

Your Guide To Opening Back Up Amid Staff Shortages

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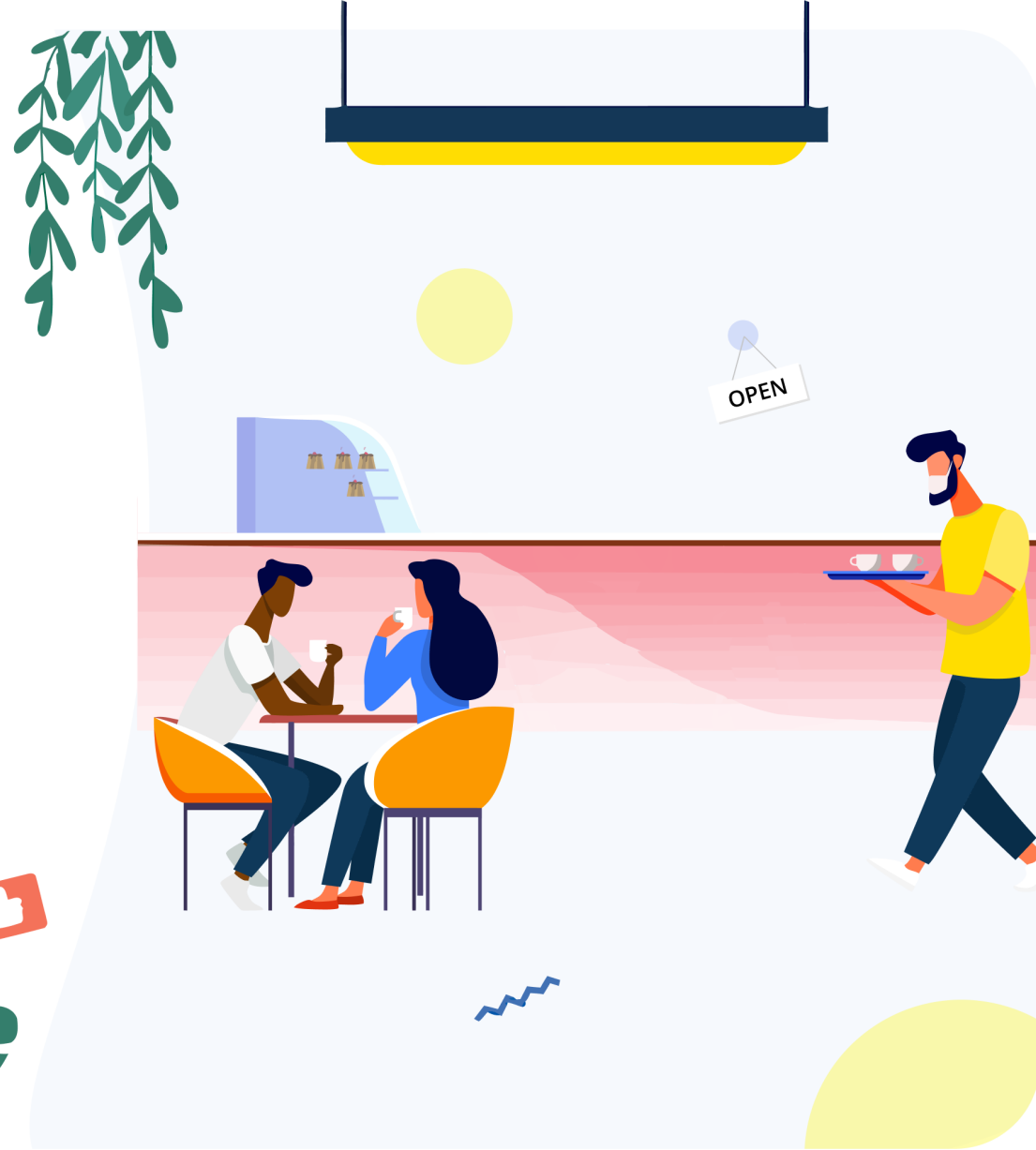


How can businesses reopen with limited staff?

