



Communication update

17 March 2020

Update on our planning for the Coronavirus outbreak

Further to our previous notes, we wanted to keep you updated on our planning in the face of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Openreach is committed to keeping the nation connected whilst keeping our people safe. In doing so, following the latest Government advice on social distancing, we are revising our policy in relation to contact with end customers.

From tomorrow (Wednesday 18 March 2020) we will be issuing the following guidance to our volume engineering field force:

- Engineers are asked to avoid close human contact with end customers where possible whilst ensuring customers have a working service (working voice and broadband at reasonable speed)
- Engineering work will first be done outside of the customer's premises to try to enable working service
- All non-appointed work will finish at the external point nearest to the premises
- Appointed work will finish where possible at the nearest point to the premises unless the engineer is unable to get a working service
- If an engineer cannot get working service outside of the premises, they can enter if they feel it is safe and after asking two questions as previously communicated:
 - Has anyone in the premises been diagnosed with COVID-19, has been asked to self-isolate, or has been travelling to a coronavirus high-risk area or country in the last 14 days?
 - Is anyone in the premises suffering from flu-like symptoms?
- Given the recent changes in Health England guidelines, we have decided to change our engineer guidance from tomorrow:
 - If the answer to either of those questions is yes, the engineer will not enter the premises and the job will be furthered for reappointment four weeks later

- If the answer to both questions is no the engineer will enter the premises taking additional precautions (such as asking the end customer to vacate to another room)
- Time in the premises will be limited to providing service to the NTE – additional work such as removing bridge taps, NTE shifts, internal wiring/additional cabling, etc will not be done
- Special arrangements are being put in place for vulnerable customers and we will contact you specifically to align our processes

In addition, we will now ask our desk-based agents to ask the same two risk-assessment questions to your agents when re-appointing jobs to ensure that we don't progress with inappropriate appointments.

In the meantime, we ask you to:

- Limit any non-urgent work into Openreach, including stopping any proactive repair programmes
- Switch to non-appointed jobs where possible
- Inform end customers of this change of policy to manage expectations
- Ensure we have the correct end customer contact details supplied to us as we will be calling end customers to confirm their service is up and running

As you will appreciate, this is a rapidly changing picture and we will continue to update you as we develop our guidance. We expect to be briefing you shortly with further updates on our priority of jobs in the case of reducing engineer availability.

Meanwhile, if you have any questions, please contact your account team.

Regards

Openreach Communications