

**This policy should be read in conjunction with –**

**Appendix 1 – COVID-19 Contact Training Record**

**APPENDIX 2 – TEAM MEMBER COVID-19 STEP BY STEP**

**END OF 26. COVID-19 POLICY**

**APPENDIX 1 –**

CONFIDENTIAL

COVID-19 CONTACT TRACING RECORD

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name:** | |  | | | | |
| **Start Date :** | |  | | **End Date:** |  | |
| Date of Contact | Location | | Incidents of ‘Close Contact’  A ‘Close Contact’ is an interaction within 2m for a period of 15 minutes | | |
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| **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:** | | | | | | |
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**APPENDIX 2 –**

TEAM MEMBER COVID-19 STEP BY STEP

* 1. All Team Members must ensure they have been trained on the RH Youth Organisation’s COVID-19 Policy and Risk Assessment before attending.
  2. Team Members arriver 30 minutes before session start time.
  3. All door handles must be washed.
  4. An outdoor hand washing station must be set up with running water.
  5. A hand sanitiser station must be set up at the entry of the building.
  6. All Team Members must be wearing appropriate PPE which shall be provided by the RH YOUTH ORGANISATION.
  7. When the Young People arrive, parents should remain in the car and not approach the Team Members. No parents will be allowed inside the building.
  8. Young People must wash their hands immediately.
  9. When we are using the building for activities or when wet, Young People must proceed into the building where a one way system will be in place to avoid congestion. All indoor areas must be well ventilated with windows and doors being propped open.
  10. Young People must use the hand sanitiser station upon entry.
  11. Young People will be reminded about the importance of personal hygeine (hand washing, coughing and sneezing etiquette).
  12. Young People will be reminded that they must avoid any rooms that they do not need to go to, this includes the toilets. If needed, only 1 may enter at a time.
  13. Young People will be split into groups and Team Members will run their activites.
  14. After the session, Young People will be asked to wash their hands before leaving.
  15. Team Members will then have 30 minutes to clean all equipment that has been used as well as any surfaces and door handles before the next session. If there is not another session, this still needs to be done.
  16. At the end of the night, a security check should be carried out and all windows and doors must be closed and locked if they have been opened.
  17. For the latest guidence and instructions, consult the RH YOUTH ORGANISATION’s latest COVID-19 Risk Assessment which will be available at all times.