

# COVID-19

Guidance for Ark site users

**Date of issue: 4 May 2021 @ 19:30**

We continue to take the safety and wellbeing of our staff, clients and partners very seriously and therefore as a business, we have decided to take additional precautions regarding Coronavirus. Please note that in some areas the Ark guidance goes beyond the HMG public guidance.

All Ark sites are open for business and all critical services are being provided as normal. **We will continue to update you as and when our guidance changes alongside the government guidance, however, for now, we continue to restrict access to site to essential visits only.**

We continue to measure footfall at all of our sites; this enables us to ensure that we can provide the safest working environment for all, whilst taking into consideration the increased demand country wide for sanitation products and the priority of the NHS in resourcing.

Our staffing levels remain good at all sites and we thank you for your support so far in restricting your access to essential visits only.

**Therefore, for the protection of service provision you must continue to restrict access to our sites to those of your staff whose attendance there is essential for the installation and operation of your systems housed at that particular data centre.**

## **Use of PPE at Ark sites:**

We mandate the wearing of face coverings in our common areas such as receptions, corridors and kitchens. However, face coverings may be removed when stationary at your desks providing social distancing can be maintained. For Client demised offices/Data Rooms face coverings remain optional, although we do recommend wearing them. To protect the environment please use a washable face covering when you can. If you are exempt from wearing a face covering, please carry an exemption card/lanyard.

Ark reserve the right to check identity of individuals which may require temporary removal of the mask or covering. Please be prepared to be politely challenged or reminded to wear a face covering if Security or Ark Management notice non-compliance.

Clients and other third parties have a duty to undertake their own risk assessments for their staff. We note that many organisations (including Ark) are undertaking risk assessments for tasks where individuals have to work within 1m of each other. If those risk assessments conclude that PPE is required for any activity, it is the employer's responsibility to provide that PPE to their staff.

If you wish to enforce a face covering policy within your demised space, you must advise ASD (01225 818999) to ensure that our staff and cleaners are aware of any changes in policy and wear a face covering in areas that they are required to do so.

**Preventing the spread of infection:**

2m social distancing remains in place across all sites and must be adhered to, only where 2m cannot be achieved, please observe a minimum of 1m-plus, whilst taking steps to minimise the risk of transmission. Please see Available facilities & etiquette for more information.

Hosts are responsible for their visitors adhering to the COVID rules on site and so please ensure you share this guidance in advance of your visitors attending.

Public Health England recommends the following precautions are taken to help prevent people from catching and spreading COVID-19. We respectfully request that you follow these guidelines whilst attending our sites:

- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water. Washing your hands is a priority and please use alcohol-based sanitisers as an additional precaution. This is particularly important after travelling on public transport.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve when you cough or sneeze.
- Dispose of tissues straightaway and wash your hands with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds.
- Wear a face covering when in communal areas. These may be removed when stationary at your desks providing social distancing can be maintained.
- Avoid close contact with people who are unwell.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Conduct regular lateral flow testing to prevent the spread of the virus. More info under Testing section below.

Ark have therefore:

- increased our cleaning activities and are paying particular attention to areas of contact and high trafficked areas. This includes a twice weekly precautionary Clorox clean of all general access areas.
- provided extensive signage to assist and encourage prudent behaviours and safe use of the facilities.
- provided sanitising gel dispensers in addition to our normal facilities and encourage all attendees to our sites to make full use of them.
- amended security requirements for external pin pads – more information below in Guidance concerning site attendance.

### **Your team:**

In line with government guidance, please:

- do not travel between your data centre sites, particularly if you have more than one facility with Ark
- restrict access to your data centre sites to those of your staff whose attendance there is essential for the installation and operation of your systems housed at that particular data centre
- where you operate a shift pattern for your data centre staff, maintain a separation between shifts.

### **Guidance concerning site attendance:**

All Ark sites are open for business and all critical services are being provided as normal. However, given the critical nature of the facilities, please do not make unnecessary visits to our sites; you must restrict access to our sites to those of your staff whose attendance there is essential for the installation and operation of your systems housed at that particular data centre.

