**HARC COVID-19 VOLUNTEER GUIDANCE**

The team at HARC want to ensure that those undertaking volunteer roles as part of the project are safe. COVID-19 will be a feature of our lives for the foreseeable future, so we need to learn to live with it and manage the risk to ourselves and others.

As COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, we need to make judgements to manage the risks of coronavirus. While no situation is risk free, there are actions that can be taken to limit transmission of the virus.

If you are healthy and low risk, you can sign up to as a volunteer to ensure that homeless, rootless and vulnerable people receive support they need over the Christmas and New Year period.

In line with the UK’s current rules, you can carry out volunteering tasks if you are well and have no symptoms like a new or continuous cough or high temperature, and neither does anyone in your household.

Please be assured that the premises will be thoroughly cleaned before each shift.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

* Kitchen volunteers and Cooks will be required to prepare food wearing masks, gloves and aprons
* General volunteers will be required to wear masks when inside the project – unless exempt from wearing one
* We also still ask that the two-metre rule is maintained wherever possible.

**Infection prevention**

To help protect yourself, people you are volunteering with, and our guests, ALL volunteers must practice universal infection control precautions-

* Wash your hands with soap and water before, during and after volunteering. Do this for at least 20 seconds
* Use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
* Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
* Put used tissues in a bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards
* Carry tissues with you at all times in case you need to sneeze or cough
* Avoid physical contact with others and maintain a distance of two metres between you and other people
* Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
* Wash used cutlery and crockery thoroughly with hot water and detergent – dry it thoroughly immediately and put it away

Please note that the virus that causes coronavirus can remain on surfaces for several hours to days. These measures will greatly reduce the risk of someone becoming infected after touching contaminated objects or surfaces.

**Handling packages or food**

While food packaging is not thought to present a risk of passing on the infection, efforts should be made to ensure it is cleaned and handled in line with the above precautions.

**Surfaces**

All volunteers will be asked to clean ‘as they go’ all surfaces before and after activities including high touch areas such as door handles, telephones, desks and computer keyboards. Sprays and cloths will be available for this.

**Travel**

If you have to use public transport to get to the venue, you should only do this if you are well and neither you nor your household members are self-isolating. If you car-share to get to the venue you should take precautions; wear a mask and sanitise surfaces that you will both/all touch.

**What do I do if I become unwell whilst volunteering?**

If you develop any of the Coronavirus symptoms, a high temperature or a new continuous cough, please inform the Project Lead or Shift Leader immediately and go home to self-isolate.

* Keep at least 2 metres ( 3 steps) away from others
* Avoid touching anything
* Tell your Project Lead or Shift Leader of any areas you’ve been or surfaces you may have touched in the building
* Tell your Project Lead or Shift Leader about anyone you’ve been in close contact with since feeling unwell so that we are able to put track and trace into operation
* If you are able to drive home, you should do so. If you have arrived by public transport or car share, you should arrange a taxi or a driver to take you home
* If you are seriously unwell and require medical attention, we advise you to be isolated while you wait for advice or an ambulance
* HARC will then arrange for deep clean after any affected volunteer has left the building
* Once home, use the NHS 111 online Coronavirus service to get advice, only phone 111 if you can’t get online, your symptoms worsen, or you have been instructed to by the online service.
* To protect others, do not attend GP practice, pharmacy or hospital without being assessed by phone first. Call 999 if you believe it is an emergency and your life is at risk.
* If you have been near someone who is taken unwell with symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), you do not need to go home unless you develop symptoms yourself.
* If by accident you have touched someone who is unwell you should wash your hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact.

**You must stop volunteering if:**

* You feel unwell, especially if you have symptoms of coronavirus (fever/high temperature, a new and continuous cough, shortness of breath).
* You’re asked to stop by a Project Lead or Shift Leader

**What do I do if I become unwell when I get home after volunteering?**

* Phone the HARC mobile number **07523 927318** and give your name and details of the date and time of the shift that you worked

**If there is a positive case amongst staff or guests:**

We will-

* Notify Public Health England Y&H Health Protection Team within 24 hours and inform them that this is a positive confirmed case of Covid-19 in in a vulnerable people’s setting
* Notify Sheffield City Council Public Health Sheffield that there is a confirmed case in a vulnerable people’s setting
* Ask the person to self-isolate for 10 days if they are not already doing so. Advise household contacts to self-isolate for 14 days
* Contact any staff/volunteer or guest who may have spent 15 minutes at or under 2 metres social distance or 1 minute at or under 1 metre and ask them to self-isolate for 14 days
* Carry out a deep clean of the project

Reviewed by JR August 2021