

Last update: 17 Mar 2022

YOUR VOICE IN WINCANTON

Joint Trade Union Letter To Wincanton

Posted on: 17 March 2022

Carol Madden

Head of Employee and Industrial Relations

Wincanton

Dear Carol,

We are writing on behalf of our joint membership in response to the changes that have been made by the business in relation to Covid 19. The pandemic is far from over and we are seeing an increase in the number of cases in many parts of the country.

The changes to recording Covid absences and sick pay are having a detrimental impact on our members as they are now coming into work when they have returned a positive Covid test. Whilst many of us are fully vaccinated and in relatively good health, for many the risk of infection with Covid could result in serious ill health or worse. It is therefore imperative that a good employer like Wincanton is not seen to be oblivious to the physical and mental health of our members. We are seeing a growing number of people who are extremely unhappy that they are expected to work alongside colleagues who have tested positive thus creating an unhealthy environment at work.

We are seeking assurances from the business that employees will be encouraged to isolate at home if they test positive and these absences are not recorded in line with 'normal' absence. We would further



hope that these occasions would attract sick pay at the contractual rate.

These issues are well known to us all over the last couple of years but we cannot simply hope that things are going to be ok. We are working with many employers, some your competitors, who are taking a much more sensible approach to Covid. It would be unfortunate for all the good work that Wincanton has done throughout the pandemic so far to be undone at the final hurdle.

We hope that we can reach agreement on the above as soon as possible in order to reassert some form of control on Covid in the workplace.

Yours sincerely

Mick Rix

GMB National Organiser

YOUR GMB UNION NEWS ROUNDUP



Posted on: 9 February 2022

Bulletin No 1 February 2022

PENSIONS: Wincanton will shortly be sending out letters, to those of its employees not in a pension scheme.

As a Trade Union GMB supports automatic enrolment (AE) as it provides additional income in retirement that members would otherwise not receive. Pensions are simple! they are the 'wage' you will receive when you retire. Hence it is best to save for it now while you are earning.

The company pension is paid in addition to the state pension.

You pay a contribution to the pension, so does the company. The contributions are taken out of your wages and you are taxed on the remainder. This means you pay slightly less tax and NI.

You can retire in accordance with the scheme rules and you are free to utilise your pension pot in a manner that you feel suits you best.

GMB UNION REPS: have an important part to play in ensuring our members are kept informed and updated properly. GMB Reps are essential to making work better.



We want more GMB members to come forward to become GMB Reps and help to make your workplace a better place to work. Want to find out more?

YOUR SAFETY: The pandemic is not over! C-19 will be around for life. It is a matter of learning to live with it safely and continuing to observe the safety instructions that have been put in place by the company and GMB Union which have been designed to help slow down the spread of the virus and to keep you safe.

There has been huge involvement of GMB Safety reps and your GMB Officials. Now is not the time to become complacent.

Remember keep up the good hygiene standards that have helped to get people through the worst of the pandemic.

1. Regular handwashing with hot water and soap

2. Use Hand sanitiser

3. Socially distance

H&S FORUM & WINCANTON WORKS COUNCIL: Meetings are starting to take place again between the trade unions and the company. Look out for further news on these issues as we make work better.

MICK RIX

GMB NATIONAL OFFICER

GMB UNION – CORONAVIRUS



Posted on: 2 March 2020

Bulletin No1 v March 2020

What is Coronaviruses?

Coronaviruses are a common family of viruses, and one of the main causes of the common cold. When a person is infected with the virus, they develop symptoms similar to a cold – primarily respiratory symptoms relating to breathing.



Why this outbreak matters is because it is a new strain of the coronavirus, known as 2019-nCoV (Novel Coronavirus), which has never been seen before.

As a result, there is no human immunity to the virus, and no medication available to treat the symptoms. This new strain of the virus causes severe respiratory diseases, including pneumonia.

How serious is this outbreak?

Much like SARS and influenza, those most at risk are young people, older people and those with existing health conditions.

The situation is changing every day, and guidance from the UK Government and the World Health Organisation is being updated regularly.

GMB members should refer to the guidance produced by the **Department of Health and Social Care and Public Health England (DHSC and PHE)**, found on www.gov.uk

Employers have a duty of care under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Control of Substances Hazardous Health 2002 (COSHH) to reduce the risks from exposure to biological hazards to as low as is reasonably practicable.

In performing and updating the COSHH assessment, employers will need to regularly consult the latest guidance from Public Health England (PHE), Health Protection Scotland (HPS) and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

The assessment should include a number of issues, but more importantly the provision and safe use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

Role of GMB and your Employer Normal policies and procedures regarding flu cases should apply. There must be consultation arrangements in place that allow GMB safety representatives to raise concerns with senior managers.

Members who are concerned should speak to their local GMB Safety Representative and check for regular updates.

