



Covid-19 Support Plan – January 2021

# CIVEA Covid-19 Guidance



CIVEA have produced updated guidance as a refresher to enforcement agents on working safely and respectfully during the Covid-19 pandemic.

This module has been designed to highlight key safety measures to protect the health of enforcement agents and the public.

This learning module provides access to:

- Safe Working Practices video
- CIVEA COVID-19 Support Plan
- Government Guidance: *Working safely during COVID-19: enforcement agents (bailiffs)*.
- Key reminders and practical tips for carrying out enforcement visits safely and responsibly
- Vulnerability guidance and signposting
- Personal wellbeing

# Safe Working Practices



## COVID-19 Symptoms:

Enforcement agents **must not** work if they are symptomatic.

The symptoms are:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

Get a test as soon as possible if you have any symptoms of coronavirus.

Notify your line manager of any individuals you have been in close contact with in the past 48 hours.

## NHS Test & Trace:

Enforcement agents should be registered with the NHS Test & Trace App.

Enforcement agents must not work if they are asked to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, for example if they have been identified as a close, recent contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.

Enforcement agents must also stay at home and self-isolate if a member of their household is symptomatic.

You may be asked to provide details of recent close contacts by NHS Test & Trace. If any of these contacts were through your role as an enforcement agent you must notify your line manager and comply with the request without disclosing the reason for your contact with the individual.



# Safe Working Practices

## Commencing Work

Enforcement agents should notify their line manager each morning that they are symptom free and fit to work.

Enforcement agents must not commence work if they do not have sufficient protective equipment.



### Checklist:

- Clean vehicle (ensuring handles, steering wheel, keys are cleaned with antibacterial wipe)
- Face masks and eye protection
- Disposable gloves
- Antibacterial gel
- Antibacterial wipes
- Disinfectant
- Bin Bag (for disposal of used masks and gloves)
- PDA/PDQ
- ID
- BWV
- Paperwork
- Glue stick for envelopes if required

# *Safe Working Practices*



Please refresh your knowledge by reviewing the Safe Working Practices video again and read the government guidance: Working safely during COVID-19: enforcement agents (bailiffs). This is designed to keep you and the public safe.



## **Social Distancing:**

- Enforcement Agents must not enter residential premises, in any circumstances, even if invited.
- Enforcement Agents should keep a distance of at least 2 metres.
- If it is not reasonably possible to maintain a distance of 2 metres a face covering must be worn.
- If an individual breaches the 2 metres distance, step back and explain the requirement.
- If an individual deliberately breaches the 2 metres distance, terminate the visit, withdraw safely and alert line manager.

# Safe Working Practices



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## Face coverings:

The CIVEA advice remains that face masks should be worn to protect the public where possible.

There are scenarios where it would be appropriate to remove a face covering provided 2 metres distance is maintained:

- **Communication** – if an individual has difficulty with communication or there is a language barrier it would be reasonable to remove the face mask.
- **Discretion** – wearing a face mask can result in you speaking louder by default. Given the sensitive nature of the role and the restriction on entry to residential premises it would be appropriate to remove a face covering to enable a discreet conversation.
- **Exempt** – you are exempt due to health reasons and carry a face covering exempt card

If it is not possible to maintain 2 metres distance yet there is a communication issue or discretion concern the agent should terminate the visit, alert their office and leave a letter with the individual with contact details to communicate with the office or agent via telephone.

# Safe Working Practices

Please refresh your knowledge by reviewing the Safe Working Practices video again and read the government guidance: Working safely during COVID-19: enforcement agents (bailiffs). This is designed to keep you and the public safe.



## Hygiene:

Enforcement agents should follow good hygiene practices, including:

- regular hand washing for 20 seconds using soap and water or use of hand sanitiser
- covering the mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing, then immediately disposing of the tissue in a bin and washing hands, or coughing or sneezing into their arm
- avoiding touching their face with their hands
- avoiding contact with objects and hard surfaces where possible
- avoiding sharing items such as pens

Enforcement agents should carry hand sanitiser on their person at all times.

In particular, hand hygiene should be practised:

- before and after each visit and after contact with any member of the public, (regardless of whether the minimum 2m social distancing was maintained)
- before and after donning PPE

# Safe Working Practices



## Pre-visit Assessment

Every attempt will be made by the office to contact an individual prior to an enforcement visit, to determine if anyone in the household is symptomatic or self isolating and also to identify critical workers, vulnerability or changes in circumstances.

If a contact number is held on file, Enforcement Agents should also attempt contact immediately prior to visiting to determine whether it is safe to visit.

