



People and Organisational Development Manager Bulletin

COVID-19 restrictions remain for our workforce



You will be aware that the Scottish Government announced that the country moves to beyond Level 0 from Monday 9 August and staff will be keen to know how that impacts on them at work.

Our priority is to protect the health and safety of staff and service-users given that positive Covid-19 cases are still being recorded. The partnership to deliver the vaccination programme continues at pace and real progress has been made in reducing and mitigating the risks that Covid-19 presents to all.

We have previously highlighted to you that even though restrictions are reducing across Scotland, the council will continue to implement a range of measures to mitigate the risk of transmission of the virus in the workplace for at least the next three months until 1 November 2021, with a series of review points planned to assess our shared progress and refine as appropriate.

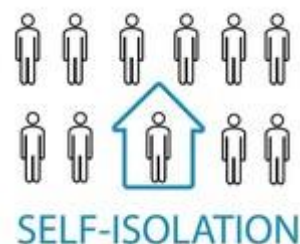
As the First Minister made clear in the announcement yesterday, home working will continue to remain the default for those who are able to do so. In recent weeks our planning was based on this likely scenario as it remains vital that we continue to avoid large numbers of people congregating in the workplace. These protective measures avoid the risk of transmission of Covid-19 in the workplace, the impact of which could be significant upon staff, their families and the people who rely upon the services we provide. The message therefore remains clear, if you can do your work from home then please continue to do so and continue to support your staff to do so.

For staff who do need to work from a council building they should continue to maintain two-metre physical distancing within all council buildings, depots and facilities, as well as the wearing of face coverings while accessing/egressing and moving around in buildings. For those roles that require it, appropriate PPE should continue to be worn in line with relative risk assessments. The two-metre distancing remains important at this stage as many of the staff have public-facing roles and may need to explain to members of the public that we are continuing to maintain two-metre distancing for our shared safety.

More information can be found on [myNL](#).

Self Isolation and Annual Leave

If an employee is required to self-isolate prior to taking annual leave and the period of self-isolation overlaps with the annual leave period, the employee will be able to cancel all or part of their annual leave through iTrent with the prior authorisation of their line manager. The employee should rearrange their annual leave to be taken at a future date that meets with the exigencies of the service and managers are encouraged to accommodate periods of annual leave wherever possible.



If an employee is required to self-isolate whilst they are on annual leave and they can evidence that Test and Protect have told them to self-isolate, the employee can claim back the period of annual leave that they were required to self-isolate.

The above does not apply to employees who choose to travel abroad and are required to self-isolate or quarantine on return.

Teaching Staff Only

If a teacher or music instructor is required to self-isolate due to contact with Covid-19, and this has severely limited the ability to socialise and for recreation, the employee will accrue compensatory leave as follows: For every 5 days of annual leave within the self-isolation period the employee will accrue 2 days of compensatory leave. This is subject to a maximum credit of 8 such days accruing in any one leave year. In agreement with the council, this compensatory leave shall be taken by the employee following his/her return to work. The timing of this leave is subject to the overriding needs of the service.

Employee Testing



We are encouraging all staff to test regularly for Covid-19 even if they don't have symptoms to help stop the potential spread of the virus.

Around one in three people with COVID-19 have no symptoms but may be passing the virus on to loved ones, friends and the wider community without knowing it.

By encouraging our workforce to undertake regular testing, we can help identify positive cases more quickly and break the chain of transmission. Testing means we can help protect each other, service users and enable us to continue providing the vital services we deliver for the people of North Lanarkshire.

Covid-19 lateral flow testing kits are available to everyone, even if they don't have symptoms. You can also order them online or pick them up from one of our local mobile or pop-up testing centres.

You can also receive an immediate test at our asymptomatic testing site at Airdrie Leisure Centre between 9:30am to 5.30pm - 7 days a week. You will receive your results in around 45 minutes. Any positive cases will then be confirmed by PCR test.

Where applicable, managers should support requests from staff to take time off work to attend a testing site.

By testing twice weekly, we can all help protect each other. For more information on testing click [here](#).

Fire Safety

Recently there have been 2 fire alarm activations within a Council building which the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service have had to attend. In both instances this was as a result of microwaves being used to cook food and left unattended.