There can be no denying that staff shortages are holding businesses back at the minute. We recently covered the way that COVID-19, Brexit and the 'pingdemic' are causing staff to be reluctant or unable to come back to work. However, amongst these challenges there are a lot of opportunities too.

Businesses are now getting creative, and finding new ways to tackle staff shortages that will likely stand them in good stead in the future. With technology evolving, and becoming widely adopted, businesses are able to reopen safely and effectively despite having less staff than they would like.

We've compiled the latest techniques, to guide you through reopening your hospitality venue with limited staff numbers. Every business is different, and there is no one size fits all solution, however these ideas may give you some inspiration to reopen with new hope for the future.



Why are businesses struggling with staff shortages?

Firstly, it's important to address the 3 main reasons that staff shortages are occurring in a post-COVID world. These are the 3 issues that this guide aims to combat against.

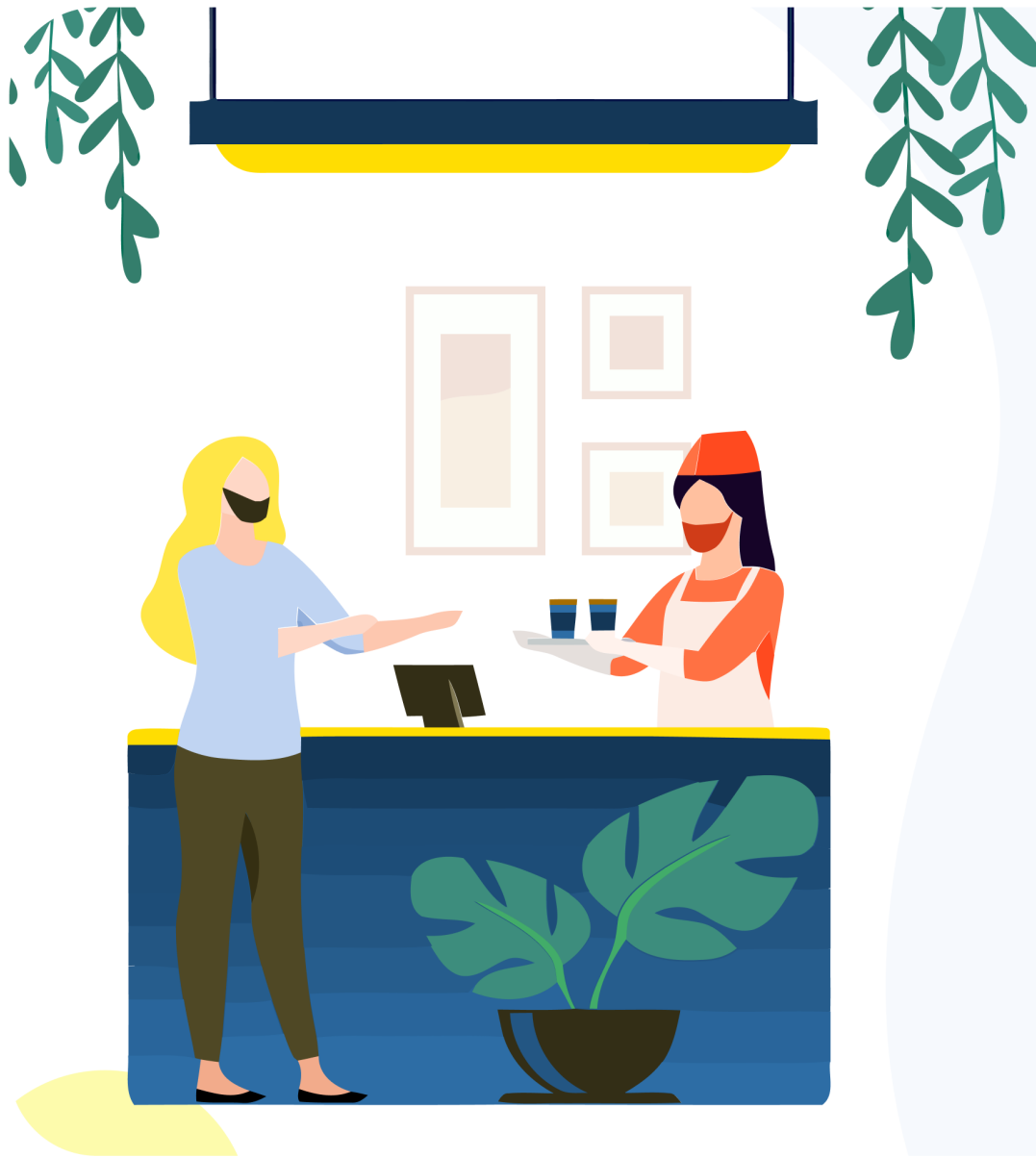
Some of the key reasons that we're seeing widespread staff shortages are:

1. Covid-19

Of course, COVID-19 has heavily impacted staff shortages. The pandemic has given everyone time to think and reassess their career path. During this time many people reskilled and changed professions following lockdowns. During COVID lockdowns working hours and income were unstable in hospitality, meaning that many people chose to turn their back on the sector altogether.

Meanwhile, those who did stay and are returning to work in the sector may be doubting the safety of their profession. As hospitality workers tend to interact with customers, they are in a sense on the "front-line" and at risk of contracting COVID.





2. The job itself: Low pay rates, lack of breaks and horrible customers

A recent NPR review states that the main reasons hospitality workers have quit their jobs are low pay rates, lack of breaks and horrible customers. With pay rates dropping due to COVID-19, many people are quitting the industry altogether. This trend is being dubbed “the great resignation” and is occurring across many industries as workers demand better pay, more breaks and fair working conditions.

2. The ‘Pingdemic’

Another key reason that staff shortages are rife is the amount of hospitality workers being “pinged” by track and trace, and told to self isolate. When this happens, staff members have no choice but to miss shifts and leave their team short staffed.

What’s worse, often when one person in a team is pinged, they will have mingled with other staff members, meaning that 4 or 5 members of a team can be cut in one go.

How Can We Combat These Staff Shortage Triggers?

These key triggers of staff shortages can be eased with a combination of technology, planning and thoughtful people management. Every hospitality business is feeling the strain at the moment, but there are some ways to boost business and reduce the pressure of staff shortages.

Here's our take:

Covid-19

How can you minimise the impact of COVID-19 on your venue? Well, as we've seen over the past year and a half, it is very challenging. There is no sure fire way to reduce the impact of COVID-19, or ensure that your venue and staff don't become infected.

However, as we try to establish some normality, there are some established methods that do seem to work with regards to slowing the spread and opening your venue safely post-COVID.