## Risk Assessment:

Enforcement agents must risk assess each visit:

- observe people and surroundings;
- wear gloves if it is necessary to open a gate or ring a doorbell;
- avoid touching hard surfaces;
- wear gloves if entering a lift, using a staircase handrail or affixing an immobilisation device;
- only use a lift if on your own;
- when making contact identify yourself and explain the need to maintain social distance;
- ask if anyone in the household is symptomatic, self-isolating, shielding or has tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 28 days. If this is the case or where there are visible signs of symptoms, terminate the visit, leave paperwork with contact details and put the case on hold for 14 days.

## Returning to your vehicle safely

- Maintain social distancing at all times
- If using gloves ensure the safe removal of gloves guidance is adhered to
- Remove PPE prior to re-entering your vehicle following guidance
- Wipe vehicle frequently touched internal areas and handles with antibacterial wipes
- Wipe camera, PDQ, mobile phone and folder with antibacterial wipe
- Dispose of any damaged PPE used in bin bag

If you have had to terminate the visit early due to your personal health being compromised ensure that return to your vehicle or home follow 1) good hygiene and 2) public health guidance



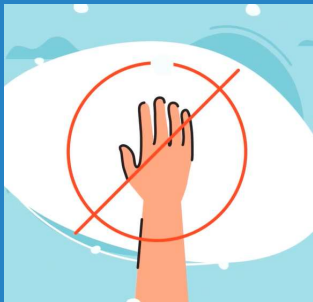
# Safe Working Practices



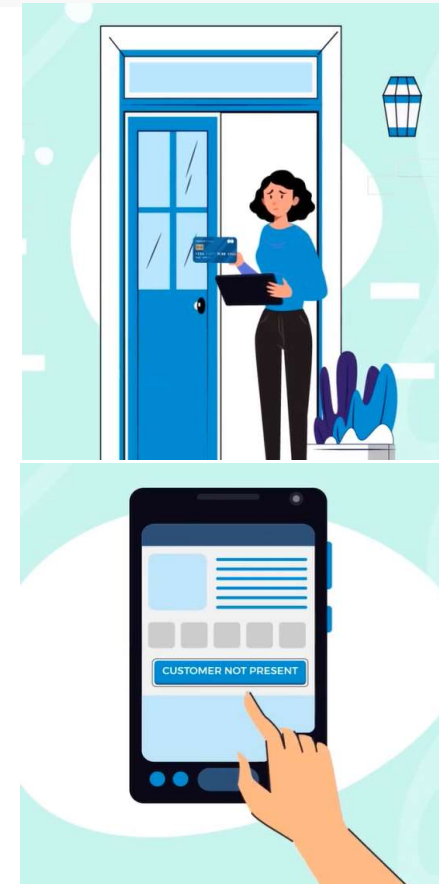
## Contactless Visit

CIVEA members have adhered to the contactless visit since the recommencement of enforcement visits on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2020.

This must continue to protect against transmission of COVID-19.



- Enforcement agents must not enter residential premises.
- Payments must be taken via card (online or PDQ using customer not present) where possible. If a customer's only means of payment is cash it should be counted into a sealed bag and quarantined for 72 hours prior to banking.
- Receipts should be requested via email and not provided manually.
- Where evidence (residence, liability dispute, vulnerability, etc.) is required a photo should be taken and uploaded via the agent's PDA or emailed to the office by the customer.
- Gloves must be worn when handling any paperwork or equipment.



## *Practical Guidance*



Enforcement is an essential part of our justice system. However, protecting public health is the key priority of the government and CIVEA.

CIVEA have demonstrated to the government that enforcement can be carried out safely, responsibly and sensitively through the adherence to our safe working practices, contactless visit and non-entry to residential premises.

Whilst this does occasionally present challenges for enforcement agents it is important to be vigilant and considerate at all times.

### Visiting during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Do not shout – if there are communication issues remove your mask provided you can maintain 2 metres social distancing.
- You cannot enter residential premises so do not imply that you can. It should be made explicitly clear that you will not enter at this particular time but that the warrant in your possession does permit power of entry and you may return at a later date.
- There are no restrictions on taking control of goods outside of the premises, such as a car on the drive or highway. However, Enforcement Agents should proceed with extreme caution and be aware of the increased chance of infection when clamping vehicles.
- Enforcement Agents should carefully consider the need to clamp a vehicle. In particular, if the vehicle is proven to be used by a critical worker to travel to work or required for urgent transport if someone is seriously ill.
- It is acceptable to ask an individual for evidence of shielding or a positive COVID-19 test. However, if this is not immediately available the enforcement agent must still terminate the visit and ask the individual to send the evidence to the office.

