

## International travel rules changed

**Last week we reported that those returning to the UK from abroad will need to test negative for coronavirus 72 hours before departure. Since then, further changes have occurred. We explore what employers should know below:**

- As of 4am on Monday 18 January 2021, the travel corridors into the UK have been removed.
- When a travel corridor was in place, it meant that arrivals from that country did not have to self-isolate when arriving to the UK.
- This change means that all UK arrivals - including all employees coming back from a holiday - will need to self-isolate for 10 days regardless of their country of departure, unless they can take a private test which may reduce this to 5 days.
- Employers may now be forced to deal with more self-isolation issues and should be reminded that Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) is not payable for travel-related quarantine.
- Employees might wish to cancel their holidays, and their pre-booked annual leave, because they will no longer be travelling.
- That said, employers are not required to agree to annual leave cancellations, so employees could still be required to take time off.
- Further, travellers from South (and Central) America, South Africa, Portugal, and Cape Verde have been banned from entering the UK due to fears of a new (likely more contagious) variant of the coronavirus.
- UK nationals and those with residence rights returning from abroad are exempt but they must self-isolate upon their return.
- Lastly, business directors bringing jobs and investment to the UK are no longer exempt from self-isolation rules.

### Government urged to strengthen furlough reach

The Trades Union Congress (TUC) is calling on the Government to introduce a temporary right to furlough for parents and those who are required to shield. This comes after a TUC survey on the challenges of managing work and childcare during lockdown found that 71% of those who applied for furlough, following the latest school closures, have had their requests rejected.

#### Did you know?

Furlough remains at an employer's discretion if their business is experiencing a wider downturn in demand. Therefore, they are not currently required to furlough staff, regardless of any coronavirus-related childcare issues they may be having.

### Minister's letter to employers on domestic abuse

Business Minister Paul Scully has written an open letter to employers offering guidance on how they can support people going through domestic abuse. The letter emphasises that employers are not expected to become domestic abuse specialists, but should be working to raise awareness, help affected staff to access support both internally and externally, as well as promote free online guidance.

#### Did you know?

Employers have a duty of care to staff when it comes to protecting and preventing them from domestic abuse in the workplace. It is therefore advisable for employers to implement domestic abuse policies and educate all staff on the issue.

### Tesco required by EAT to disclose staff pay

An employment appeal tribunal (EAT) has upheld the tribunal's decision by ordering the supermarket chain Tesco to disclose the pay information of its warehouse staff. The more than 3,700 claimants in this case are mostly female shop floor staff. They are arguing that the work they do is of equal value to that which is carried out by the mostly male warehouse staff who receive a higher hourly rate of pay.

#### Did you know?

Pay between men and women must be equal where the job and skills are the same/similar, the work is fairly evaluated to be equivalent, and where the work is of equal value but are not similar.

SSP is not available for travel-related quarantine so employers will need to find alternative ways of handling self-isolation periods when staff return from abroad. Our 24-hour Advisory Service is on hand to provide up-to-date guidance on this and more.

Please contact the 24 Hour Advice Service for advice on your specific situation before acting on the information in this publication.