Whether or not a visit is essential we continue to leave at your discretion at this time but please note that until further notice Ark staff will be supporting non critical visits or non-statutory audits remotely wherever possible.

### **Current restrictions:**

You should follow the government advice that is in place. Please continue to follow the above guidance on “site attendance” and “Your team” regarding attendance at Ark sites.

### **Entrances to Site:**

We continue to take the Health and Safety of our staff, clients and partners very seriously and as such we have decided to make the following changes to site entrance:

- You will no longer be required to enter your pin on the external pinpad turnstiles or doors. These now only require a swipe of your card.
- Upon entry to the building, prior to entering the meson door, disinfectant wipes are available for you to wipe your hands and the pinpad prior to use. (Additional cleaning remains in place, this is just an extra precaution)
- Pins, biometrics and card swipes are still required to enter the meson doors to uphold our high level of security at site.
- Signage will remind you to wash your hands as soon as possible at the nearest sink with hot water and soap. Hand washing guidance remains in these areas.
- Protective Perspex screens have been put up in all front of site reception desks to protect staff and visitors and to maintain social distancing.

**When not to attend our sites:** You must not attend our sites (even if you have an access pass), or send colleagues or suppliers to attend our sites (even if they have access passes), if the person attending or anyone in their household or support bubble, to the best of your/their knowledge:

- has any of the COVID-19 symptoms, which are:
  - Fever
  - Cough – a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours. If you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual.
  - Loss or change to your sense of smell and/or taste or;
- has been in close contact with anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or has had any of the above symptoms in the last 14 days.

If you suffer any of the above symptoms, we recommend you self-isolate, do not attend a GP surgery, pharmacy and hospital. Instead contact NHS 111.

If you or any of your colleagues' experience symptoms whilst on site or once you have attended site, please advise ASD immediately to ensure we can complete a track and trace and if required, do any precautionary cleaning.

#### **NHS Test and Trace Application**

Ark encourages the use of the NHS Test and Trace Application. If you test positive for Coronavirus, or are contacted by the NHS and asked to isolate, please do so immediately according to the NHS advice on isolation below and advise ASD on 01225 818999. We will then trace your steps if you have attended site and take all necessary precautions.

#### **Testing**

##### **Regular lateral flow testing:**

We request everyone attending site to conduct twice weekly home lateral flow testing. You must do so by ordering for collection or delivery from the government website [here](#). Preferably you should test on Sundays and Wednesday nights/Thursdays; especially if attending site. By conducting home testing kits, you will minimise the chances of bringing the virus to site.

Regardless of your result, you should upload it to the NHS Test and Trace function by following the instructions instead of the testing box.

##### **Immediate testing if you have symptoms:**

Anyone showing symptoms of the virus can apply to be tested using a home kit or at one of the walk in or drive through locations, if you are showing symptoms and would like to be tested, please go to <https://self-referral.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/> for further information and to book.

#### **Coronavirus Vaccination**

Ark support the vaccination program and encourage everyone to book and attend their appointments when contacted to do so. Even once you have received your vaccinations, you must continue to follow the above guidance and wear a face covering in common areas.

### **When booking in visitors**

Until further notice, we require all non-permanent card holders (visitors), to complete the health screening questionnaire prior to attending site.

As this will need to be completed in advance of attending site – we ask that you send the attached questionnaire to each visitor and have them complete and return it to you prior to raising your visitor access request. Please then attach a completed questionnaire (for each of your visitors) to your VA portal request or email request. Please ensure you issue the latest questionnaire to your visitors. If in doubt, please contact [ASD@arkdatacentres.co.uk](mailto:ASD@arkdatacentres.co.uk) for the latest copy.

Until these questionnaires are received, your visitor request will not be processed. If we have any concerns with the responses on the questionnaire, access to site for the individual will be denied for 10 days, for those known to have been in contact with someone who is infected.

**In instances of short notice visitors:** If you do not have the name of the visitor coming to site (in instances of deliveries or suppliers for example) and/or in instances of any emergency or short notice visitor access requests, questionnaires will be issued for completion upon arrival at site.

