

Statement from Barclays on supporting employees through the COVID-19 Crisis

The Covid-19 pandemic is an unprecedented situation and presents challenges for all of us, including organisations providing essential services to customers, businesses and the economy during this difficult period.

From the outset of this crisis, the safety and wellbeing of all of our colleagues has been our number one priority. We were saddened, therefore, to read about the experience of two colleagues included in the published responses to your inquiry.

We have put in place a comprehensive set of measures to protect colleagues and customers which have been developed in accordance with relevant government guidance. We continue to monitor that guidance and to continuously reassess our efforts as the situation develops.

As you will be aware, the UK Government has introduced the concept of 'key worker' which in the financial services sector covers roles that provide 'essential financial services'. For Barclays in the UK, this segment of colleagues can be further limited to those individuals whose roles require them to attend a workplace, office or site to undertake their 'essential' role effectively. Thousands of our colleagues are already working from home and we are committed to seeking to further reduce the number of colleagues who need to attend a workplace. We have been working around the clock to develop new technologies and methods of working which will help us enable many more colleagues to work from home. At the same time, we are deeply mindful of our duty to continue allowing our millions of customers to process transactions, access finance, including the Government Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme and other support arrangements, and to continue supporting them through any financial difficulty in this uncertain time.

Below are some examples of measures we have put in place to keep colleagues safe and well in our workplaces whilst maintaining customer and client services to the communities we serve:

Branch protocol and safety:

- To support our communities, we are working to keep as many branches as possible open, while remaining flexible as we see customers' behaviour change. We informed colleagues recently that we are reducing opening hours, with local branches now shutting at 2pm and town / city branches by 3pm.
- As part of our ongoing review, it is likely that due to a reduced customer demand, opening hours will reduce further. Some branches will be open fewer days per week to ensure we offer a broad geographic coverage while minimising the number of colleagues needed in a branch. Our local leaders are prioritising keeping branches open where we have screened-off counters wherever possible.
- We have issued all of our branch-based teams with specific guidance around social distancing, which includes a limit on the number of customers in a bank branch at any one time, encouraging colleagues to use counters and screens provided, as well as using distance markers. We've also deployed 170 guards across key locations to support social distancing.
- To keep our staff protected we are sourcing as much hand sanitiser as possible, and are deploying additional Perspex screens and antibacterial wipes out to our branches. Where supply chains aren't delivering in time we are empowering colleagues to source locally and reimbursing them. Deep cleaning is taking place across our branch network where required.

Call-centres:

- We have taken a number of steps to assist colleagues to observe social distancing including physically spreading out colleagues across floors, providing support and guidance on how to keep safe in high footfall areas, and removing seating from on-site restaurants.

- We have managed to enable some home-working solutions for our telephony colleagues and are looking to roll this out more extensively as soon as we can.
- All of our call centres are subject to frequent deep-cleans and hand-sanitisers are provided.

Colleagues self-isolating and Wellbeing support:

- If any Barclays colleague needs to self-quarantine or self-isolate and is unable to do their job from home, we will place them on paid leave.
- We have launched e-learning for managers and their teams on how best to support each other - including during periods of social isolation – and how to access professional help when needed through our employee assistance programme.
- We have also developed a new site on our wellbeing portal bringing together the most relevant resources to support physical and mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic.

With several hundred branches and contact centre locations providing essential services, we are aware that there might be instances where the measures we have put in place are not strictly followed. We hope that there will be few such instances, but to ensure colleagues can raise any issues, we have set up an intranet link which is shared on all widely (to allow colleagues to share where they need support when their local leadership haven't been able to help) so that we can act quickly on feedback to address any issues.

Given the continuously evolving circumstances, we are keeping these measures under review, and will not hesitate to act should we consider any further action necessary to support our colleagues through this unprecedented period. We will continue to be grateful for, and promote, the incredible efforts of our colleagues who are working hard to help each other, our customers, and clients.