

Update to customers 25 March 2020

Following the announcement by the government on 23 March which introduced increased social distancing measures, we have reviewed how we best continue to support you and the wider NHS whilst ensuring that our colleagues, customers and patients remain safe. Our priority is to ensure that our customers have the correct support to continue to provide vital patient care, as well as minimising the risks of unnecessary contact during this time.

We're working to support the NHS in whatever way we can, locally and nationally alongside colleagues in NHS England and Improvement, our suppliers and customers.

When to contact us

Please contact us via our FM helpdesk on **0808 196 2045** for the following:

- to report an emergency or urgent FM issue (see below for more information)
- to notify us of positive cases of COVID-19 at one of our buildings. We ask that you inform our reception colleagues of any procedures you have introduced to deal with patients who attend with symptoms of COVID-19.
- to notify us of any segregation/cohort areas of in-patient treatment established in one of our buildings, so we can effectively plan resources to support this.
- if you require assistance with repurposing space to better support clinical needs (see below for more information)

You can keep up to date via our website at www.property.nhs.uk/covid19.

Changes to reporting facilities management jobs

In order to maintain our capacity for essential work and to minimise unnecessary travel and contact for our colleagues, customers and patients, we are prioritising emergency and urgent FM jobs only. By doing this we can ensure that we have the ability to focus our efforts where they are really needed and for longer.

We ask that during this time our customers help us to prioritise by only logging jobs that help you to continue to deliver vital patient care. Generally, these jobs can be described as:

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| Emergency | <p>The issue is preventing core services from being delivered at your site and/or presents an immediate risk to people/safety/security/ structure.</p> <p>If not attended to immediately will endanger the health and safety of people, causes major damage to buildings or affect building security.</p> |
| Urgent | <p>The issue does not present an immediate threat to the health and safety of people, or the fabric of the building but could do so if not attended within 24 hours.</p> <p>If not attended to within 24 hours the issue will impact the ability to deliver core services at site and result in a risk to safety of persons or integrity of the sites, plant or equipment.</p> |

Our [guide to logging jobs](#) is a handy infographic which gives clear examples of emergency/urgent issues as well as non-urgent issues.

You can log emergency and urgent jobs by calling our FM Helpdesk on **0808 196 2045**. We will continuously monitor this approach and will review when it is safe to resume logging non-urgent jobs.

At this point in time, our helpdesk will not be processing non-urgent issues and we ask that you log these at a later date.

Cleaning services

There is significant demand for our specialist clinical cleaning capability at present. Where we provide cleaning services to you, our facilities management teams will be able to identify the appropriate level of cleaning required aligned to the [Public Health England guidance](#).

We are in the process of training more of our cleaning teams to be able to support the cleaning of in-patient areas where patient(s) have suspected or confirmed COVID-19 and can offer this support to customers where training has been completed. Please speak to your local contact or our helpdesk to notify them where you have set up designated segregation and cohorting areas for suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patients so that our teams can ensure cleaning regimes are re-aligned to meet requirements where possible. We aim to have all members of our cleaning team trained by the end of next week.

We may need to rely on clinical teams to provide appropriate PPE including FFP3 masks, if NHSPS is unable to procure sufficient quantities to protect our teams; we will let you know if this is the case. Please call our FM Helpdesk on **0808 196 2045** to request these services.

Construction and refurbishment work

Following the announcement by the government, we are focused on continuing with services which help to increase the capacity of the NHS during this time. We are actively reviewing with customers where we are on-site, or about to start, construction and refurbishment works.

We will review on a case by case basis each scheme, working with customers to assess local needs. Where schemes are able to support the NHS' response to COVID-19, we will seek to continue works whilst minimising risks to colleagues and customers. Your NHSPS contact will be in touch shortly to discuss further.

Repurposing space to support clinical needs

At this unprecedented time, we are dedicated to supporting STP/ICSs and NHS England and Improvement teams, with property options to provide urgent additional capacity and different space requirements.

With a large portfolio, we are already reviewing a number of options to create additional bed capacity within in our community hospital estate whether this is for COVID-19 patients directly, or to free up space in acute hospitals. Additionally, we have provided information of vacant space options within our primary care estate and are rapidly responding to a number of specific requests for the delivery of additional clinical space.

Through our regional teams we have mobilised our people to focus on supporting the NHS through this difficult time and if you require support with additional, or different space requirements, please do not hesitate to get in touch via local contacts or via our helpdesk on **0808 196 2045**.

Payments

During this period, we recognise the priority for the NHS is on patient care and supporting clinical needs. As the challenges posed by COVID-19 increase over the coming weeks and months, continuing to provide frontline colleagues is our priority but to do that we are reliant on being able to pay suppliers to support us in this challenge.

We know this is a difficult time for us all and the government has provided funding payments into the system to help. Therefore, to allow us to continue to support the suppliers, we ask that payments are processed as normal wherever possible.

Given the circumstances, we will not be actively escalating debt recovery during this period apart from in exceptional cases. If you have specific concerns, please contact us to discuss via our Customer Support Centre customer.service@property.nhs.uk or 0800 085 3015.

Latest guidance and updates

To stay up to date with the latest guidance from NHS Property Services, please visit our website www.property.nhs.uk/covid19 which includes our [Pandemic Preparedness Procedure](#), past communications