

Guidance for Covid 19 – Emails

What Emails are considered a Covid record?

This list is by no means exhaustive and will vary from Service to Service and even person to person. However, here are a few examples of what should be identified and what doesn't need to be.

Subject	Content	Should it be identified as a Covid-19 record?	Further explanation
Sickness	An Email explaining a member of staff was absent due to sickness	No	Sickness information will be captured by Oracle. The inquiry is not expected to get into the granular level of this type of Email. It is more likely to focus on staff numbers as a whole and if any changes were needed. Before you delete emails about sickness absence it is worth ensuring that all return to work interviews and any trigger action is recorded and saved.
Actions as a result of high level of sickness absence.	If high levels of sickness absence result in changes to procedures, processes and operational operations emergency plans have to be enacted, or temporary staff may need to be recruited.	Yes	This is evidence of a decision taken due to the pandemic and that as a result of a high level of sickness absence changes had to be made to operational practice.
Minutes of Meeting	A reference copy of minutes of meetings (main copy stored centrally)	No	As long as this is a copy for reference with no additional decisions made in the Email chain, this won't need to be kept for Inquiry purposes
Minutes of Meeting only captured by email	Minutes of meetings purely captured by Email or a reference copy attached but with the addition of important Covid-19 decisions made	Yes	Anything that's only present in an Email that captures important Covid-19 related discussion will need to be kept
Working from Home	Emails confirming a decision to work from home	No	

Working from Home	All mention of working from home	No	
Working from Home	Staff feedback for working from home	No	
Working from Home	Emails capturing new equipment needed for working from home ie laptop	No	
Working from Home	Emails capturing new software being installed	No	
Transport	Emails capturing changes to Services or changes to access of routes / services due to Covid	Yes	Anything affected as a direct result of Covid (i.e. alterations in lockdown or reduction / cessation of services as a result of local or national measures).
Complaints	Covid-19 related complaints	Yes	If these aren't captured elsewhere, ie core system or formal process, these would need to be identified. Examples would include complaints about discharge from hospital or return to nursing homes after due to Covid or complaints about amendments to services due to Covid. i.e. these not being available or being below standard.
Decisions made	Decisions made solely related to covid 19 which are not in a formal decision-making process	Yes	These would include amendments to services, policies or procedures, procurement as a direct result of Covid-19.

Evidence	If it could potentially be used as evidence in court	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inquiries or inspections arising from an outbreak of COVID-19 in the workplace. • Workplace incidents where employees or members of the public have tested positive to COVID-19. • Compensation claims by employees and members of the public who contracted COVID-19 while on agency premises.
Finance	If it shows a financial transaction directly related to Covid-19	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anything procured as a result of the pandemic. i.e. PPE, equipment for operational reasons, and any additional costs accrued as a result of Covid-19. • Recruitment or secondment caused by Covid would be examples of this.
Historical/learning /best Practice.	If we will need the information to help us deal with similar situations in the future	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For example changes to committees, taskforces, working groups and other bodies formed to manage the Council's strategic response to COVID-19. E.G The Lancashire Resilience Forum.
Correspondence from Elected Members or MPs	Any emails or correspondence received or sent to you by Elected Members/MPS relating to COVID from members of the public	Yes	These should be saved as we do not know where, and if any, legal challenge may come from whether that is the Public

			Inquiry or a local challenge in the courts.
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General rules also apply that you'd normally expect when reviewing your Emails. The following would not need to be kept:

- Duplicates
- Personal/Non-work-related Emails
- Emails for reference only
- Emails solely acknowledging / thanking you for something
- Emails giving details of holidays
- Invitations to work events
- Appointments
- Copies of reports and newsletters
- Internal messages into which you were "cc'd" or "bcc'd"

As previously mentioned, these lists are by no means exhaustive. If you are at all in doubt about a particular Email, please feel free to contact the Records Management Covid inbox on: recordsmanagementcovid19@lancashire.gov.uk