This information is intended to help you, as a volunteer for and/or member of The Royal British Legion to decide what steps you should take in light of the spread of the covid-19 virus.

**What is the coronavirus?**

A coronavirus is a type of virus. As a group, coronaviruses are common across the world. This strain, covid-19, is a new strain of coronavirus first identified in Wuhan City, China in January 2020.

**What are the symptoms?**

The following symptoms may develop in the 14 days after exposure to someone who has covid-19 infection:

* A cough
* A high temperature
* Shortness of breath

If you are worried about symptoms, please call NHS 111 [or go to the NHS 111 coronavirus advice website.](https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19) Do not go directly to your GP or other healthcare environment.

[The latest advice and developments on the covid-19 situation can be found on the GOV.UK website.](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public)
**What’s the best way to prevent the spread of covid-19?**

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser. This is particularly important after taking public transport.

* Use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
* Always carry tissues with you to cover your cough or sneeze, then throw the tissue in a bin. You can [download a ’Catch it, Bin it, Kill it’ poster](https://www.england.nhs.uk/south/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2017/09/catch-bin-kill.pdf) (attached), from the NHS for use in your home and or volunteer/member location.
* Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in the home and work environment.
* Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

**What can I all do to protect staff, volunteers, members and those that we support?**

* If you are feeling unwell or are worried that you may be at risk please don’t come into Legion locations or carry out any visits. Let staff know that you won’t be attending.
* Take note of and share with other volunteers and members the information provided via our communication channels including emails and posters.
* Handwashing facilities are available in all our offices and are well supplied to facilitate regular handwashing. GOV.UK has published clear and printable [instructions on handwashing techniques](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/866065/Handwashing_techniques.pdf) (attached), which can be displayed in homes, offices and other Legion venues.
* Viruses can live on hard surfaces for up to eight hours. Frequently clean key areas including keyboards and door handles.
* Ensure your emergency contact details are up to date with your contact at the
Legion.

**How can I support our beneficiaries/clients?**

* Generally, infections can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people, and those with long-term conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease.
* Some of our volunteers, members and people we support may be more at risk or highly concerned about the virus.
* If carrying out visits to those we support in their home, check before the visit that they are well and if they have had recent travel to risk areas.
* Supporting volunteers/members carrying out their roles from home: volunteers/members may prefer to carry out their roles from home, (if you have the infrastructure and the role enables you to do this). Please let staff know if this is what you’d prefer to do.

**What if I or someone I know has travelled recently or is about to?**

* Keep up to date on current travel advice. The Foreign Office has published [information and advice on travel safety](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-the-foreign-commonwealth-office-puts-together-travel-advice#history) and the World Health Organisation is providing updated [covid-19 travel advice.](https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/travel-advice)
* The government has listed high risk areas/countries by [category 1 (highest risk areas) and category 2 areas.](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-specified-countries-and-areas/covid-19-specified-countries-and-areas-with-implications-for-returning-travellers-or-visitors-arriving-in-the-uk)
* Volunteers and members who are symptomless but have returned from category 1 areas within the last 14 days should [self-isolate](https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2020/02/20/what-is-self-isolation-and-why-is-it-important/) for 14 days from their return.
* Volunteers and members who have returned from a category 2 area within the last 14 days and who develop symptoms should self-isolate.
* Let your contact at the Legion know if you are travelling or returning from travel, particularly if it is from a risk area.
**Resources/guidance**

**Key up-to-date information from the government:**

* [GOV.UK: COVID-19 latest information and advice](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public)
* [NHS coronavirus advice](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/)  **Travel advice**
* [GOV.UK: COVID-19 travel advice](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus)
* [GOV.UK: COVID-19 specified countries and areas with implications for returning travellers or visitors arriving in the UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-specified-countries-and-areas/covid-19-specified-countries-and-areas-with-implications-for-returning-travellers-or-visitors-arriving-in-the-uk)