

# Coronavirus (COVID-19) / Central's Guidance and Policy

(Updated: 18th March 2020)



This document gives some information about COVID-19, how to look after yourself and self-isolation. There is also a section at the end on Central Church's policy around COVID-19 to date (this is subject to change as the government releases new advice).

## What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a new illness that can affect your lungs and airways. It's caused by a virus called coronavirus.

## What are the symptoms?

The symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- a cough
- a high temperature (37.8C or greater) or fever (you may feel warm, cold or shivery)
- shortness of breath

For accurate and up-to-date information we strongly recommend you read through the information on:

[nhsinform.scot/coronavirus](https://nhsinform.scot/coronavirus).

## What if you have symptoms of COVID-19?

If you've developed a new continuous cough and/or a fever/high temperature in the last 7 days, stay at home for 7 days from the start of your symptoms even if you think your symptoms are mild.

Phone your GP if your symptoms:

- are severe or you have shortness of breath
- worsen during home isolation
- have not improved after 7 days

You should also phone your GP if you develop breathlessness or it worsens, especially if you:

- are 60 years old or over
- have underlying poor health
- have heart or lung problems
- have a weakened immune system, including cancer
- have diabetes

If your GP is closed, phone NHS 24 (111).

If you have a medical emergency, phone 999 and tell them you have COVID-19 symptoms.

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## Do the people I live with need to take any action?

If you live with other people and have symptoms, they'll need to stay at home for 14 days from the start of your symptoms even if they don't have symptoms themselves.

If they develop symptoms within the 14 days, they need to stay at home for 7 days from the day their symptoms began. They should do this even if it takes them over the 14-day isolation period.

## Central Church / Coronavirus (COVID-19) / Policy & FAQ



### Overview

#### What is Central's current response?

- The Senior Leadership Team, Staff and Elders are continuing to monitor the situation with a Risk Strategy and Action Plan in place.
- Following the latest UK Government updates this past couple of days we have followed 'Social Distancing' UK Government guidelines and postponed all Central Church gatherings, events and programmes with immediate effect until further notice.
- The Central Staff, Intern and Volunteer leadership teams are working from home as of 17-March, and Central Hall is closing with only the Venue Team ensuring it's maintained.
- All non-essential meetings are to take place via phone/online or outside adhering to 'Social Distancing' UK Government guidelines.
- We will continue to update our webpage - [centralchurch/coronavirus](https://centralchurch.co.uk/coronavirus) - for information and updates.
- We are committing to pray for our church, city, nation and world as it faces the challenges of the virus. Seeking to trust God with our own precautionary steps along with the NHS/Government support ultimately putting our hope and trust in God.

*"For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline."* (2 Timothy 1:7)

### Gatherings, Ministries and Communities

#### Should I attend Sunday or any other of our Church gatherings (including Community meetings)?

We have postponed Sunday Gatherings, Community or Ministry meetings/events until further notice.

Here's some of the things we're doing as alternatives:

- We are going to offer a space to gather online together at 11am on Sunday. Check the website nearer the time for further details.

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- We are going to meet weekly online to pray. This will be tomorrow (Thursday 19 March) between 7-8pm (Via Zoom – Click here [ZOOM LINK] - at 7pm tomorrow) and every Wednesday as of next week at 7:30pm.
- We are encouraging Communities to meet online, and outside, following all appropriate UK Government guidelines.
- We obviously want to care for our Church Family and surrounding community really well. We are working on a 'pastoral buddies' set up for our most vulnerable in our community to have someone personally regularly connecting remotely and providing support where possible.
- The Elders have also made the decision to put the formation of the Vacancy Team and recruitment of a Senior Pastor on hold which includes postponing the Church Meeting on the 02 April.

## How should we be praying and caring for people?

In the context of someone affected by the virus; it's important that we ensure and encourage the person/s affected is accessing and following the relevant guidelines as it relates to physical symptoms. (And of course, don't meet up with them in person, as they should be in self-isolation).

As with any illness, ill-health can impact us physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually. Thank God for Jesus who knew what it was to be human in all of those regards. We know that God loves to care for us and we can have confidence that he listens to our prayers. We can pray for healing, as we would for any illness, trusting the person into the hands of Jesus who loves them. We can also reach out, pick up the phone, listen to people, send a pizza delivery... all of these things help us be the hands, ears, and feet of Jesus at a critical time for the nation.

We are well placed to respond within the church family to immediate need through our network of Communities, with the support of our pastoral care team. In the first instance please reach out within your Community. If you're yet to connect into a Community and you are concerned either for yourself or another member of the Church family, please contact the pastoral care team - [care@centralchurch.co.uk](mailto:care@centralchurch.co.uk).

## Central Team (Staff, Interns and Volunteer Team)

### When should I self-isolate and/or work from home?

- We are asking all our Staff, Intern and Volunteer team to work from home other than for essential needs. Please speak with your leader/line manager should you need to determine what is essential.
- It's very important that you stay at home (self-isolate) if you have symptoms that may be caused by COVID-19 or you live with someone that has symptoms. Staying at home will help to control the spread of the virus to friends and others.
- You should be following 'Social Distancing' guidelines if you are one of the vulnerable groups outlined by the UK Government.
  - o aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions)
  - o under 70 with an underlying health condition

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- o those who are pregnant

## What should I do if I feel unwell with the symptoms of COVID-19?

- Stay at home and call your Team Leader/Line Manager as normal.
- If you've developed a cough or fever in the last 7 days, stay at home for 7 days from the day your symptoms started. You can return to working from home after 7 days if you're improving and no longer have a temperature. You don't need to be completely symptom-free to return to work.
- Phone your GP or NHS 24 (111) if your symptoms: are severe or you have shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, worsen within the 7 days you're at home, haven't improved after 7 days
- Update your leader/line-manager on the response from your GP or NHS 111

## What will happen if a case of COVID-19 is confirmed in a Central Team member?

That team member will have to self-isolate and follow UK Government guidelines. They should let their manager and/or leader know in order for us to best support them.

## For staff only: Will I be paid if I self-isolate?

If you are self-isolating based on UK Government or medical recommendation, then you may work from home where possible. Where you are unable to work from home or are unwell with the virus, then our normal sick pay policy will apply (see HR Policy and Staff Handbook). We will look at this on an individual basis where needed, if sick pay is not applicable or exhausted for the year.

## For staff only: What if I have a dependent that needs care?

If you need to take time to care for a dependent who has been self-isolated or to deal with school closures then you may take emergency days until your allowance is exhausted. If you need further time after that then you may take holiday or unpaid leave.

## For staff only: How can I prepare to work from home?

Your line managers will be working with you to create a plan for this, looking at work that can be done from home, work that may need to be prioritised, and providing guidance on Central policy. If you do not have the equipment needed to work from home, then please note this with your line manager.

## And finally...

## I am worried about COVID-19 and have more questions.

NHS Scotland have produced excellent advice and support via their website, <https://www.nhsinform.scot/coronavirus>. Keep up to date on the latest information on COVID-19 there.

If you are worried or concerned about anything relating to COVID-19 regarding your work, leadership or Church attendance, please contact your team leader/line manager if you have one. If not then please email Tom Montgomery ([tom@centralchurch.co.uk](mailto:tom@centralchurch.co.uk)) and Andy Harding ([andy@centralchurch.co.uk](mailto:andy@centralchurch.co.uk)) who will try to be able to answer any questions and support you.

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