



JTU04-2021

11 January 2021

JOINT UNION COVID SAFETY ACTION PLAN

Government Advisors are now saying that we are at a most critical stage with regards to Covid. Their directive is that all unnecessary contact between individuals must cease. As frontline critical keyworkers there is clearly a balance to be struck between this and the crucial job staff in Probation do to protect the public and support people.

However, at present it is clear that HMPPS is not managing to get the balance right due to overly complicated guidance. The three unions have therefore presented a clear action plan to the Director General for Probation in HMPPS to keep staff, service users and the public safe.

We are calling on the Director General to ensure that this action plan is put into place with immediate effect in order to comply with the latest Public Health stipulation.

1. A clear unambiguous message to go to all Regions and CRCs that all face to face contact with colleagues, statutory partners and service users must cease immediately unless Gold Command, following Trade Union Consultation, has determined there is an over-riding risk to public protection
2. All face-to-face group work and unpaid work to be suspended
3. Multi-site working only to be used in exceptional circumstances where it is necessary for public protection. This includes a review of all contractor and partner agency staff
4. All CRCs to be instructed with regard to 1 and 2 above via HMPPS Commercial Team
5. Where APs remain open safe occupancy levels to be reviewed in consultation with the Trade Unions
6. Prison OMU attendance to cease for NPS staff unless specific public protection issues pertain which will be agreed between Regions and unions

7. HMPPS to negotiate the following as a matter of urgency with HMCTS:
 - a. Virtual hearings to be the default
 - b. the suspension of all breach court proceedings
 - c. where courts do sit by absolute exception
 - i. temperature testing of all court users
 - ii. the removal of NPS staff from any court without physical screening to protect staff/court users

8. Unions to agree all exceptions to the above positions with HMPPS

ADVICE FOR MEMBERS

If you believe that you are being asked to work in a way that is dangerous to your health, safety or wellbeing in relation to Covid, please speak as a matter of urgency to your local union representative or branch. The unions are pressing HMPPS to put the action plan above in place as a matter of urgency. Your protection in the workplace is our highest priority.