Take Note: Wincanton should not, due to this global virus, penalise anyone who has been told to self-isolate and stay away from work either by Wincanton managers or the medical authorities. Also you should expect to be paid as a result.

Likewise if you have the virus and as a result you are placed in quarantine, you or someone on your behalf, should call your managers and tell them what has happened. Again you should not receive any



adverse issues (absence procedures) as a result of any absence, and again you should be paid for the period of absence,

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MICK RIX

GMB NATIONAL OFFICER

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE No4 – RISK ASSESEMENTS/ POLICIES



Posted on: 21 May 2020

Bulletin No 4 May 2020

PANDEMIC TOOLKIT?

The company have had discussions with the trade unions, on their pandemic toolkit. There are a number of files that underpins this management pandemic toolkit, which have been made available to managers at sites. GMB reps and safety reps can access and view to see if the working environment at their site, has been fully assessed and all preventative measures have been taken into account to ensure the workplace is fully covered under the COVID 19 Risk Assessment and checklist.

These are important and necessary developments in ensuring our members are protected and their working environments are safe as much as possible in helping to contain the spread of COVID 19 virus and that sites are made safe.

GMB UNION REPS have an important part to play in ensuring our members safety. GMB Regional Organisers and GMB Reps should have been issued with **GMB Union V4 GMB advice for those working in the Logistics, Transport, Warehouses and Delivery Drivers document.**

There have been complaints from a number of sites that the company have overlooked consulting and having dialogue with representatives and safety reps. The company at a senior level have promised to address this, and have made it clear that they welcome the involvement of GMB Reps and Safety reps, and have said that if GMB Reps, or Safety reps have not been involved in any discussions, inspections, or



have been bypassed, **they can involve their GMB regional organiser and escalate** their complaints to the business unit safety managers.

H&S Forum the company agreed to set up a Company National H&S Forum. This is a very welcome step in the right direction, and will hopefully increase standards in the company.

Employers have a duty of Care – Social Distancing

Social Distancing is one of the most important acts that colleagues can undertake in ensuring the spread of COVID 19 is contained. This must be adhered to along with exacting standards of hygiene.

Role of GMB and your Employer There must be regular consultation arrangements, and workplace inspections put in place that allow GMB safety representatives to raise issues with senior site managers, and also conduct the workplace inspections. Reps have an important role to play in ensuring social distancing and hygiene arrangements are properly maintained, including the provision of PPE.

Also check for regular updates please on our GMB coronavirus hub. www.gmb.org.uk/coronavirus.

Please Note: Wincanton should not, due to this global virus, **penalise anyone** who has been told to self-isolate and stay away from work if you or someone else you share a household with is displaying symptoms. If you have come into contact with someone that you know has got the symptoms, you should also stay away from work. In all cases you should arrange to get tested, and go to NHS online 111 and obtain a self-isolation certificate to cover your absence from work.

1. Regular handwashing with hot water and soap

2. Use Hand sanitiser

3. Social distance at least 2m at all times

MICK RIX

GMB NATIONAL OFFICER

CORONAVIRUS – FURLOUGH/SELF ISOLATING



Posted on: 10 April 2020

Bulletin No 3 April 2020



FURLOUGH UPDATE?

Furlough is an old fashioned term most commonly known as lay off, and is an alternative to redundancy. The trade unions campaigned hard for the government to bring in an arrangement to assist employers and workers because of the recent economic downturn due to the Coronavirus pandemic. The scheme is known as the Covid Jobs Retention Scheme (CJRS).

What has happened since Newsbrief No2/2020?

We informed colleagues in our last GMB Newsbrief No2/2020 for Wincanton members that the company were proposing some form of national arrangement regards furloughing employees in those contracts which are unionised. A series of video conference calls have been undertaken by the trades unions with company senior representatives.

The Principles of the Agreement

A number of national principles have been agreed with the company which are the minimum what employees can expect to obtain if they are furloughed. Where collective bargaining exists, these are subject to further discussions locally. In the first paragraph of the document it states:

“This applies to all unionised Wincanton sites and does not impact on any locally negotiated collective bargaining arrangements.”

The agreement does not affect your contract of employment permanently, and is only in place for the temporary duration of the governments CJRS. Again see principles of the agreement:

This agreement is entered into for the duration of the Job Retention Scheme and no changes to any contract of employment, collectively agreed or otherwise are to take effect on a permanent basis. Any temporary change will no longer have effect upon conclusion of the Job Retention Scheme

Employers have a duty of care – Social Distancing under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Control of Substances Hazardous Health 2002 (COSHH) to reduce the risks from exposure. We know at some places the employer has been lacking in these areas. ***Social Distancing must be put in place, in all areas, and adhered to with exacting standards on hygiene put in place.***

Role of GMB and your Employer There must be regular consultation arrangements in place that allow GMB safety representatives to raise concerns with senior site managers. We should ensure social distancing and hygiene arrangements are maintained and put in place, including the provision of PPE.

