

No. 583/2020

3 December 2020

Our Ref: E1/20

**To: All Branches**

Dear Colleagues,

**Royal Mail Group -Mandatory Face Coverings and Masks - Frequently Asked Questions and Answers (Version 3 and Addendums):**

LTB No. 544/2020 reported in detail on Royal Mail Group's decision to introduce 'Mandatory Face Masks' in all indoor workplaces as from Monday 9 November 2020.

A number of questions and enquiries were received by both Royal Mail Group and CWU/HQ which have been forwarded to Royal Mail Group Headquarters, National Head of Occupational Health where all the questions were collated and answered by Royal Mail Group's Occupational Health and Legal Team experts before being produced in the attached 'Mandatory Face Coverings And Masks - Frequently Asked Questions And Answers' document, Version 3 dated 26 November 2020 being the latest edition. A copy is attached for the information of all Branches, Regions and Health and Safety Reps. Two additional questions received after publication have been answered separately and are also attached for your information.

After the initial flood of questions and enquiries, many of which have been dealt with directly in written responses to Representatives, the number has now abated and support for mask wearing in offices across the country is generally very high. Will all those who sent communications with either single or lists of questions please accept this LTB and attached Q&A as a reply if you haven't received a response separately. Many of the questions received were repetitive and so these were grouped together and collated for a single response.

It is crucially important to recognise and remember that Royal Mail Group and the CWU fully agree that face coverings do not replace other important preventative measures such as increased hand hygiene, social distancing and increased cleaning; THESE MUST REMAIN IN PLACE.

It will not eliminate the risk in totality, but wearing a face covering can help workers stay safe by reducing the risk of infection significantly. This is even more important in situations where social distancing is difficult, with the onset of the flu season and where employees meet new people, such as Christmas temporary workers over the Christmas peak in crowded workplaces. The key benefits of face masks/face coverings in the workplace is to prevent the spread of the viral infection and defend the workforce from being a pandemic victim of what is an airborne illness, protecting both the wearer and the surrounding people – giving risk reduction from airborne droplet and aerosol transmission during exhalation.

Mandatory masks are one important component to a 'five-pronged', fully committed drive that's now needed with both RMG and CWU in agreement. These are:

- Improving Hygiene.
- Mandatory Face Coverings.
- Social Distancing (2M).
- Regular and Improved Cleaning (premises and vehicles and touchpoints).
- 'Workforce Testing' (This will be separately reported. CWU, RMG and the DHSC have agreed to run a Workplace Testing Pilot within a Royal Mail Delivery Office).

An update on the development of a Coronavirus/Covid-19 vaccine will be reported in a separate LTB.

Any further questions should be sent to Nicholas Burns Royal Mail Group Safety Health and Environment Engagement Manager: Email: [nicholas.burns@royalmail.com](mailto:nicholas.burns@royalmail.com)

Yours sincerely



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**National Health, Safety & Environment Officer**