



The Rt. Hon. Michael Gove, M.P.,
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office,
70 Whitehall,
London.
SW1A 2AS

21st July, 2021

Dear Michael,

I am writing following this week's welcome announcement that fully vaccinated critical workers will be able to leave self-isolation in exceptional circumstances, under plans to prevent serious disruption to vital public services, and to request that full consideration is given to BSA members in this regard.

As you know, BSA members deliver services and infrastructure projects across the private and public sectors, including many of the essential services the country has relied upon during the pandemic. Members, from large strategic suppliers to small businesses and VCSE organisations, provide a range of services including non-clinical services in hospitals to ensure they can operate, including cleaning, maintenance and catering; run and maintain public sector estate including government departments, military bases and prisons; deliver telecommunications and cyber security services to support the UK's digital infrastructure; and have supported services as part of the fight against the COVID-19, including operating testing sites. A list of members is attached.

We understand of course that the new measures will apply only in exceptional circumstances and to a limited number of named critical workers, where there would otherwise be a major detrimental impact on essential services, and following advice from the relevant government department. We also appreciate that workers will need to be fully vaccinated, to take the relevant tests, and be asymptomatic contacts only.

In line with the above principles, it is important that *all* sectors vital to the support of critical national infrastructure are included in departmental considerations when requests are received, including those supported by BSA members.

Members are of course working hard to try to mitigate the effects of any staff shortages. However the number potentially affected and the nature of the work, often in highly sensitive environments requiring additional levels of security, training and safeguarding checks, make this more difficult.

We fully support the need for testing, tracing and isolation and appreciate the changes coming into effect on 16th August. However, we do need to ensure there is no disruption to essential services prior to then. I can be contacted at bsa@bsa-org.com should you require further information.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Fox,
Chief Executive,
The Business Services Association

Cc: Rt Hon Sajid Javid M.P., Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care
Lord Grimstone of Boscobel K.t., Minister for Investment