

Summary of procedure

At HJL we recognise the ongoing nature of the pandemic. In line with our commitment to disability justice, and to build and practice collective care and accountability we have developed this policy to reduce the spread of infection within the HJL office, co-working spaces and events to support the wellbeing of our staff and wider communities and networks.

We require that the following procedures are followed alongside air filtering and ventilation. We do not have a mask mandate, however we are *strongly* encouraging a move towards a culture of masking as a team. Please see the full policy below for further details.

Prevention

We *require* that:

- Team members test weekly before coming into the office (e.g, on Tuesday morning) or co-working spaces, and on the day of in-person away days.
- You do not come into in-person work spaces if you have Covid-19 symptoms.
- You do not come into in-person work spaces if you have Covid-19.
- If you have an active cold or cold symptoms wear a mask. Please do not come to in-person work spaces if you are sneezing and/or coughing.
- You work from home if someone you live with tests positive for Covid-19, and only return to in-person work spaces when they are no longer ill and you have tested negative on two lateral flow tests 48 hours apart.
- If you have been in contact with someone who has subsequently tested positive, for example if you have met a friend for dinner and they tested positive after meeting with you, please ensure you have two negative lateral flow tests at least 48 hours apart before coming into in-person work spaces.

Visitors to the office

We *require* that:

- When we have an office, visitors who are attending meetings at HJL test before they come to the office, or to move the meeting online if they have symptoms or have come into contact with Covid. This request must be included in an advance email confirmation of the meeting [see [Addendum 2](#)].
- Visitors who turn up to the office without testing will be asked to wear a high quality mask (ffp2/ffp3) or meet outside of the office space.

Testing positive

We *require* that:

- If you test positive for Covid you must follow the Sick Leave procedure (See **Schedule 5 Sickness Absence Policy**).
- If you have recently been in an in-person workspace, you must let the rest of the team know so that they can test.
- If you are positive and are asymptomatic or feel well enough to work, please work from home. However, it is recommended that people who have a Covid infection rest as much as possible to support their recovery, even if the infection is asymptomatic or mild.

- Only return to work/in-person workspace when you are feeling well and have had two consecutive negative lateral flow tests, 48 hours apart

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1. Policy statement

The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has led to mass disablement and death, disproportionately impacting global majority and disabled folks. We refuse to overlook or deny the continued grief and struggle resulting from the pandemic, and the state negligence and violence that has surrounded the virus. In line with our commitment to [disability justice](#), we rehearse solidarity and collective care, through the development and implementation of this Covid policy.

Covid-19 is an airborne virus that spreads primarily through aerosols as well as surfaces.

Aerosols are the small particles we breathe out when we talk, shout, sing, cough, sneeze and breathe. These aerosols carry Covid-19 particles and can infect you when they are breathed in.

High quality masks, air filtration and good ventilation along with regular testing therefore help prevent spread. Using multiple forms of prevention is better than one.

This policy has been developed in collaboration with the whole HJL team through the use of surveys, research, consultation and team discussion. As Covid-19 is a constantly evolving situation, and as future pandemics develop, this policy differs from our more statutory fixed policies and will have further iterations in order to stay responsive to an ongoing crisis.

2. Prevention of the spread of Covid in the HJL office

At HJL our work is relational, therefore we value collaboration and relationship building through working together in the HJL office or in-person working spaces. We must balance this with preventing the spread of Covid. We can prevent and limit the spread of Covid through utilising the multiple following strategies, recognising that each has its limitations especially with a lack of continued support by the government, health services and scientific community:

2.1 Testing for Covid

2.1.1 Weekly testing

- When we are meeting in the office we ask that you **test once a week** before coming in on our busiest days - Tuesdays and Wednesdays.
- While we do not have an office we ask that you test **on the morning of an in-person team meeting** or **once a week if meeting at a co-working space**.
- Covid-19 infections do not always present with symptoms, however Covid can still be spread even if a person doesn't feel ill. Therefore we ask that you test as a precaution.¹

¹ Covid can be transmitted asymptotically, meaning you may have Covid and spread it to others while not experiencing any symptoms - one study found 40% of people infected with Covid have no symptoms. See Splete, H. (2021, 14 December). Covid-19 Asymptomatic Infection Rate Remains

- It is best practice to test as close as possible to being in in-person work spaces as current testing has its limitations.²
- It is therefore even better practice to test more regularly where you are able to, especially if you have been in high risk environments (e.g. restaurants, clubs, planes, crowded spaces).
- When testing check expiry dates, and the instructions on how to test as these have changed from previous versions of the test.

