



Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

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We would like to thank everyone who has taken the time to e-mail or tweet us about their work or workplace during the COVID-19 pandemic

Although we do not have the capacity to reply individually, each and every email has informed our work and enabled us to raise the critical issues that you have brought to light.

Many companies, big and small, are doing the right thing - they are downing tools, shutting up shop, and paying their employees to work at home. Their actions will save lives.

However, we have received over 2000 emails, letters and tweets from people concerned about their work or workplace. We have heard from employees across all sectors of the economy and from all regions of the UK. Despite the diversity of employment, some key concerns have recurred across submissions:

- Lack of social distancing, protective equipment and safety measures within the workplace;
- Confusion over whether certain workplaces should remain open;
- The Government's Job Retention Scheme and who is eligible;
- Rules around self-isolation and sick pay, including the use of unpaid leave;
- The rights of pregnant women, people with existing health conditions and those living with vulnerable relatives regarding their work and workplace;
- The challenge of childcare for both parents able to work from home, and for those whose jobs require their physical presence in the workplace;
- Failure of employers to allow staff to work from home when it is possible to do so.

We have made it clear to the Government and companies that it can no longer be business as usual. Businesses need to stand by their workers and keep them safe, and the Government needs to provide definitive guidance on what is expected of employers. I have written to both the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and the Chancellor of the Exchequer to ensure your voices are heard. The letters can be found on the Committee's website.

Whilst we are unable to answer individual queries on employment rights, the following people or organisations may be able to help:

- Your local MP (you can find who your local MP is [here](#));
- [Citizens' Advice](#);
- Your Trade Union, if you are a member of one.

The latest Government guidance for businesses and employees during the coronavirus pandemic can be found [here](#).

When this pandemic passes, businesses will have to answer for how they treated their workers and suppliers, as the Government will be judged on its response. Many businesses will be able to tell of how they did everything they could while others will be found wanting. At moments of national emergency, we find out a lot about people's priorities and motivations. The BEIS Committee, when the time is right, will come back to look at these issues.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Rachel Reeves." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rachel Reeves MP

Chair of the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee