

Dear patient,

Requests for certification of absence from the workplace relating to Covid-19 may fall into three main categories.

**1. Those who are self-isolating because they are symptomatic or have a symptomatic household contact**

If you are self-isolating because you or someone in your household has Covid-19 symptoms you can get your own certificate using the online 111 isolation note tool. You do not need to speak to a GP unless your symptoms are worsening and you need clinical advice.

**2. Those in the stringent social distancing group (vulnerable but not shielded)**

This vulnerable group is defined by the government, roughly equating to those eligible for the annual flu jab. If you are in this group and require medical evidence of this, please use the attached template letter as you will not be eligible for a MED3 which is for certifying due to illness. If you become unwell, point 1 applies.

**3. Those in the shielded group (deemed extremely clinically vulnerable)**

If you are in this group, you should receive a letter from the government confirming that you are in the shielded category which can be used for the purposes of certification off work.

The current Government Guidance for employers and businesses on coronavirus (Covid-19) states;

*“By law, medical evidence is not required for the first 7 days of sickness. After 7 days, employers may use their discretion around the need for medical evidence if an employee is staying at home. We strongly suggest that employers use their discretion around the need for medical evidence for a period of absence where an employee is advised to stay at home either as they are unwell themselves, or live with someone who is, in accordance with the public health advices issued by the government.”*

Dear Employer

## Request for medical certification from absence of work related to the Covid-19 pandemic for patients at increased medical risk

Your employee has been following current Government and/or Public Health advice related to the Covid-19 pandemic because they have a condition that places them at increased risk of complications if they contract coronavirus. Specifically, this is because

- They are following government advice for stringent social distancing as they have a qualifying condition as defined here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing>  
This means they should not leave the house unless for essential needs.
  
- They have received a letter from the government advising them they need to practice shielding as they have a qualifying condition making them extremely medically vulnerable, as defined here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>  
This means they should not leave the house.

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Please note the patient has not been clinically assessed but has self-identified as falling into one of the above groups and has printed this template letter from our practice website. Due to the current pandemic and pressure on general practice, we are prioritising the urgent medical needs of our patients and will not be providing a medical certificate for the required period of absence.

Further information for employers is available on the government website <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/guidance-for-employers-and-businesses-on-coronavirus-covid-19> There is also useful information on how to support employees on the ACAS website here: <https://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus>. If further medical assessment is required to assess ability to work during this time this needs to be arranged through an occupational health organisation.

By law employers may use their discretion around the need for medical evidence if an employee is absent from work due to a medical reason. We would ask you to apply this discretion to help support NHS general practice provide care for our population rather than being asked to fulfil unnecessary administrative tasks.

Many thanks for your assistance during this challenging time.



Dr Matthew Noble  
Partner, Babylon GP at Hand