The BRLSI: Coronavirus information for staff, volunteers, Members and visitors

National advice and guidance
Visit [gov.uk](http://gov.uk) for information on the outbreak of coronavirus in China, including the current situation in the UK and information about the virus and its symptoms.

NHS information on coronavirus has advice for travellers and information on the virus and its symptoms.

For travel advice, you can visit the latest [UK Government travel advice](https://www.gov.uk) related to coronavirus and individual pages for travel advice to specific countries or territories.

Information and guidance
We are acutely aware of the level of concern about the risks from coronavirus and we are keeping abreast of information provided by Public Health England (PHE) and the NHS, and are following official advice.

The BRLSI is committed to informing our community if there are any positive cases that could affect the BRLSI. In making this commitment, we are aware of the enormous workload for the NHS and PHE in processing the tests.

If more cases are confirmed in the UK, it will be announced as soon as possible by the Chief Medical Officer of the affected country.

We know of no positive tests for coronavirus for any member of our organisation
The health and safety of our staff, Members, volunteers, visitors and the wider community is our top priority.

Anyone concerned about their health in relation to coronavirus should follow [PHE guidance](https://www.gov.uk) and contact NHS 111 if the guidance advises them to do so.

The information below aims to offer you advice and guidance and is based on the current guidance issued by Public Health England (PHE).

The situation is subject to change and we are monitoring the guidance regularly to ensure that our arrangements remain consistent with expert advice. If this guidance changes then we will update our advice accordingly.

The BRLSI has a CV Management Team that is closely monitoring this situation and official advice. If you have any specific questions that are not answered below, please email [volunteer@brlsi.org](mailto:volunteer@brlsi.org) or call 01225 312084.
BRLSI General Advice and Guidance

What are the symptoms?
Based on current evidence, novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) presents with flu-like symptoms including a fever, a cough, or difficulty breathing. The current evidence is that most cases appear to be mild.

What is the risk?
PHE advice has increased the national risk from low to moderate but the risk to individuals remains low. There is a greater risk of complications in people who have a pre-existing long-term health condition.

What steps can I take to protect myself?
The advice from PHE is that people should continue with their normal activities. PHE also reminds people to follow good hand hygiene and standard infection control guidelines “Catch it, Bin it, Kill it”.

If you have any immediate health concerns, please contact NHS 111. Any member of staff, you can speak with their line manager.

What should I do if I have symptoms?
You should follow the normal guidance for treating coughs, colds and flu. This includes:

• staying away from work until your symptoms have eased
• getting plenty of rest and sleep
• keeping warm
• taking paracetamol or ibuprofen to lower your temperature and treat aches and pains
• drinking plenty of water to avoid dehydration
• If you are pregnant, have a long-term underlying health condition or a weakened immune system then you should contact the NHS non-emergency helpline 111 for advice. You should also contact this number if your symptoms do not improve after seven days.

Is the BRLSI open as normal?
The BRLSI is open as normal. Talks, exhibitions, work and all other activities are running as usual.

What action is the BRLSI taking?
We have followed all PHE advice and guidance and are communicating regularly with our staff, volunteers and Members. We are monitoring the situation closely and we continue to provide as much advice, care and support as we can to our BRLSI community.

The BRLSI’s CV Management Team is in contact regularly to ensure that we have appropriate procedures and arrangements in place. This group is made up of key leads from across the BRLSI.
We have reviewed cleaning arrangements, are using anti-viral products for hard surfaces, ensuring soap dispensers are well stocked and reminding people to observe good hand hygiene.

**Should I wear a face-mask?**
The advice we have is that there is little evidence to indicate that wearing a face-mask provides any additional effective protection. However, it is a personal choice and we would encourage all members of our organisation to be supportive of the choices people make in this regard.

**How can I help?**
Please be mindful that visitors from China and specified areas may be particularly concerned about family and friends at home and about potential discrimination here in the UK. As an inclusive international organisation, we’d ask all members to continue to be supportive of one another at this time.

**Staff Guidance**

If I’ve been advised to self-isolate, do I have to take the time off as leave or is it sickness absence?
In this current ‘containment’ phase, if you have been advised by NHS 111 or Public Health England to self isolate, you do not have to take this as annual leave. If you are well and able to work from home, you are encouraged to do so. Otherwise, you should take this as sickness absence.

Likewise, if you are on holiday and end up in an area that is quarantined, this would also be treated as sickness absence.

I suffer from a long-term underlying health condition - should I stay away from work?
The current advice from PHE is that this should not be necessary. However, we understand that people may be concerned, and you may want to discuss work arrangements with your line manager.

Should I be working remotely?
This should not be necessary due to the PHE advice. However, if there are particular circumstances that might require you to work remotely these should be discussed with your line manager.

**Room Hire Status**

What is the BRLSI’s cancellation policy?
For the duration of the Coronavirus alert, the cancellation notice period in order to receive full refund has been reduced to 7 days.

What happens if the BRLSI closes?
If the BRLSI decides to close for a period, all affected bookings will be refunded in full.

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