2.1.2 Testing with symptoms

- Symptoms of Covid can include but are not limited to a sore throat, high temperature, chills, a new or continuous cough, a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste, shortness of breath, feeling tired or exhausted, an aching body, a headache, a blocked or runny nose, loss of appetite, diarrhoea, feeling sick or being sick.³
- Covid symptoms are not the same in everyone and they can change depending on the strain - it is not always about a continuous cough.
- If you have symptoms of Covid please do not come into an in-person workspace. False negative lateral flow tests are common.⁴ If you feel well enough to work, work from home, and if not take sick leave (See **Schedule 5 Sickness Absence Policy**).

2.2 Protocol following close exposure to Covid

2.2.1 A close contact tests positive e.g. someone you live with or care for

- If a person you live with or care for tests positive for Covid, please work from home for the duration of their illness. Before returning to in-person workspaces please ensure you have two negative lateral flow tests at least 48 hours apart.⁵
- If you have been in contact with someone who has subsequently tested positive, for example if you have met a friend for dinner and they tested positive after meeting

High. *Medscape*. Retrieved 15 Oct 2025 from
<https://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/964836?form=fpf>

² It is good practice to test as close as possible to being in the office as current testing has its limits and viral load can develop at different rates depending on strain, which means testing may not detect a live infection until your illness has developed further. Please remember at this point in the pandemic, and with newer strains of Covid, false negative lateral flow tests are very common - with one study finding tests missed between 20% and 81% of positive cases. See Duncan, C. (2022, 24 February). Lateral Flow Tests May Be Missing 'Substantial' Number of Covid Infections. *Imperial News*. Retrieved 6 March 2024 from
<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/news/234154/lateral-flow-tests-missing-substantial-number/>

³ NHS, Covid-19 symptoms and what to do. Retrieved 11 March 2024 from
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/covid-19/covid-19-symptoms-and-what-to-do/>

⁴ Duncan, C. (2022, 24 February). Lateral Flow Tests May Be Missing 'Substantial' Number of Covid Infections. *Imperial News*. Retrieved 6 March 2024 from
<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/news/234154/lateral-flow-tests-missing-substantial-number/>

⁵ Recent research suggests it is not inevitable that you will catch Covid if living with someone who has tested positive. The preventative measures in this policy can also be helpful in your home environment to prevent spread when someone has tested positive.

with you, please ensure you have two negative lateral flow tests at least 48 hours apart before coming into an in-person workspace.

- Despite the reduction in legal time limits people can be contagious with Covid for 10 days, and others can be longer than this depending on strain.

2.2.2 Potential exposure following high-risk activities e.g. travel, clubs, festivals, indoor-dining

- If you have been in a more high-risk environment for Covid - e.g. places with many unmasked people, crowded, and with poor ventilation - you may want to consider testing more regularly when in the office as well as masking. This is a suggestion, not a requirement.

2.3 Masking

- Masking with high quality, well fitted N95/FPP2 standard or higher masks remains one of the best preventive measures. None of the other interventions listed in this policy are as effective as masking, all of these work best when paired with masking.
- Masks work by protecting the wearer from inhaling virus particles from others and protects others from the wearer exhaling virus particles. As noted earlier in the pandemic masking works best when it is two way (Figure 1.). Masks must be well-fitted - there must be no sagging or gaps between the face and the mask for effective protection (Figure 2.).
- **There is not a mask mandate at HJL, however we are strongly encouraging a move towards a culture of masking as a team.** We ask that folks mask when we are ill or have been in high risk environments. Masks are strongly welcomed and those who wear them are supported.
- We recognise the issues around accessibility and masking - for example, for survivors, for those that lip read, and for those with sensory or breathing issues.
- **We also hold this alongside the disproportionate burden one-way masking has on disabled and immunocompromised folks and that disability justice looks like solidarity through masking and that we keep each other safe.**

Delayed coronavirus transmission with mask use

An analysis of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data shows that wearing any kind of mask can delay transmission of the virus compared with not wearing one at all. A well-fitted N95 respirator on both the infected and uninfected individuals would provide the most effective protection.

