

Rishi Sunak
Chancellor or the Exchequer
HM Treasury
1 Horse Guards Road London
SW1A 2HQ

By email to: ceu.enquiries@hmtreasury.gov.uk

2nd June 2020

Dear Chancellor,

Test and trace

I'm writing on behalf of the people who will, over coming weeks, be asked to remove themselves from their workplaces by the test and trace system.

As you know ensuring those who have been traced, remain in isolation, will be crucial if we are to continue to ease the lockdown and get our country, and therefore our economy moving again. However, the announcement that Statutory Sick Pay has been extended to those who have been told to isolate under the new system will not have the desired outcome.

As it stands, many employees would be forced to take the decision to attend work to receive their full wages as opposed to isolating, which could see them receive significantly less income.

Furthermore, those who are self-employed, fall through the cracks of the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme, and as a result of their self-employed status, have no access to Statutory Sick Pay may also be forced to attend work because of the financial implications of not doing so.

Therefore if the Government aims to ensure those who are traced remain home, and stop the spread of the virus then the Government must ensure that they would not be significantly financially disadvantaged for doing so.

In order to achieve this, the Government must do more to protect both the incomes and the jobs of those who are isolating. Employment rights must be strengthened to ensure that no one experiences detrimental treatment for isolating as per government guidelines, and there must be a whistleblowing service in line with this. Furthermore, those isolating as a result of test and trace should be entitled to significantly more than they would be under Statutory Sick Pay.

This situation requires an employment arrangement that encourages, rather than discourages, those who may have been in contact with the virus to stay at home and isolate. I believe there are a number of mechanisms that would support this. Consideration should be given to mechanisms including but not limited to; a jobs or wages guarantee, a significant increase to Statutory Sick Pay

for those isolating, reduction of the minimum income for access to Statutory Sick Pay and a set of clear expectations from government for employers surrounding the test and trace mechanism.

I hope the Treasury is able to reflect positively on the contents of this letter, and I would welcome further discussion between Government, employers and unions both on ensuring the test and trace system works to its intended outcome, and on the wider issue of recovering from this crisis.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Rickhuss', written in a cursive style.

Roy Rickhuss

General Secretary