Please ensure if you are using a microwave within a Council building you remain present for the duration of the time the microwave is on.

Fire Warden Training

Training courses are available for a variety of dates for fire evacuation wardens. To book a place please log on to the learning management system. [Log in to the site \(learningpool.com\)](#)

Payroll Closing Date for Temporary Teachers Payrun



Due to a system upgrade by our software providers, iTrent will be unavailable on Friday 20th August 2021.

This requires us to make the following change to our deadlines. The payroll closing date for the temporary teachers payrun has moved from the 13th to the 12th

August. Temporary teachers will not be able to go into iTrent to claim hours on the 12th for payment on the 26th August.

Updated Faster Payment Process

The process for requesting a 'faster payment' for an employee has been streamlined to ensure consistency and to avoid any further delays in payment being made where an underpayment in the employee's basic salary has occurred. The Service Level Agreement is 3 days for the payment to reach employees bank accounts from when the request is received in the Faster Payment Mailbox.



Managers are reminded that a faster payment should be by exception only as this payment (usually) incurs a charge to the employing service. The form also requires to be approved by an authorised signatory that has permission to authorise a 'Payment Request Out with Payrun'.

Management of Annual Leave



Just a reminder to encourage all staff to take their annual leave in this calendar year to allow for rest and relaxation.

Normal carry forward arrangements to the end of January are in place however staff should not carry leave beyond this date unless service demands have precluded staff from taking leave.

Recording absences

When updating the system with employees fit note details, managers should **not** use the absence end date field to record when a fit note expires.



The employee only should complete their absence end date field when the absence has finished, and they have returned to work. Fit note information should be recorded on 'Certification details' relating to the sickness.

Sickness absence stages in iTrent have also now be updated to reflect the new Supporting Attendance Policy. Previous stages are still visible, but should no longer be used (These are shown as ZZ - Do not Use).

For more information on how to record absences, please click below:

[Recording sickness absence](#)

[Recording COVID absence](#)

Ending an Absence on iTrent



Sickness Absence (including COVID-19 related sickness absence)

Line Managers are asked to remind employees that they need to end their sickness absence through mySelf as soon as they return work. Guidance for employees on How to End a Sickness Absence on myself can be found [here](#).

If a sickness absence is not ended the employee will continue to receive sick pay which could impact on their earnings, and the absence will continue to contribute to the service absence levels. Therefore, line managers are also asked to review sickness absence reports on a regular basis to ensure that there are no employees still showing

as absent when they have returned to work, and if there is to input the end date of the absence through myTeam.

Other Absence i.e. Self Isolating – Test & Protect request

Where an employee has been absent due to a period of special leave, or some other absence reason (excluding sickness absence) line managers are responsible for ending the period of absence through myTeam. This is particularly important where the employee has initially been absent due to a period of COVID-19 self-isolation and has not returned to work within the expected timeframe. In these circumstances the 'other absence' should be ended, and the employee should be placed on sickness absence with iTrent updated accordingly.

As with sickness absence it is important that line managers review 'other absence' reports to ensure that employees absences are recorded and managed appropriately.

Industrial Injury/Disease

Section 5.7 of the Supporting Attendance Policy and Procedure provides some information on absence due to an Industrial Injury/Disease.

A supplementary guidance has been developed to assist managers in applying the correct process in relation to this and can be found [here](#).

If you require further information on this guidance, please email employeeerelationsteam@northlan.gov.uk



Supporting Attendance Training



Whether you have 1 staff member or 100, all line managers are reminded of the importance of undertaking the Supporting Attendance Training as this will help you with practical application of the new Supporting Attendance Policy & Procedure.

The training is available on [LearnNL](#) and there are three elements to this: e-learning module, online masterclass session (with Q&A) and additional workshops in relation to stress at work, including how to complete the stress assessment and Let Talk about Mental Health.

Line Managers are also asked to familiarise themselves with the new [Supporting Attendance Policy and Procedure](#) in advance of the training.

If you require further information on the new Supporting Attendance Policy and Procedure, please email employeeerelationsteam@northlan.gov.uk

Recruitment and Selection e-Learning

We have been working hard to create new Recruitment and Selection Training for managers. This training is mandatory for all managers who are involved in the recruitment and selection process.



The e-training is delivered virtually and is based on modules. The beauty of the modular fashion of virtual training is that you can revisit any module you need to during your recruitment journey.

The recruitment team are continually working to develop the recruitment processes and in particular to reduce the amount of administration and time to complete forms and move towards digital solutions. We would encourage Managers to review the training to check nothing has changed since the last time you were involved in the recruitment and selection process.

Please login to [LearnNL](#) to access the recruitment and selection training.

The recruitment team are always on hand and happy to deal with enquiries that you have in your recruitment and selection journey, please e-mail ESC-RecruitmentTeam@northlan.gov.uk.

Authorisation of payments via myTeam



Please ensure that when authorising payroll related claims via myTeam that you have a responsibility to ensure the claims have been fully and accurately completed. You must also ensure the claim reflects the

hours worked and only input once. Please retain relevant documentation where appropriate.

Also check that any additional or casual hours worked are being claimed under the correct position and element. This will ensure the payment is paid at the correct hourly rate.

Please advise employees to claim their hours using the 24-hour clock format when claiming hours through the mySelf portal.

The current year payroll schedules are held within MyNL and the below link will furnish managers and employees with confirmation of payment dates, claim periods and when each payroll is available for input. <https://mynl.co.uk/download/795/new-pyol23-process/6418/pay-schedules-inc-itrent-opening-closing-dates.pdf>

Sending information to the ESC

Please remember to send information to the ESC as soon as it is available. This is particularly important where there are changes to an employee's circumstances, for example they are leaving, retiring, changing their hours, going on maternity leave etc. There has been an increase in overpayments recently because notifications of this nature have been late in arriving at the ESC.



iTrent Updates



Business Objects Upgrade We migrated to a new version of Business Objects on 6th August. During the transition period (4 weeks), any scheduled reports you receive will be issued twice and we apologise for any inconvenience this may cause.

This allows us to verify that the migration has been successful and pick up any anomalies which may occur. If you notice any differences in the reports, please email iTrentReporting@northlan.gov.uk with any concerns.

New Earnings Reports There have been improvements to the earnings reports issued to managers prior to each pay period. These now include Year to Date and Rolling Year earnings, split by basic, overtime and other payments. We hope that you find these updates useful and are happy to receive any feedback you may have.

Improved look workflow notifications We are in the process of updating workflows that employees and managers receive, modernising the look of the notification and adding additional functionality, such as the ability to authorise requests directly from the email.

Time and Expense requests will also show calculated values as part of the manager notification, which allows them to see the financial value of any claim. We hope that you find these improvements helpful and welcome any feedback you may have.

iTrent Chatbot The iTrent chatbot is now available for download (to both work and personal mobile devices) and offers a user friendly interface for employees to request leave, book flexi and ask a variety of HR related questions.

Managers can also opt in to receive employees requests directly to the app, allowing for the authorisation of leave requests in just a couple of clicks from within the app. More details can be found at [mySelf/myTeam Guides – My NL](#).

Claiming overtime via mySelf

Work is underway to roll out overtime claims via mySelf for Health & Social Care staff. It is planned to start this from early September beginning with a pilot area within Wishaw Social Work Locality and Cambusnethan Children's House.



New shopping discount platform goes live



We're excited to announce that the new shopping discounts platform, available to all NLC colleagues is now available.

The new discount platform offers you money off everything from regular food shops, to online shopping, to that expensive bit of tech, or a family holiday.

Sound interesting? Find out more [here](#).

Money off my shopping? I'm in! [Take me to registration!](#)

If you have any questions, please email: workwellNL@northlan.gov.uk

MyNL

MyNL remains your first stop shop for all people policies, guidance, forms and documents. It is regularly updated and widely used. See some links to key pages below for your information:



[Latest Staff Information](#)

[Managers Guidance](#)

[MySelf/MyTeam guides](#)

[Teachers T&Cs](#)

[CLNL Staff T&C's](#)



If you can't find what you are looking for on [myNL](#), call the ESC People Helpdesk on 01698 403151 or [email us](#) on ESC-HelpDeskTeam@northlan.gov.uk



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