INFECTED INDIVIDUAL	UNINFECTED INDIVIDUAL			
	Nothing	Cloth mask	Disposable mask Surgical mask	Respirator N95
Nothing	15 minutes	20 minutes	30 minutes	2.5 hours
Cloth mask	20 minutes	27 minutes	40 minutes	3.3 hours
Disposable mask Surgical mask	30 minutes	40 minutes	1 hour	5 hour
Respirator N95	2.5 hours	3.3 hours	5 hours	25 hours

Note: These results were published last spring, before the omicron variant, which is believed to spread more easily than earlier variants.
Source: American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists Pandemic Task Force

EMILY M. ENG and ALISON SALDANHA / THE SEATTLE TIMES

Figure 1. Delayed coronavirus transmission with mask use⁶

⁶ Luxton, J. and Saldanha, A. (2022). Masking against COVID: A Visual Guide. *The Seattle Times*. Retrieved 8 March 2024 from <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/health/a-visual-guide-to-protective-masking-against-covid-19/>

Fit Check for P2/N95 respirator



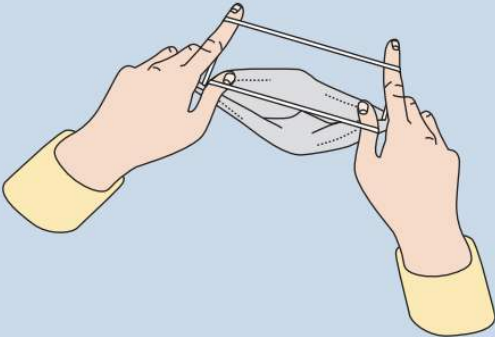
Step 1

Perform hand hygiene



Step 2

Select the P2/N95 mask that fits you well. Only touch the outer edges. Separate the edges and straps. Slightly bend the nosepiece to form a gentle curve



Step 3

Use index fingers to separate the headbands. Hold the headbands in your fingers and position the P2/N95 mask under your chin with the nosepiece up



Step 4

Pull headbands up over your head and ensure top strap is resting high at the back of the head and above ears. Ensure bottom strap is positioned below ears.



Step 5

Place fingertips of both hands at the top of the metal nosepiece. Mold the nosepiece, using the fingers of each hand, to the shape of your nose. Pinching the nosepiece using only one hand may result in less effective respirator performance



Step 6

Once a good facial fit has been achieved, proceed to Steps 6a. and 6b

Step 6a. Positive seal check

- Exhale sharply. A positive pressure inside the respirator = no leakage.
- If leakage, adjust the position and/or tension straps

Step 6b. Negative seal check

- Inhale deeply. If no leakage, negative pressure will make respirator cling to your face
- Leakage will result in loss of negative pressure in the respirator due to air entering through gaps in the seal

Continue to fit PPE in the recommended order

Figure 2. Fit check for FFP2/N95 mask

2.4 Cleaner air

- A combination of ventilation and HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Air) air filtration provides the best possibility for cleaner air and reduction in circulation of pollution, virus and allergen particles.⁷
- Depending on temperature and time of year, we will have at least one window open and daily use of the Blast Commercial Air Purifier in the office. This will be dependent on the number of people in the office.
- The HEPA filter must be monitored to ensure that it is turned on and off, and the filters must be changed at the appropriate times. A member of the team will be assigned to manage the upkeep of filters.
- While we do not have an office we will ensure good ventilation in in-person workspaces.

3. Visitors to the office⁸

- The HJL office is utilised not just by the Core team but by other people and organisations within HJL's ecosystem. We want the office to be a hub for movement and creative exchange. To this aim, we have partner organisations regularly using the space and encourage people to visit and meet in person, where appropriate.
- For people who regularly visit the office we ask them to follow this policy.
- For visitors who are attending meetings at HJL's office they will be asked in advance to test before they come to the office, or to move the meeting online if they have symptoms or have come into contact with Covid. This request must be included in an advance email confirmation of the meeting [see [Addendum 2](#)].
- For ad hoc meetings and for those who turn up to the office without testing we will ask them to mask and/or offer that they meet in the cafe downstairs.

4. Supporting staff with short and long term implications of Covid infection

4.1. Testing positive

- If you test positive for Covid please follow the Sick Leave procedure (See **Schedule 5 Sickness Absence Policy**).
- If you have recently been in an in-person workspace, please let the rest of the team know so that they can test.
- If you are positive and are asymptomatic or feel well enough to work, please work from home. However, it is recommended that people who have a Covid

⁷ Gettings, J. et al. (2021). Mask Use and Ventilation Improvements to Reduce COVID-19 Incidence in Elementary Schools - Georgia, November 16 - December 11, 2020. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 70, 779 - 784. Retrieved 11 March 2024 from <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7021e1.htm>

⁸ When we have a permanent office space

infection rest as much as possible to support their recovery, even if the infection is asymptomatic or mild.

