June 2020



Thank you for contacting me about the clinically vulnerable returning to work.

Covid-19 is the biggest challenge the UK has faced in decades – and we are not alone. All over the world we are seeing the devastating impact of this disease.

I want to reassure you that protecting lives remains the main priority for the Government. Safety will always come first and that is why approximately 2.5 million have been asked to shield themselves, as they are most at risk of needing hospital treatment if they were to contract Covid-19.

If someone is shielding, which can be for various reasons including age or medical condition, their employer is expected to make every effort to enable them to work from home.

If they are unable to work from home, they should discuss their options with their employer. It could be that an employer may be able to offer different types of leave, different working patterns or perhaps a different role.

There are several support schemes available to businesses who are struggling during this crisis, including the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and the Self-employment Income Support Scheme. These schemes are designed to support both employers and employees and to protect jobs.

It is important to state that employees have protection against unfair dismissal and, if they believe they have been unfairly dismissed, which could possibly be on the grounds of discrimination, they should contact the Employment Tribunal.

Further details can be found online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/employment-tribunals>

While businesses can only re-open in accordance with Covid-19 Secure guidelines, which does include a risk assessment, if someone has been advised to shield then they should continue to follow this medical advice.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me about this very important issue.

Yours faithfully,

**CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP**

**MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY**