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To: All Branches

Dear Colleagues,

Latest Face Mask/Coverings Rules in the UK – [Face Mask/Covering Mandatory Rule Changes on 10 July – Shops in Scotland]

Government rules and guidelines are rapidly changing as the Coronavirus/Covid-19 pandemic evolves. As lockdown rules continue to be eased slightly in the UK, new safety measures are being introduced. One of these measures is wearing a face mask or covering which has become mandatory in some situations.

This LTB is to update Branches on the latest rules to be introduced on face masks and coverings in each of the four nations of the UK.

Scotland:

From Friday 10th July it will be mandatory to wear face coverings when entering shops throughout Scotland. This includes when going into Post Offices. Royal Mail managers in Scotland have received a communication from the RMG Head of Health advising them to ensure their workforce are briefed and aware of the new 'mandatory guidance' and how to obtain a facemask/covering. This will include drivers, collections and delivery staff visiting these businesses. CSP's (Customer Service Points) are classified as shops for the purposes of this guidance and therefore all customers using these facilities in Scotland will need to wear a face covering. Posters will be made available to display this requirement. Employees who work in Customer Service Points will be provided with facemasks/coverings from their manager. The penalty for not wearing a face covering in shops in Scotland is a £60 on the spot Fixed Penalty Notice.

Royal Mail Group state that they have a good stock of masks, gloves and wipes (Protective Equipment) and there should be no problem with compliance by Royal Mail Group (Royal Mail, Parcelforce and RMSS staff) in Scotland.

Public Transport:

Face coverings are mandatory across the UK (England, Scotland and Northern Ireland) when using public transport (bus, trams, train, ferry or plane) except in Wales where it is recommended.

England

In England it is now compulsory to wear a face covering on public transport and in hospitals - staff, outpatients and visitors must wear them. This has been in place since 15 June. You don't

need to wear a face covering whilst waiting for public transport but train stations are asking people to wear them as they enter the station. You may be refused travel if you do not wear a face covering on board public transport. As a last resort, you may be fined up to £100 for not wearing a covering.

Some people are exempt from the new rules on face coverings including:

- Children under 11 years old.
- People unable to put on, wear or take off a mask due to a disability.
- People with breathing difficulties.
- Those travelling with someone who relies on lip reading.

In circumstances where it is really necessary to eat or drink on public transport, you will be able to lower your mask to do so.

The rules may not apply to some types of public transport including cruise ships, school transport, taxis and private hire vehicles. We all have a responsibility to check the latest rules and guidance with whichever company you are travelling with as some, such as Uber, are enforcing their own rules on face coverings.

The government expects that the number of people travelling on public transport will continue to increase in the coming weeks and months as more workplaces and shops start to reopen. However, they still encourage people to avoid the use of public transport as much as possible and only use it for essential journeys, to make it easier to socially distance and stay safe on board. Those who can continue to work from home should do so in line with the government's advice.

Wales

The guidance in Wales is in line with the latest advice from the World Health Organisation. People in Wales are strongly encouraged to wear a face mask/covering on public transport and in other settings where social distancing is difficult such as crowded shops. As with all face mask advice, the Welsh Government clearly states that wearing a face mask should not be seen as a replacement or alternative to social distancing and hand washing.

Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland has similar rules which have not changed since the beginning of May. Wearing face coverings has not yet been made mandatory but it is recommended for short periods in places where social distancing is impossible, including public transport and retail environments.

World Health Organisation (WHO) advice

The World Health Organisation (WHO) states that the use of a mask can be helpful to limit the spread of potentially infectious droplets in some public settings where physical distancing is not possible. As such, it recommends the use of non-medical fabric masks for people in the general public where at least a one metre distance cannot be maintained, such as on public transport, in shops, or other confined or crowded environments. The WHO advises you should clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub, or soap and water, before putting a face covering on, and it should cover your nose and mouth, with no gaps between the mask and your face. You should avoid touching the mask while you are using it - and if you do, thoroughly wash your hands after. Replace the mask with a new one as soon as it is damp, and do not reuse single use masks.

Face Masks General

The clear advice from the WHO is that social distancing and hygiene measures are by far the most effective ways to protect yourself and others from COVID-19. The evidence remains clear that the most effective way to protect yourself and others from infection is to follow social

distancing rules, avoid touching surfaces and your face, and wash your hands regularly. Use sanitiser gel or disinfectant wipes where washing facilities are not available. Face coverings/masks are not a substitute for these measures, but in some circumstances where it might be difficult to stay 2m away from others, they may serve a useful protective purpose.

Yours sincerely



Dave Joyce
National Health, Safety & Environment Officer