

20<sup>th</sup> December 2020

## RICF Tier 4 Restrictions Guidance

RICF met earlier today in response to yesterday's Government announcement of a new Tier 4 for areas In England with high infection rates of COVID-19 alongside new additional restrictions being introduced in Scotland and Wales.

*The terminologies across borders vary slightly but the risk assessment processes, and overall approach is consistent for the railway, protecting rail workers and providing essential services.*

Rail workers continue to be classified as 'key workers' and it is important that the railway continues to operate to enable essential workers and those people that cannot work from home, such as construction workers, will be able to travel to/from work.

It is not intended to introduce amended timetables in Tier 4 areas or for cross border services which will continue to run as advertised and planned.

There are no changes to our RICF social distancing guidance previously issued. However, the situation will be closely monitored over the coming days and weeks to assess whether any additional mitigations are required based on the emerging scientific analysis of the new virus variant and in line with any updated guidance from the UK and Devolved Governments and advice from all Public Health Bodies across the UK.

Where risks have been identified in the workplace, it is essential employees and employers pay strict adherence to guidelines, i.e. PHE /Government and NHS, (including the adoption of the RICF social distancing principles wherever possible). These should then be followed, together with additional mitigations if necessary, to undertake specific tasks which have been subject to risk assessments.

Employees continue to have an active role in facilitating social distancing principles being maintained on the railway network. This includes provision of information, advice, signage, announcements, control of station entrances / gate-lines etc. as appropriate as well as through role modelling social distancing themselves. The expectation is that social distancing remains self-policing by the public and employees are not expected to enforce social distancing through physically intervening in potential conflict situations.

The Guidance for Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) Persons in Tier 4 is different to the other Tiers. Employees based in tier 4 areas who have been identified by their Local NHS Clinician/ Consultant / GP or employer as CEV and their role/duties mean they are unable to work from home, the employee will not be required to attend for work and will be regarded as 'sick. They will be eligible to receive their company sick pay entitlement in this period (i.e. not subject to reduction if entitlement becomes exhausted under contractual arrangements with any booked/rostered Annual Leave falling due, being taken).

All sickness absence related to COVID-19 giving rise to self-isolation to avoid passing on infection will continue to be excluded from company sickness absence monitoring procedures.

Our priority remains to protect and safeguard our employees and their families. To achieve this, we will comply with UK and Devolved Government's guidance and advice from all Public Health Bodies across the UK.

Employees must maintain strict individual and collective adherence to the best practice guidance of **'Hands, Face and Space'**. Without following this basic advice, you are placing your work colleagues and yourself unnecessarily at risk. We remind and strongly encourage employees to:



- Wash your hands regularly with soap or sanitiser
- Follow the social distancing rules in place
- Wear a face covering, over your nose and mouth, when carrying out tasks that require you to do so and when going into areas that require you to wear one
- Keep your work areas clean
- Respectfully ask your colleagues to keep their distance if there is no need for them to be in your space.

Employers and the Trade Unions will continue to work together including seeking further clarification from Government departments. Further RICF calls will take place up to and over the Christmas period to review the situation and consider whether any additional measures or guidance is considered necessary based on the emerging scientific analysis and any updated guidance from the UK and Devolved Governments and advice from all Public Health Bodies across the UK.

