

Furlough Leave

Who can be put on Furlough Leave?

Any employee that was on the company payroll on 28th February 2020 can be put on Furlough. However, the reason for Furlough Leave is that the company does not currently have work available for that employee, it is not to be used as an alternative for Maternity/SSP etc.

Employees self-isolating due to symptoms or family members with symptoms must still be paid SSP/Sick pay in line with previous recommendations, though could be furloughed after the self-isolation period.

Employees in the “Extremely Vulnerable” group that are currently ‘**shielding**’ (only those that received a letter from the government asking them to stay indoors for 12 weeks), CAN be placed on Furlough Leave if the company does not have any work available for them. If there is work that can be done at home, this should be the option available in the first instance.

Employees choosing to stay at home when work is available and can be done safely, **should not be placed on Furlough as work is available**. Their employer can choose to pay them, but only those who are showing symptoms (or live with those with symptoms), or who have been specifically told to self-isolate will be entitled to receive sick pay.

Does it apply to Practices?

Guidance published recently suggests that GP practices **may not be eligible to apply for Furlough**. The update states:

“The government expects that the scheme will not be used by many public sector organisations, as the majority of public sector employees are continuing to provide essential public services or contribute to the response to the coronavirus outbreak. Where employers receive public funding for staff costs, and that funding is continuing, we expect employers to use that money to continue to pay staff in the usual fashion – and correspondingly not furlough them.”

“This also applies to non-public sector employers who receive public funding for staff costs. Organisations who are receiving public funding specifically to provide services necessary to respond to COVID-19 are not expected to furlough staff.”

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