



Ms Rachel Reeves MP
Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy Select Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd
33 Holborn
London
EC1N 2HT

www.sainsburys.co.uk

2 April 2020

Dear Ms Reeves,

I am writing in relation to your committee's inquiry into the impact of coronavirus on businesses and workers and specific concerns that were raised in a recent submission.

This is an incredibly fast-moving situation and we are constantly reviewing the support we provide based on government guidance, feedback from colleagues, customers and the communities we serve. You identified rules around self-isolation and sick pay as one of the issues you are looking at and I can confirm that our colleagues will receive 12 weeks' full pay if they need to self-isolate. This applies to colleagues who are over the age of 70, pregnant, or have an underlying health condition. This also applies to colleagues who live with extremely vulnerable family members who the Government has asked to shield for 12 weeks.

In relation to some of the concerns outlined in the submission to your committee, I can confirm that in light of government guidance we closed our standalone Argos stores and Argos is now an online retailer only. Customers are not able to browse, purchase Argos goods or place orders for payments in any stores. Argos stores in Sainsbury's supermarkets are available solely for online collection. This means that customers who are out shopping for food and other essential items can collect orders that they have already made and paid for online. While this option is available for customers who want products urgently, we are strongly advising people to use home delivery wherever possible and we have increased online capacity to meet increasing demand.

Enabling our customers to collect their online purchases means we are helping customers adjust to a new way of life. We are seeing customers buy things to help them safely store the food they need, work from home, entertain and educate their children while schools are closed. They are also buying items that will help them to cook, keep fit and healthy, and stay connected with loved ones. We believe that these things are essential for all of us to maintain a balanced lifestyle during this unsettling time.

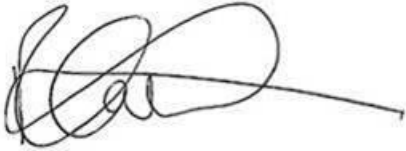
The safety of colleagues and customers is our highest priority and we have introduced a range of measures to keep people safe, which should address the issue of queues, as identified in the submission. This includes limiting the number of people allowed in our stores and at our ATMs at any one time; queuing systems in place outside stores where we are asking customers to queue at a safe distance of two metres; and reminding people in stores to keep a safe distance from other customers and from our colleagues.

We are also limiting the number of colleagues working in Argos stores in Sainsbury's supermarkets and so some are redeploying to help elsewhere in supermarkets. This will enable us to help feed the nation in these difficult times. Other colleagues are also supporting in the Argos hub stores, which help us to fulfil online delivery slots, depots and our customer service centres.

I hope this information answers the issues raised in the submission to your inquiry and please be assured that we are doing everything we can to support our customers whilst maintaining a safe environment for our colleagues, consistent with government guidelines.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Casofsky', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Richard Casofsky
Head of Public Affairs
Sainsbury's