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Health and Safety Bulletin

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NORVIRUS

The Norovirus infection is spreading rapidly across the UK. This infection circulates every winter and affects thousands of people many of which will be UNISON members. The infection is easily transmitted from person to person, and comprises the following symptoms - vomiting, diarrhoea and fever. The incubation period is between 24 hours and 48 hours. Employees presenting the above symptoms should be allowed to go home and remain there for a further 48 hours during which time the infection should clear. For those handling food such as school meals they should not return to such duties for 72 hours. It is essential that good hygiene is maintained as this will assist in controlling the infection. There is no specific treatment for this infection and therefore it will run its course. It is important to drink plenty of fluids which will help to prevent dehydration.

The following web link will provide information useful to managers and safety reps. It offers advice regarding when it may be considered safe for infected staff to return to work.

[https://www.grosvenorhealth.com/index.php?id=56&tx_mininews_pi1\[showUid\]=69&cHash=85c18bab80](https://www.grosvenorhealth.com/index.php?id=56&tx_mininews_pi1[showUid]=69&cHash=85c18bab80)

What branches can do

Branch safety officers should draw this advice to the attention of safety reps, other members and the employers.

Branches with intranet web pages for its organisations should post this information there to aid publicity

WORKPLACE HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE GUIDE

The Health and Safety Executive has produced a revised version of the Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations. This guide covers a wide and varied range of basic health, safety and welfare issues and applies to most places where there are UNISON members. The leaflet gives a brief outline of the following requirements of the Workplace Regulations:

- Requirements under these Regulations
- Interpretation of the Regulations

Health

Ventilation

Temperatures in indoor workplaces

Work in hot or cold environments

Lighting

Cleanliness and waste materials

Room dimensions and space

Workstations and seating

Safety

Maintenance

Floors and traffic routes

Falls into dangerous substances

Transparent or translucent doors, gates or walls and windows

Non-transparent windows

Non-transparent doors and gates

Escalators and moving walkways

Welfare

Sanitary conveniences and washing facilities

Drinking water

Accommodation for clothing and facilities for changing

Facilities for resting and eating meals

The guide can be found at <http://shift.org.uk/~employers/line-managers-resource.html>

What branches can do

Branches are to ensure that employers and safety reps are aware of the revised guidance.

Branches are to download the guide on their intranet pages where they have them.

TUC GENDER AND OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH 'GENDER-SENSITIVITY' CHECKLIST

The TUC's Gender and Occupational Safety and Health (G&OSH) Working Party upon which UNISON has a seat have produced a checklist to help safety reps and others check whether their workplace health & safety policies and practices are gender sensitive. Please see the link below to view and download copies. http://www.tuc.org.uk/h_and_s/tuc-14179-f0.cfm

What branches can do

Branch safety officers should draw this advice to the attention of safety reps, other members and the employers.