

Members Living with People who are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable

As a result of Trade Union representations the following has been sent to Probation and Prison Leaders.

Further guidance for supporting colleagues who live with people who are clinically extremely vulnerable

Given the increased community prevalence of Covid, the number of outbreaks in prison establishments, and the high risk environment of prisons, probation and approved premises, staff who live with people who are clinically extremely vulnerable should be working from home. Guidance around the clinically extremely vulnerable can be found on the linked guidance.

Line managers are expected to be creative about what work can reasonably be undertaken at home, for example, even if the member of staff doesn't have access to an official laptop, they may be able to undertake online training using their own IT. Reducing footfall generally in prisons and probation premises will help to reduce the risk of transmission.

Where there are no options for working from home, line managers should take a very cautionary and compassionate approach to risk assessments for those staff who live with people who are clinically extremely vulnerable.

Recognising the risks that Covid presents in our workplaces, the risk assessment must ensure that as an employer we can take all necessary precautions to safeguard individuals living with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable. Support from HR, health and safety and trade union colleagues must be made available to support the risk assessment process if required. If the required safeguards cannot be achieved then the member of staff must not be in the workplace. Governors and NPS managers have the discretion to allow paid special leave where appropriate and should consider this.

It is important that we recognise that for some colleagues home life is greatly affected by measures they are taking to keep loved ones safe, and we should creatively seek measures to support their emotional wellbeing. We also know that some colleagues are struggling with working from home and it is important to take into account their views when completing the risk assessments.