

# Sentinel

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## COVID -19 Competence and Medical Certificates Sentinel Extensions Update

Posted in <https://info.railsentinel.co.uk/category/competence-updates/>

You will recall in a communication released 24<sup>th</sup> March 2020, we advised a risk assessment was completed for competence and medicals based around contingency measures introduced by the Government, in response to the COVID-19.

To mitigate the risks of the lack of available safe workforce to maintain the network for vital freight and key worker services, Network Rail applied a temporary 4-month extension to the validity of all Sentinel and skills competences and medical certificates.

A recent review has concluded that a further 2-month extension will again be granted to the validity period of competences and medicals, giving a maximum total extension of 6 months.

The system will be updated by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020 but for the avoidance of doubt, the extension period is effective from today. By undertaking this further 2-month extension for all competences and medicals, we prevent a bow wave of demand for reassessments, which I am sure you will all welcome.

For Network Rail staff HAVS health surveillance dates and Annual Capability Conversation (ACC) requirements have also been extended and Oracle will be updated in a similar timeframe.

While these extensions have been applied during this period to support the ongoing safe availability of the workforce, managers have an important role to diligently observe the requirements of competence management and continue to promptly schedule the bookings for reassessments

If a manager or individual doubts continued competence or becomes aware of any change in health status or behaviour, they must stop work using that competence and engage with the relevant service for advice. If there is any suspicion about someone being unfit through drugs or alcohol, there is no relaxation to existing controls.

Training centres are now re-opening and starting to deliver essential training, albeit with limited capacity, as the rules for social distancing and reduced class sizes are adhered to.

Managers are encouraged to book individuals back onto training and recertification where capacity exists. Reliance upon competence extension should now only be considered as a backup if individuals have been unable to book training due to limited spaces.

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