

Latest update date: 17 March 2020

Coronavirus (Covid-19) update

In response to the developing situation regarding the Coronavirus, and in light of the government's revised guidance issued yesterday evening, we wanted to update you on our contingency planning measures.

Customer focus, along with the safety of our people, remains our key priorities and we will do everything we can to ensure continuity of service, and to manage to our service level agreements and contractual obligations during this period of disruption.

In line with government guidance, we have asked any of our people who are experiencing flu-like symptoms – cough, fever or shortness of breath - to self-isolate for seven days. Similarly, we have asked anyone who lives in the same household as someone experiencing symptoms to self-isolate for 14 days. Staff with high-risk needs and those with high-risk dependents have been asked to stay at home for the foreseeable future.

The business remains open and the platform fully operational but we have initiated remote working procedures for those staff who are able to do so.

Over the last week and ahead of the latest government guidance, we had initiated a 33% rotation of client relations staff working from home. This successfully tested all of our contact systems, including Jira, telephone and live support with no loss of service. Now that these plans are fully initiated, we will continually monitor all systems for operational resilience.

We are tracking and monitoring levels of illness among staff to ensure we know the likely impact on resources in each team across the business at any given point. We will also seek to redeploy those with relevant skillsets into any impacted areas where we might feel it necessary in the coming weeks.

All unnecessary travel has been cancelled, and we will move important meetings to online, video or teleconferencing where possible. We have moved all Nucleus events to Webex for the immediate future, and this includes our user sessions which are due to take place in May

Our suppliers are regularly vetted in terms of their business continuity plans, and we have held regular discussions with our material service providers over the last couple of weeks to assess the effectiveness of their plans. We remain in dialogue with them, intent on ensuring we have continuity of service.

Managing the ongoing situation

We have established three separate incident response groups to manage the current situation:

- Operations group – to monitor service levels and take any necessary action to address any issues arising. The operations group will also ensure effective oversight of our service providers.
- People group – focused on providing effective communication, assistance with anyone impacted by the virus and establishing and maintaining effective working / remote working practices throughout the period.
- Oversight group – to track the overall state of the outbreak, provide general direction and guidance and any appropriate governing decisions. Our executive team are all members of this group, and they will provide regular updates to the NFG board.

Each group is meeting as often as they deem necessary and the oversight group is meeting daily to ensure the highest level of preparedness and response as the situation escalates.

Staying vigilant

We are also mindful that situations like these are ripe for increased fraud attempts. Our current procedures are designed to minimise attempts at fraud, and while we do not plan on changing these at this stage, we will keep this under review. This includes the need for wet signatures. We will only change procedure if we have certainty that this will not dilute the protections afforded to our customers. We would ask that everyone is vigilant during this period.

Keeping you informed

We continue to follow the guidance and advice from the World Health Organisation, UK government, the NHS, the FCA and other regulatory bodies to prepare different levels of escalation as the situation develops. We're confident our business continuity planning gives us the right framework to maintain service levels during this period.

With this in mind, we will continue to monitor performance in all areas and keep you up to date with developments as they progress.

In the meantime, we appreciate the uncertainty that these type of situations bring and have sought to answer as many of your questions as we can. Please click [here for a full FAQ](#). Should you have a specific question that we have not covered, please contact your account manager or client relations manager in the usual way.