- Only return to work/in-person workspace when you are feeling well and have had two consecutive negative lateral flow tests, 48 hours apart⁹

4.3 Longer term symptoms of Covid and Long Covid

- We recognise the existence and impact of Long Covid and want to support staff who may be suffering with it.
- We will be reviewing our overall sickness policy with a view to Long Covid and other long-term conditions and will update as necessary.

5. General sickness

- If you have an active cold or cold symptoms please wear a mask. Please do not come into an in-person workspace if you are sneezing and/or coughing.
- If you have a long-term cough after being ill and it is not infectious please tell the team
- If you have a condition that causes symptoms of coughing and sneezing (e.g. COPD, hayfever) please let the team know where appropriate.

6. Further development of policy

This policy is a live document and subject to change as the pandemic develops and the science of prevention continues to grow alongside this.

HJL will need to be agile and responsive to the changing needs of the team, particularly as new members join and further preventative measures may be required.

7. Policy review schedule

The policy will be reviewed formally in Oct 2026.

⁹ Head, E. (2022, 18 August). Covid-19 - how long am I infectious and when can I safely leave isolation? *Imperial News*.

Addendum 1: Covid Events Policy

Copy for public events

Covid-19 events policy 🦊

The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has led to mass disablement and death, disproportionately impacting global majority and disabled folks. We refuse to overlook or forget the grief and struggle resulting from the pandemic, and government negligence and violence that has exacerbated the virus.

In line with our commitment to [disability justice](#), we are rehearsing solidarity and community care, by asking you to join us in practising collective care around the virus. Solidarity is a practice – we need to rehearse it together.

Masking 🧐

We require that everyone wear a mask for all of our indoor events, unless exempt. We request you wear a high-quality (ffp2/ffp3) non-vented mask. We will have spare masks available.

- All of our team who are able to will be wearing masks.
- Panelists and workshop leaders may remove masks when speaking.
- We understand that this may not be possible at all times, especially for events that involve dancing, physical activity, or eating and drinking.
- We want to move from a place of trust instead of assumptions about why people are not able to wear masks. We encourage our community to use your discernment in accessing the space.
- We trust that you will stay in alignment with our collective commitments as much as possible.

Testing 🦋

We require that everyone does a lateral flow test before coming to an HJL event. If you test positive please do not attend, even if you feel well. If you have difficulty with access to tests please contact us.

Symptoms 🤔

If you are experiencing Covid symptoms, please do not attend events and cancel your tickets to allow folks from the waiting list an opportunity to attend. Please do not come to further events until you are symptom-free and have had two negative tests 48 hours apart. If you are unsure, err on the side of caution.

If you are unwell and have a new cough, are sneezing or vomiting please do not attend. If you have a condition that causes coughing or sneezing, like COPD or hayfever please let us know.

If you start to feel unwell while at the event, please keep your mask on and exit the space.

Ventilation 🪟

At our events we will be making sure we have airflow wherever possible. Please consider bringing extra layers of clothing to account for potential lower indoor temperatures.

Contact 📧

If you have any concerns or feel that any of this conflicts with your access needs, please do reach out to us info@healingjusticeldn.org

With thanks to the HJL ecosystem and [Breathe Easy Sheffield](#) for keeping us accountable and rehearsing collective care in a pandemic.

Addendum 2: Visitors to HJL offices/working spaces

Covid policy for guests to HJL

A note on HJL's Covid policy, at HJL we recognise the Covid-19 pandemic as an ongoing mass death and disabling event. In alignment with our commitment to disability justice in our office we utilise a range of precautions to reduce the spread of infection including a Smart Air Hepa filter, open windows, testing once a week, and optional wearing of masks.

As a guest in our office we ask:

- That you test before coming in
- If you have symptoms of Covid or you are unwell (e.g. have a new cough, are sneezing, or vomiting) we ask that you reschedule and prioritise rest. If you would still like to meet we more than welcome moving to an online meeting.
- The office is a welcoming environment for mask wearers, and if you would like to wear a mask please do.

If you have any concerns or would like to share any access needs please let us know.