Members who are concerned should speak to their local GMB Representatives, if their concerns are being ignored. Reps can also get hold of their GMB regional organiser. **Also check** for regular updates please on our GMB website where we have a coronavirus hub. www.gmb.org.uk/coronavirus



Take Note: Wincanton should not, due to this global virus, *penalise anyone* who has been told to self-isolate and stay away from work by your Wincanton manager or the medical authorities. If you think you or someone you share a household with may have the symptoms you should expect to **receive full pay** as a result.

1. Regular handwashing with hot water and soap

2. Use Hand sanitiser

3. Social distance at least 2m at all times, in canteens, smoke shelters, and offices along with the warehouse & transport areas

MICK RIX

GMB NATIONAL OFFICER

ARE DHL PROTECTING THEIR PROFIT LINE?



Posted on: 2 April 2020

NEWSBRIEF April No2/2020

ARE DHL PROTECTING THEIR PROFIT LINE? Unfortunately GMB and our sister unions have tried to hold meaningful dialogue with DHL over a number of issues to reach agreement on the way forward. These include furloughing arrangements, redeployment to other parts of the business, redeployment outside of their contracts, obtaining sensible and dignified payments for those that have to self-isolate or self-shield due to government advice, including enhanced safety and protection measures at sites that are operational, and including the provision of PPE.

DHL have basically told GMB and the other unions to go whistle, and they refuse to discuss a national strategy and agree a common set of principles that would be both beneficial to the company and employees alike.

GMB Union can only deduce that DHL a multi-billion pound global business, run by global multi-millionaire executives is giving the impression it is more interested in taking UK government subsidies to shore up its substantial profit line, rather than enhance the safety and protections our members rightly expect.



This is the type of behaviour one would expect from an operator like Eddie Stobbart and not a so called "company of choice".

We gave advance notice to DHL, of a press release which we intended to issue from noon on the 16th April if they did not respond to our demands for talks. Unfortunately DHL have not met that deadline, and have refused discussions. Therefore in the interests of our members, GMB Union in conjunction with all trades unions at DHL have issued a Joint press release.

Press release can be viewed at [JOIN](#)

We call upon DHL to realise its obligations to their own employees and to start talking properly with all the trade unions that represent thousands of its 41k employees.

What can you do? What are the Trade Unions doing? The trade unions will be further assessing what is the reaction to our statements and the press release. We are in close contact with each other. We will liaise with our reps in DHL too and get their feedback too?

We would like colleagues at different sites to start to raise formal **collective** grievances regarding the lack of consultation over furlough arrangements, and the lack of arrangements and safety protections for redeployed colleagues, including the lack of agreed PPE and other safe measures to enable the containment of the virus, including the horrendous self-isolation and self-shielding payments made to colleagues.

We are also sure our reps at sites will also think of other imaginative measures that need undertaking to enable those at the top of the company to start to take these matters of concern seriously. Remember a number of people in the company at various levels have also expressed their frustration with the company at a senior level.

If you have any views or comments on this Newsbrief you can please feedback to your site reps, or to your GMB Regional Organiser, who in turn can then pass those comments on.

Please Stay Safe, protect the NHS, Save Lives

MICK RIX

GMB NATIONAL OFFICER

GMB UNION – CORONAVIRUS



Posted on: 10 March 2020



What is Furlough?

Furlough is a word that many people don't use normally. The old fashioned term most commonly known is lay off, and is an alternative to redundancy.

The government have now published the payment arrangements if companies need to furlough.

What have the company said?

The Company have now sent a letter to the trade unions regards notification for Furlough arrangements. There is a conference call being arranged with the National Officers which we then disseminate further information on the Furlough arrangements that may be put in place at different worksites.

How serious is this outbreak? Self-Isolation

Those most at risk are young, older, and people with pre-existing health conditions. ***The outbreak is serious, the virus kills.*** The government have introduced self-isolation procedures, for 7 days, 14 days and 12 weeks. ***Please go to www.uk.gov/coronavirus*** Please see some selected areas to look at for you, your family and friends and workmates.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/covid-19-guidance-for-employees>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

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Role of GMB and your Employer There must be regular consultation arrangements in place that allow GMB safety representatives to raise concerns with senior site managers. And ensure social distancing and hygiene arrangements are put in place, including PPE. **Refer to the GMB handout for Reps and Managers.**



Members who are concerned should speak to their local GMB Safety Representative, and representatives who feel they are being ignored, must get hold of their regional organiser. **Also check** for regular updates please on our GMB website where we have a coronavirus hub.

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GMB YOUR VOICE IN DHL

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GMB NATIONAL OFFICER

YOUR GMB UNION NEWS ROUNDUP YOUR GMB UNION NEWS



Posted on: 2 February 2020

Bulletin No1 February 2020

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