# *Vulnerability & Covid-19*



Identifying and supporting vulnerable individuals is a crucial role of an enforcement agent.

COVID-19 is impacting all individuals in different ways.

It is important enforcement agents are alert to the increasing number of individuals who are experiencing increased financial pressure or some form of health related vulnerability as a result of COVID-19. This must be recorded for reporting and monitoring purposes.

## Reasons for increased vulnerability:

- Businesses scaling back operations, reducing working hours and laying off staff on short and zero-hour's contracts.
- Some people may need to take time off work to care for sick relatives or to look after children.
- Some people may suffer an income shock as a result of measures to contain the virus (e.g. unable to work due to caring needs for elderly relatives or children in the event of school closures, unable to work due to travel restrictions, social distancing requirements or office and business closures).
- Self-employed individuals and business owners may be suffering a reduction in income and delays obtaining grants and benefits.
- Some people who become ill or are advised to self-isolate will not be entitled to sick pay or will only be entitled to statutory sick pay. It will be very difficult for people to provide evidence of illness as the advice is to not visit our GP.
- Some people will be experiencing mental health issues associated with the pandemic.
- Some people will be dealing with serious illness, possibly with restriction to treatment.
- Some people will develop mental health issues and associated problems such as increased debt or gambling and addiction.
- Some people will be in a crisis situation such as possible loss of home or domestic abuse.
- Some people will be experiencing suicidal thoughts.
- Some people will sadly be dealing with bereavement.

# Vulnerability & Covid-19



Ideally, vulnerability will be identified through the office following attempts to engage with a customer prior to an enforcement visit.

Vulnerable individuals will be supported through welfare teams or dedicated staff.

Enforcement agents will encounter vulnerable individuals and must ensure their engagement does not exacerbate the individual's situation.

CIVEA members are advised to treat each case on its merits, but to adopt a flexible and sympathetic approach toward anyone claiming to have been impacted by COVID-19.

## How to support vulnerable individuals:

- Ask if the individual has been financially impacted as a result of COVID-19 and ask for details of their current situation and whether this is temporary.
- Offer extended payment terms where appropriate.
- If the individual has suffered a short term income shock a payment break should be provided until their normal earnings resume.
- Where vulnerability is identified the case should be referred to the welfare team or dedicated vulnerability staff who can provide additional support and will monitor the individual's circumstances.
- If an individual has been significantly financially impacted and are unable to renegotiate payments they should be referred to a debt advice agency where appropriate. Signposting the individual to the Money Advice Service website will provide comprehensive guidance and a debt advice locator tool:



**0800 138 7777 / [moneyadviceservice.org.uk](https://moneyadviceservice.org.uk)**

- All enforcement action should be suspended for anyone identified as clinically extremely vulnerable to COVID-19 and who are required to isolate/shield.

# Potential Financial Vulnerability

## Covid-19

A large proportion of individuals may not be in a crisis situation but are worried about their future income.

Signposting these customers to money guidance now may help them plan for a future income shock and minimise detriment.

A supporting module on identifying and supporting vulnerable customers is included for your to complete after this module.

