

Dear member

Firstly I hope this finds you well.

Thank you for those who got in touch since the last e brief, hopefully we have answered you questions and can provide further information, guidance in this briefing

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Whilst the Scottish Ambulance Service advises it has both adequate stock of PPE in terms of quantity and specific type, the UNISON advice to members regarding PPE remains as follows:

- Individual dynamic risk assessments should dictate the level of PPE members choose to use.
- A minimum of level 2 PPE (disposable gloves, disposable apron, fluid repellent surgical mask, eye protection (if risk of splashing)) is recommended to use for all patients. As per the recommendation of the ambulance infection and prevention control group which is based on Public Health England guidance.
- If members do not have the correct PPE to treat a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patient they should stand off and request that a resource with the correct PPE does.

General advice for UNISON ambulance members will be going up on the national website this week included a section on PPE and will reflect the branches advice.

The National Social Partnership Forum have organised a briefing with Public Health England / Health Protection Scotland. We have asked that the issues raised by the ambulance sector in relation to PPE, specifically the standing of surgical masks as PPE under EU law and the discrepancies between Resus council and PHE advice on the level PPE required for CPR and resuscitation, will be addressed at this briefing.

[PPE tell us your story](#)

The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR)

The HSE has provided clearer guidance regarding reporting COVID-19 under RIDDOR <https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/riddor-reporting-coronavirus.htm>

They say that employers must make a report under RIDDOR (The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) when:

- An unintended incident at work has led to someone's possible or actual exposure to Coronavirus. This must be reported as a dangerous occurrence.
- A worker has been diagnosed as having COVID 19 and there is **reasonable evidence** that it was caused by exposure at work. This must be reported as a case of disease.
- A worker dies as a result of occupational exposure to Coronavirus.

The HSE have also established a COVID-19 reporting line for workers who have concerns about their safety <https://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/concerns.htm>

The Association of Ambulance Chief Executives (AACE) are intending to issue guidance to employers on reporting COVID-19 under RIDDOR. We have asked that this guidance stresses the importance of engaging staff sides prior to implementing any local systems and processes. UNISON SAS will be raising the issue locally this issue in anticipation of the guidance being released.

Health Care Professionals Council (HCPC)

The HCPC have produced a managing risk: infection control information sheet.
<https://www.hcpc-uk.org/covid-19/advice/applying-our-standards/managing-risk>

The aim of this is to supports registrants in making professional judgements to protect themselves and the wider service user population.

The information also sets out that, should any concerns be raised about a registrant's practice, which could include refusal to practice because of a lack of PPE, they will take account of:

- The circumstances and context they were working in;
- Any steps they took to raise their concerns; and
- Relevant resource, guidelines and protocols in place at the time.

This position is set out in the joint statement from Chief Executives of statutory regulators of health and care professionals.

<https://www.hcpc-uk.org/news-and-events/news/2020/how-we-will-continue-to-regulate-in-light-of-novel-coronavirus/>

Terms and conditions

UNISON will raise the issue of members returning to work following a positive COVID-19 test at the National Ambulance Strategic Partnership Forum (NASPF) with a view to getting a more consistent approach across the ambulance services

Staff COVID-19 testing

Concerns have been raised regarding the issue of COVID-19 test results been given to employers before members was raised. With regards COVID-19 testing it is our understanding that the law around medical records still exists i.e. staff need to authorise the release and access of medical records. This is a worrying development and could be a serious breach of the law. If anyone has experienced this please fill in a case form and refer for advice. We will continue to update you as matters develop.

International Workers' Memorial Day

It is with great sadness that I have to advise you I received news that 4 of our Ambulance colleagues in other boards have passed away due to contracting the Covid – 19 virus.

It is a coincidence yet fitting that Tuesday 28 April is International Workers' Memorial Day, when we remember all those who have died because of their work – and renew our pledge to fight for the living.

In the year of Coronavirus, this day of commemoration has never been more important. And that is why UNISON is asking the country to observe a minute's silence, to remember all the health, care and other key workers who have already lost their lives to COVID-19.

The campaign for a minute's silence at 11am next Tuesday was launched earlier this week by UNISON, the Royal College of Nursing and the Royal College of Midwives, which collectively represent more than a million NHS and public service workers, including Ambulance staff, porters, refuse collectors and care workers.

I would ask you to, where possible, to join colleagues and hopefully the entire country to pay tribute to remember workers who've lost their lives and put themselves in harm's way to keep us all safe and vital services running.

Colleagues I can only reiterate the importance that you protect your self's at all times, if you don't have the correct gear do not do the job.

Stay Safe

Stevie Gilroy

UNISON National Convener / Branch Secretary

UNISON for Protection Now

UNISON for Justice After

Here if You Need Us

[For a full list of UNISON Representative click here](#)