

# SEX WORK POST-COVID



**LGBT**  
foundation



# SEX WORK IS WORK!

Sex workers are disproportionately affected by the current situation with Covid-19 and can experience stigma for just going to work and earning money.

This can cause a lot of physical and mental health challenges, but please know that you are not alone. We are here if you need us and there is support available.

LGBT Foundation and Men's Room consulted a range of sex workers from across Greater Manchester, which informed the content for this resource.

Whether you have started sex work recently or have been doing it a while, and if your work is online, on the street, or at home, we hope there's something useful in this guide for you.

## SEX WORK IS WORK!

Some sex workers have found it hard to find accurate information, as misinformation spreads quickly.

Since March 2020, we've seen a lot of false information making its way around the internet and through word of mouth. It is important that you make sure to double check your sources.

You can also talk with organisations like The Men's Room, National Ugly Mugs (NUM), LGBT Foundation if want to verify anything you've heard. More details for who to talk to are provided at the *end of this resource*.

It's best to visit [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) for the most up-to-date Covid-19 restrictions directly from the Government.

We recommend that people take the Covid-19 vaccine as soon as it is offered to them, particularly if they're in a group of people who are classed as medically vulnerable.

At the end of this booklet  
you will find resources  
and support.



# MONEY



Some sex workers have found their income changed during the pandemic. If you're earning more, that's great!

If your income has decreased, you might be eligible for universal credit. Local mutual aid funds might be able to offer both practical and financial support, too. There are some sex work specific hardship funds to support sex workers in severe financial hardship.

Under government Covid financial support, self-employed people can claim up to 80% of their usual profits.

This does apply to sex workers – but only if you were already registered as self-employed before the pandemic. If you have a financial advisor or accountant, speak to them about whether you're eligible.

If you do need support, please refer to the 'signposting' section of this resource for more information.



## PLATFORMS

The world has changed during the Covid-19 pandemic, so sex work has too. You might be changing the type of sex work you do to include more online work.

It's a good idea to have a range of income sources if you can. Using multiple sites for work will mean that if you're blocked from using a certain platform, you can still make money and not lose all of your content. You'll access a wider audience, too!

## TOP TIPS

- Some sites are deleting sex workers' profiles, so avoid posting explicit content publicly and delete old posts to protect your accounts

- For those who are using Twitter as their main platform for reaching clients, be wary of how you advertise as an increased number of Twitter profiles are being deleted, as of January 2021
- Keep your personal profiles and work profiles separate so that you can keep personal information private
- Back up pre-created content on an external hard drive or alternative device (like any photos or videos you're selling, or using to advertise)
- Try out using free software such as [Canva.com](https://www.canva.com) to add a watermark to your work. This will prevent people from stealing your images.
- While there is a lot of nervousness at the moment regarding online restrictions being imposed on sex workers. Please know that there is still a strong commitment by many in the community to continue to exist in online spaces.

## CLIENTS

More competition for fewer clients means you might be seeing clients you'd usually choose not to work with.

However, your safety is still important so here are some safety tips to protect yourself while you're working:

### SAFETY TIPS

- Use the number and email checker by NUM to see if new clients have been reported by other sex workers
- If you have a bad experience, you can report it to NUM who anonymously use the information to inform other sex workers about dangerous clients.

- Small things can make a big difference, if everyone who has a slightly uncomfortable experience reports, NUM can see the bigger picture much faster. You could be protecting someone else down the line.
- Try taking the conversation offline – if you get your client to text first, you can use their number to try and search for their social media profiles to check they are who they say they are
- It's worth checking how seriously clients are taking the pandemic. Asking questions like 'can you have a mask ready for when you get to mine?' will let you see what their attitude is like and give you chance to decide whether you want to meet them or not

- At these times, some clients have been reported to 'try their luck' through attempting to push boundaries or time-wasting, as sex workers may be experiencing financial hardship.
- Always share your live location with someone you trust, so they can check where you are and when you leave.
- If you're seeing clients at home, leaving music or a TV show playing in another room might make it seem like you're not home alone.
- Some sex workers have found getting a video doorbell has been a reassuring addition. This will capture footage of the client as they come and go – these can be found cheaply online!
- Wearing all black when traveling to a client can be helpful, if you're stopped and questioned you can explain you're just on your way to work.

## SUPPORT

Networking with other sex workers is important and can be very helpful. This will create connection and keep you looped in with relevant and current information.

Your physical health and mental wellbeing are incredibly important. During the current climate, many have expressed difficulty in securing appointments with certain public services, such as GUM clinics and the council. There are organisations that can provide you with a faster route to this support or signpost you to alternative options.

# SIGNPOSTING

## LGBT Foundation

We offer a range of services for LGBT people, including sexual health advice and testing, domestic abuse support, and substance misuse support.

This resource has been developed by the Sexual Health Programme, to get in touch with us email [sexualhealth@lgbt.foundation](mailto:sexualhealth@lgbt.foundation)

If you want to talk to someone, call 03453 30 30 30; for up-to-date opening hours and other options of who to talk to, visit [lgbt.foundation/helpline](http://lgbt.foundation/helpline)

## The Men's Room

The Men's Room is an arts and social support charity that works creatively to empower and support men and trans people who sex work.

Our approach combines creativity with traditional social care support, offering respite, a space for reflection, reducing social isolation and providing practical support with benefits and housing.

- Website – [www.mroom.co.uk](http://www.mroom.co.uk)
- One-to-one support – email: [kellie@mroom.co.uk](mailto:kellie@mroom.co.uk)

# SIGNPOSTING

## Sexual Health Testing

- [www.sorthiv.org.uk](http://www.sorthiv.org.uk)
- [www.lgbt.foundation/testing](http://www.lgbt.foundation/testing)
- <https://www.nhs.uk/SERVICE-SEARCH/sexual-health>

## PrEP

I Want PrEP Now

- [www.iwantprepnnow.co.uk](http://www.iwantprepnnow.co.uk)

Prepster

- [www.prepster.info/covid/Info-for-sex-workers](http://www.prepster.info/covid/Info-for-sex-workers)

Find your nearest clinic to access PrEP through the NHS

- <https://www.nhs.uk/SERVICE-SEARCH/sexual-health>

## Manchester Action on Street Health (MASH)

Provides free and confidential support for women who are sex working in Greater Manchester

- [www.mash.org.uk](http://www.mash.org.uk)
- 0800 1830 499

## National Ugly Mugs (NUM)

Take reports of dangerous clients to distribute safety information to other sex workers. They also provide support to sex workers who experience harm.

- <https://uglymugs.org/>
- 0161 629 9861 (UK) / +44 161 629 9861 (Outside of UK)

# SIGNPOSTING

## **Sex Worker Advocacy and Resistance Movement (SWARM)**

Provide skill-shares and support meet-ups just for sex workers by sex workers, in the UK

- <https://www.swarmcollective.org/>
- You can get in touch via [contact@swarmcollective.org](mailto:contact@swarmcollective.org)
- **BLOCKED:** A sex worker's guide to stalking and harassment <https://www.swarmcollective.org/blog/blockedzine>

## **Support and Advice For Escorts (SAAFE)**

Access SAAFE's forum for sex workers and escorts at

- [www.saafe.info/main/index.php](http://www.saafe.info/main/index.php)

SAAFE also have a resource page that contains resources that offer advice around everything from doing taxes and spotting timewasters to joining an agency and staying safe

- [www.saafe.info](http://www.saafe.info)

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