

Health and Social Care PPE Risk & Incident Escalation Framework



The following framework must be followed to ensure consistent reporting and escalation of risks and incidents of inadequate PPE for members working in Health or Social Care settings. For more general advice on social distancing and PPE in other settings or questions relating to this framework please contact your UNISON branch (find here [UNISON Branch Finder](#)) or email yhgeneralenquiries@unison.co.uk

STEP 1 (of 7)

Understand your PPE requirements for your work setting

Health Settings	Social Care Settings
<p>Everyone: Maintain up to date understanding of latest Public Health England (PHE) PPE guidance. Whilst an issue does not need to be in breach of PHE guidelines to be raised and escalated, clarity is required at an early stage to confirm whether guidance has been adhered to. See Public Health England COVID-19 PPE Guidance</p>	
<p>Everyone: Understand PPE recommendations for specific health settings as set out in Table 1 - Table 2 - Table 3 - Table 4</p>	<p>Everyone: Understand PPE recommendations for social care settings as set out in Table 2</p>
<p>Everyone: Understand PHE definition of “possible case” (ie symptomatic) as related to above tables. See PHE COVID-19 Possible Cases</p>	

STEP 2 (of 7)

Identify and record specific risk concerns

Member: Where PPE is inadequate due to lack of or inappropriate equipment, expiry dates, failure to train / explain etc – write down:-

- i) Date / time / location PPE inadequate for work setting
- ii) Specifically what PPE should be provided for that setting and why
- iii) What PPE was missing or how is it inadequate
- iv) Whether the above constitutes a specific breach of PHE guidelines for that setting

STEP 3 (of 7)

continued overleaf

Raise urgent risk concerns with management & report to UNISON

Member: Having established specific inadequacy of PPE provision these details must be raised as an urgent risk with your line manager, or if not immediately available then the manager above them, giving the specific details recorded in step 2 i,ii,iii (& iv where applicable). Wherever possible this should be done verbally and then followed up immediately in writing.

This process can be completed individually, but where the risk affects colleagues then a collective written submission is more powerful, with a lead member identified to receive management response and to liaise with UNISON. The written submission should be copied via email to the UNISON Branch and yhgeneralenquiries@unison.co.uk. Details should also be raised with the national PPE disruption line on 0800 915 9967 (as well as and not instead of raising concerns with the employer).

STEP 3 (of 7)

continued from overleaf

Raise urgent risk concerns with management & report to UNISON

Branch: Details received from member must be recorded in Branch Covid19 incident log and member contacted to track management response / resolution and advise and support as appropriate. Branch to forward details to yhgeneralenquiries@unison.co.uk and liaise with RO as necessary for advice and support.

Region: Details received from member / branch must be recorded in Region Covid19 incident log. Where details are received directly by Region they will be forwarded to the Branch and RO. Log to be constantly monitored to track escalation steps & identify patterns of concern.

STEP 4 (of 7)

Escalate serious incident within employer and report to UNISON

See details overleaf...

STEP 4 (of 7)

Escalate serious incident within employer and report to UNISON

Health Settings	Social Care Settings
Member: If the urgent risk outlined under step 3 is not immediately resolved and there is an expectation that you place yourself in a work setting without adequate PPE then this becomes a serious incident and must be escalated as outlined below:	
Member: NHS and other health settings have well established H&S incident reporting systems (eg Datrix / IR1 form). You must urgently complete this process and submit to the employer. Retain a copy where possible and alert the UNISON branch copied to yhgeneralenquiries@unison.co.uk . You should also follow any specific Covid19 process established within your employer for the reporting of PPE concerns. Where the incident is not immediately resolved, continued risk to yourself or colleagues creates a serious ongoing incident which you must escalate without delay to the NHS Board Director or Company Director (private provider) with designated H&S responsibility.	Member: Social Care providers have varying procedures and practices for the reporting of incidents. Identify senior manager with designated H&S responsibility and clarify and follow the procedure for the reporting of a serious incident. Retain a copy where possible and alert the UNISON branch copied to yhgeneralenquiries@unison.co.uk and keep UNISON informed of any response. Where the incident is not immediately resolved, continued risk to yourself or colleagues creates a serious ongoing incident which you must escalate without delay to the Chief Executive and / or Director with designated H&S responsibility.
Branch: Branch: Details received from member must be recorded in Branch Covid19 incident log and member contacted to track management response / resolution and advise and support as appropriate. Branch to forward details to yhgeneralenquiries@unison.co.uk and liaise with RO as necessary for advice and support. Branch to offer member support to ensure escalation of incident within the employer Region: Details received from member / branch must be recorded in Region Covid19 incident log. Where details are received directly by Region they will be forwarded to the Branch and RO. Log to be constantly monitored to track escalation steps & identify patterns of concern.	

STEP 5 (of 7)

Escalate a serious ongoing incident to external authorities

Health Settings	Social Care Settings
Branch / Region: Where a serious ongoing incident is not resolved by the employer it must be urgently escalated by UNISON to the relevant commissioning and enforcement authorities. Every action recorded in Region Covid19 incident log.	
Region: work with Branch and UNISON Centre to escalate to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any Commissioning organisations• Local Council Health Lead• Regulatory bodies (STP and SPF leads, NHS England & NHS Employers• Local MP's & Mayor• Where a lack of PPE and / or short staffing means that staff cannot meet the assessed needs of service users this must also be escalated to CQC	Region: work with Branch and UNISON Centre to escalate to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commissioning organisation (Council Chief Executive, Council Leader and Adult Social Care Portfolio Holder – plus NHS Chief Executive where jointly commissioned)• Local MP's & Mayor• Where a lack of PPE and / or short staffing means that staff cannot meet the assessed needs of service users this must also be escalated to CQC

STEP 6 (of 7)

Escalate RIDDOR to HSE

Possible Covid19 exposure in workplace due to “dangerous occurrence”, Covid19 diagnosis caused by exposure at work, Covid19 death following occupational exposure must be reported by employer to HSE under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases & Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR).

Whilst trade unions cannot formerly make a RIDDOR report of an employer UNISON Region can demand, expose and invite the prosecution of employers who fail to report under RIDDOR.

STEP 7 (of 7)

Members who refuse unsafe work

Section 44 of ERA 96 protects employee’s right to withdraw from a workplace that is unsafe. Whilst such action cannot be taken lightly, in particular within a Health or Social Care setting, the right does exist.

If you have complied with steps 1-4 above and remain at risk then as a UNISON Member you should contact your UNISON Branch or Region to discuss the immediate situation and possible additional actions and their implications whilst UNISON continues to escalate the incident through steps 5-6.