

COVID-19 Guidance

For Employers and Personal Assistants



working together for independent living

This factsheet has been created with updated guidance for people with Direct Payments in Richmond Upon Thames. If you have any queries, please call us on 0208 831 6088.

Remember even when we are not in a national lockdown we should follow the 'Hands. Face. Space' guidance:

- hands – wash your hands regularly and for 20 seconds
- face – wear a face covering in indoor settings where social distancing may be difficult, and where you will come into contact with people you do not normally meet
- space – stay 2 metres apart from people you do not live with where possible, or 1 metre with extra precautions in place (such as wearing face coverings or increasing ventilation indoors)

Advice for those under the National Restrictions (November 2020):

- PAs are considered essential workers, they can still work for you during this time
- [Social distancing rules](#)
- [Making a support bubble with another household](#)
- [Shielding: protecting yourself if you're clinically extremely vulnerable](#)

Where can I get medical advice if I am concerned about COVID-19?

The Government are urging you to follow the NHS guidelines which is being kept up to date on their website: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>. At present the public are being asked not to go to the GP or call NHS 111 unless you cannot cope with your symptoms at home, your condition gets worse or your symptoms do not get better after 7 days.

How can I show that my employee is a 'key worker' and ensure they are able to travel into work in line with the Government's restrictions?

You should be aware that Personal Assistants are classified as 'essential workers' or 'key workers'. This means that under the Government's guidelines, PAs are able to leave home and travel to and from work, as this is necessary for them to complete their essential work in society. To show that your PA is a key worker, please provide your PA with a letter to verify their role when travelling. ***Ruils can provide you with a template for this..***

Access to COVID-19 Antibody Testing for PAs:

Antibody testing is now available across England and is being provided free of charge to anyone employed in adult social care, including Personal Assistants. The antibody test is a voluntary blood test which detects antibodies to the COVID-19 virus to see if you have previously had the virus.

This test **doesn't tell someone if they currently have COVID-19**: *if your PA currently has symptoms or have been advised to take a COVID-19 test, they should request a test via this link <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>. It is advised not to take an antibody test at this time.*

Results of the antibody test will support academic research studies across the UK that will help us better understand COVID-19 and how it has spread. An antibody test result can only tell you whether or not you have had the virus in the past and developed antibodies.

Regardless of the result of an antibody test, individuals must continue to comply with government guidelines, including wearing PPE and social distancing. This is because there is still research being conducted into whether someone who has had the virus can catch it again.

To take the test PAs can register on this online portal: <https://www.gov.uk/register-coronavirus-antibody-test>

These tests are now available to do from home.

Personal Protection Equipment (PPE):

PPE is available to collect from the Ruils' office, Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm:

Ruils, The DAAC, 4 Waldegrave Road, Teddington, TW11 8HT

We currently have stocks of masks, gloves, visors and aprons.

Free Winter Flu Vaccinations for PAs:

The Department of Health and Social Care has published the winter flu vaccination guidance. This includes the guidance itself, a leaflet and letter of entitlement for PAs. This is available to all PAs:

[Personal care assistants: guidance for free flu vaccination](#)

[Guidance for PAs – Free flu vaccination](#)

Useful links & contacts:

Richmond Council community hub helpline: 0208 871 6555

Government Guidance for people using DPs:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-people-receiving-direct-payments>

Health and Wellbeing: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing>

Skills for Care: <https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Employing-your-own-care-and-support/Information-for-individual-employers/Information-for-individual-employers.aspx>

If you are unable to access the internet and would like support to access the links included in this Factsheet, then please get in touch on the telephone number below and we will provide you with more information.

Please contact us for further support:



0208 831 6088



dpsupport@ruils.co.uk



www.ruils.co.uk



**Ruils, Disability Action and Advice Centre,
4 Waldegrave Rd, Teddington, TW11 8HT**