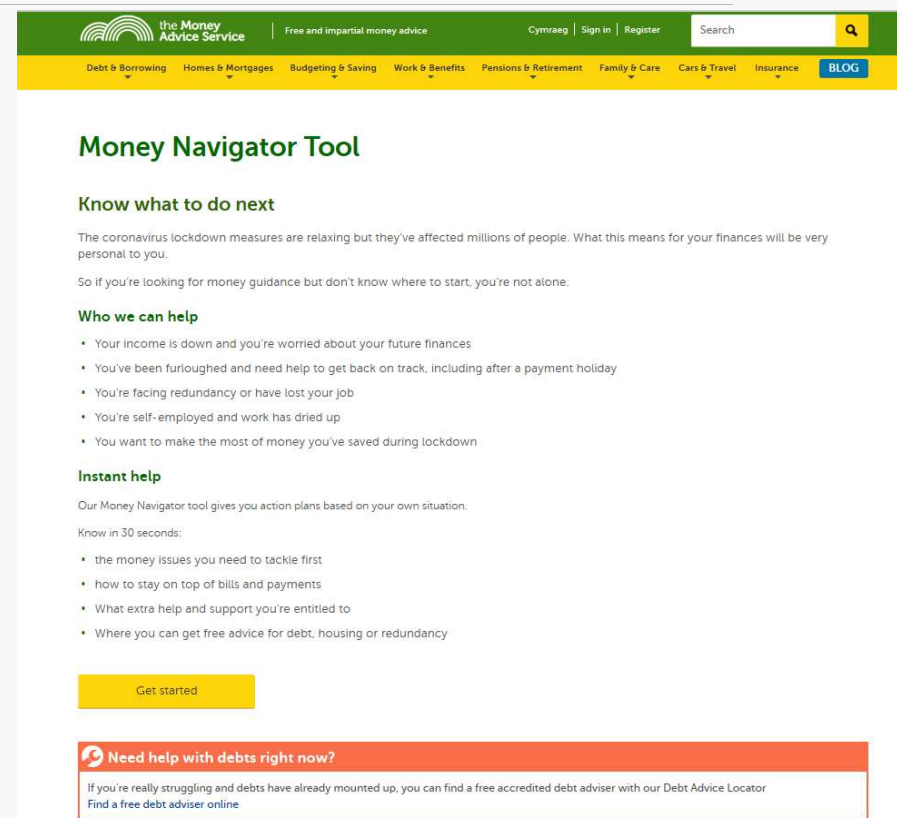
The Money Advice Service have launched an online money guidance tool for customers who are worried about future finances

The tool provides tailored guidance on an individual's circumstances, and where appropriate it directs them to specialist third party advice that can help with their problems. This means they will:

- Be able to understand their current financial situation and identify where they are struggling, including through a budgeting exercise
- Find out what they're entitled to, for example benefits, grants and payment holidays
- Understand where to go for free support across all financial matters.

### Benefits:

- Customers are more likely to maintain payments
- Customers are more likely to stay engaged if issues arise
- Customers who need immediate support are referred to Money Adviser Network



The screenshot shows the Money Navigator Tool website. The header is green with the Money Advice Service logo and navigation links. The main content area is white with a green header for the tool. It includes sections for 'Know what to do next', 'Who we can help', and 'Instant help'. A yellow 'Get started' button is prominent. At the bottom, there is a red banner for 'Need help with debts right now?'.

**the Money Advice Service** | Free and impartial money advice | Cymraeg | Sign in | Register | Search

Debt & Borrowing | Homes & Mortgages | Budgeting & Saving | Work & Benefits | Pensions & Retirement | Family & Care | Cars & Travel | Insurance | BLOG

## Money Navigator Tool

### Know what to do next

The coronavirus lockdown measures are relaxing but they've affected millions of people. What this means for your finances will be very personal to you.

So if you're looking for money guidance but don't know where to start, you're not alone.

### Who we can help

- Your income is down and you're worried about your future finances
- You've been furloughed and need help to get back on track, including after a payment holiday
- You're facing redundancy or have lost your job
- You're self-employed and work has dried up
- You want to make the most of money you've saved during lockdown

### Instant help

Our Money Navigator tool gives you action plans based on your own situation.

Know in 30 seconds:

- the money issues you need to tackle first
- how to stay on top of bills and payments
- What extra help and support you're entitled to
- Where you can get free advice for debt, housing or redundancy

[Get started](#)

### Need help with debts right now?

If you're really struggling and debts have already mounted up, you can find a free accredited debt adviser with our Debt Advice Locator

[Find a free debt adviser online](#)

# Vulnerability & You



## Personal well-being

Working during a pandemic is challenging and is likely to have an impact on your own mental health.

As an enforcement agent you are witnessing and dealing with difficult situations daily and this can be tough.

It is important to look after yourself, talk to others and ask for help if you need to.

## Top Tips:

- Stay connected – if you are working alone try to call a colleague daily and use video calls where you can
- Share experiences – after a difficult visit share your experience with a colleague or your line manager. It helps to offload and listen to other's experiences.
- Keep active – find time for exercise each day
- Fresh air – helps with low mood
- Stay hydrated – drink plenty of water
- Eat regular balanced meals to prevent lockdown snacking
- Make time for yourself - to relax or work on a project or hobby outside of work
- Minimise online time and try to reduce news intake (it is mostly negative)

If you are feeling anxious or concerned about your mental health speak to your manager for support.

For more tips, coping techniques and support links visit the MIND website which has a dedicated section on "Coronavirus and your wellbeing".

[www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)



## *Recap & Feedback*

We hope this module has been a helpful refresher to assist you in working safely during the coronavirus pandemic.



Thank you for completing this module

Please complete the recap questions and provide feedback before moving on to the vulnerability module