Coronavirus or COVID-19 is an illness that can affect your lungs and airways. The symptoms include:

- a high temperature – you feel hot to touch on your chest or back
- a new, continuous cough – this means you’ve started coughing repeatedly

In almost all cases people will make a full recovery. However, it is particularly important for the following people to be extra careful:

- People aged 70 or over
- People with a long-term health condition
- Pregnant women
- People with a weakened immune system

All NHS services for coronavirus are free for everyone – whatever your immigration status. This includes coronavirus testing and treatment, even if the result is negative. You will not be reported to the Home Office for coronavirus testing or treatment.

What does social distancing mean?
The Government has told everyone to practice ‘social distancing’ to limit the risk of catching or spreading coronavirus, this is difficult if you are homeless. Social distancing means you should maintain 2 metres distance from other people. There have been some recent changes to the social distancing rules.

- You can now spend unlimited time outdoors including sunbathing and exercise
- You can meet one other person outdoors as long as you stay 2 metres apart
- You can travel to work only if you have to
- You can view properties to rent

Please note in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland the rules are different and you are not allowed to meet people outside and to sit in the park.

- You must always stay 2 metres apart from anyone you aren’t living with this includes people you do not usually sleep near or share shelter with
- Do not gather in groups of more than two people when outside - the police can fine you

Using day centres & support services
Most day centres and support services across the country are impacted by the coronavirus so they are changing how they work. Each local area will have different support in place for people who are homeless, so you will need to speak to a support worker, the outreach team or your local authority to find out more information.
NHS 111 is a free service you can contact if you are unsure about your symptoms. You can contact it through: 111.nhs.uk or call 111. You can call NHS 111 free from a mobile or a pay phone. There may be a wait to speak to someone.

What should I do if I have coronavirus symptoms when rough sleeping?

The NHS recommends isolating yourself for 7 days if you have either:
- a high temperature – you feel hot to touch on your chest or back.
- a new, continuous cough – this means you’ve started coughing repeatedly.

If you are rough sleeping, we realise self-isolating will be a challenge. We recommend that you contact support staff from a day centre, outreach team or local support service and let them know your situation.

Do not go to the service in person as this will increase risks for yourself and other people.

Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital.

If you are in a situation where you or someone around you is suffering from coronavirus symptoms but you cannot self-isolate inside, try to follow these steps:
- Stay 2 metres away from anyone, do not share tents and bedding
- Stay in contact with friends, family and support services by phone or online if you can
- Can someone bring food and drink to you? Could you ask a support worker?
- Can your pharmacy or prescriber make arrangements to get medication or script to you? Could a support worker collect for you?
- Do you need alcohol or drugs? Can someone bring them to you?
- Stay in contact with friends, support services and family by phone.
- Can someone bring you books, music or a newspaper to entertain you?

Note: Follow the social distancing rules (see guidance on previous page).