### **Available facilities & etiquette**

When using our facilities you must follow the rules in this document and respect the personal space of others. Ark may restrict the site access of individuals who do not comply or, where we regard it necessary or advisable, exclude them from site altogether.

All facilities remain fully functional and maintained but the following restrictions on use now apply:

- **Ark meeting facilities:** these will be available for use from the 10<sup>th</sup> May. The meetings rooms have been risk assessed and limited capacity numbers have been enforced. These numbers are available from ASD or are noted on the meeting room door. Please contact ASD to book and advise how many people are required to attend upon booking.
- **Kitchen facilities:** these remain open but only for the preparation of food and drink and on a one in – one out basis. You may not congregate or stay in these facilities to eat or drink – please use the facilities for as short a time as possible and then return to your office or vehicle to eat or drink. Signs are on kitchen doors to advise only one person should be in a kitchen at once – please abide by these numbers.
- **WC and showers:** these remain open as usual.
- **Reception and other public areas:** please do not congregate or wait in these areas. In the NOC, we will not generally permit entry, if we do, it will be operated on a one in, one out basis until further notice. Signage will advise. During busy times, this may require you to queue. If you require any special assistance, please advise the ASD or advise during the VA Process.

- **Delivery bays and storage cages:** these remain open as usual.
- **Social Distancing:** When using Ark facilities, please observe the recommended 2m distance , only where 2m cannot be maintained, please observe 1m-plus, whilst taking steps to minimise the risk of transmission, this includes when waiting to enter or leave. If you are struggling to maintain social distancing in your office, please contact the Ark Service Desk (ASD) as we may be able to assist with a temporary space to help you to maintain your safety and separation in your offices. However, we have limited space available and so if there is space available for you, this arrangement will only be a temporary.
- **Used C-19 PPE or other potentially contaminated items:** You must not leave these items to be cleared up by others, including by our cleaning staff. If you need to dispose of these items on site, please contact Ark Service Desk for assistance.

For Ark staff at site, we are advising that they avoid unnecessary physical contact, travel or close proximity (less than 2m) to others and we ask that you understand and respect that guidance.

#### **Escorting and Smarhands**

- **Smarhands:** The smarhands service remains available for use but the smart hands staff will now only work physically independently of other staff.
- **Escorting:** See above regarding essential visits to site. Ark will only provide an escort where the visit is essential and cannot be supported by client staff who are already working on site during that shift.

#### **What to do if you feel unwell while at site**

If you start to feel unwell whilst attending one of our sites or you discover you may have been exposed to the virus, please move to an isolated area at least two metres away from other people and notify Ark Service Desk on 01225 818999, who will endeavour to find you a room. Please then call NHS 111 and outline your symptoms.

#### **Next steps & queries**

We will continue to monitor regular advice from UK Government, Public Health England and the World Health Organisation (WHO) and we will update our guidance appropriately as the situation develops.

Please ensure your White List and contact lists are up to date and please ensure that this communication is given to all team members who will be working on our site on your behalf.

Customers may contact their CDEs or email [ASD@arkdatacentres.co.uk](mailto:ASD@arkdatacentres.co.uk) with any queries.

Suppliers may contact their Ark point of contact or ASD with any queries.

#### **Breaches of this guidance**

If you see anyone not adhering to the above guidance, please advise ASD or Security who will be able to assist.

**Useful links:**

Government latest advice: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

NHS public facing information – the first port of call for the public  
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

NHS Guidance on Self-isolation: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-people-with-confirmed-or-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

Travel advice for those travelling and living overseas: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus>

**VERSION HISTORY**

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24 March 2020	3.0	SCB	Updated in line with guidance
8 April 2020	4.0	LS	Updated in line with changes
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19 May 2020	7.0	LS	Updated with latest guidance
18 June 2020	8.0	LS	Updated with latest guidance
30 July 2020	9.0	LS	Updated with latest guidance
16 October 2020	10.0	LS	Updated with latest guidance
3 November 2020	11.0	LS & SCB	Updated with latest guidance
21 December 2020	12.0	LS	Updated with latest guidance
21 December 2020	13.0	LS	Updated with latest guidance
5 January 2021	14.0	LS	Updated with latest guidance
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