Set up order and pay solutions

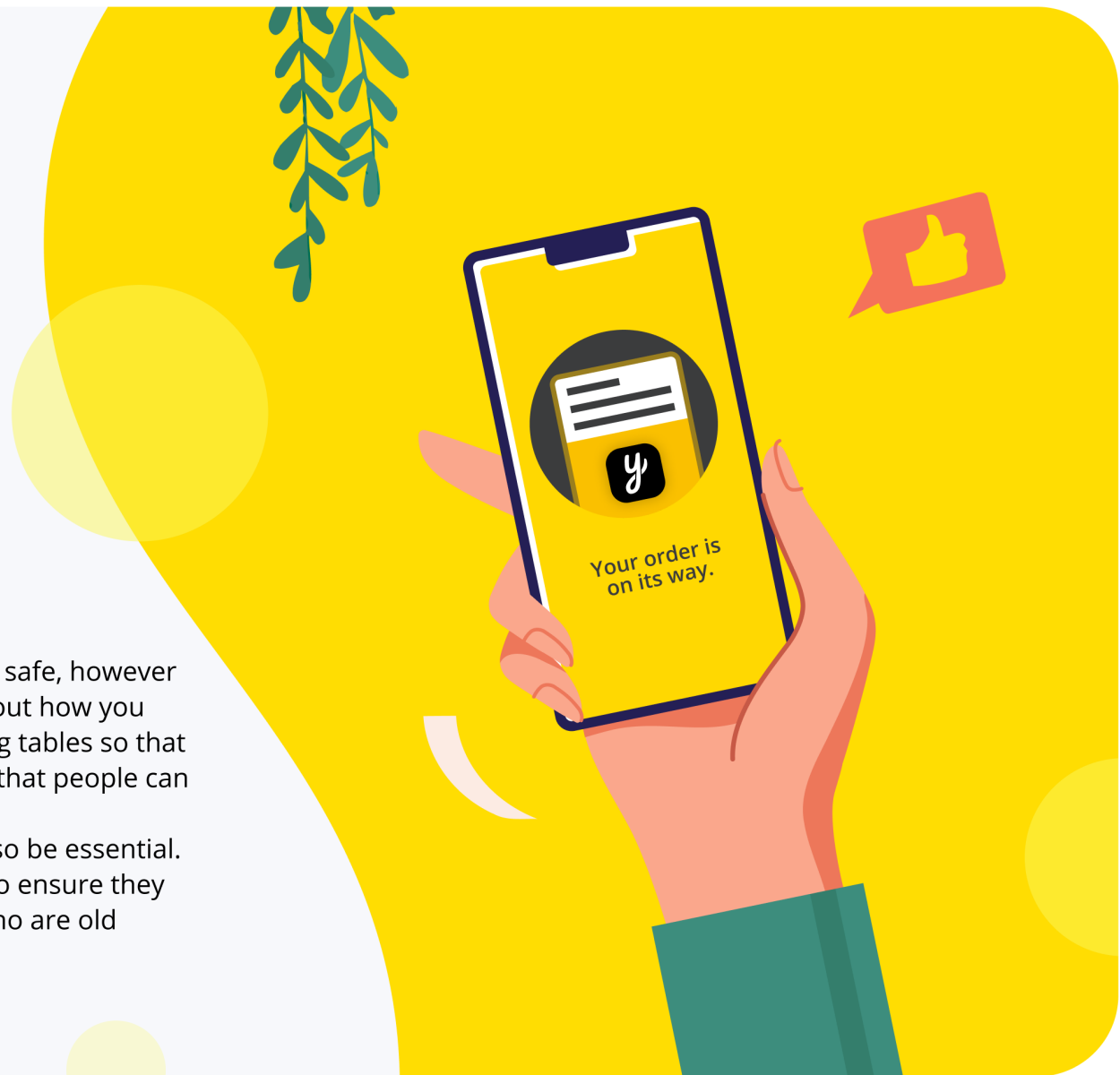
First things first, setting up an order and pay solution is a great solution to minimising staff contact with the public and ensuring that you lower the risk of anyone contracting COVID-19 in your venue.

Mobile ordering minimises contact, enables safer social distancing and puts both customer and staff minds' at ease. Mobile ordering has become a hero of the pandemic, and has enabled businesses to open safely and with minimal customer-staff contact.

Ensure that your venue is COVID safe

Mobile ordering will help your venue become more COVID safe, however that shouldn't be the only step you take. Perhaps think about how you can lay your venue out in the most COVID safe way, moving tables so that they are socially distanced or opening up garden areas so that people can enjoy the outside.

Encouraging everyone to check in to your venue should also be essential. If you're using QR codes, be sure to check them regularly to ensure they work, and offer the option of a pen and paper for those who are old school or don't have a mobile device on them.





Try for yourself!
Open your camera and scan

Sanitise, sanitise, sanitise

With staff members having more time on their hands with mobile ordering, it's a good idea to take sanitising your venue more seriously. We know that offering customers hand sanitiser works, and cleaning down bars and surfaces as often as possible is a great way to combat the spread of COVID-19.

Ditch the menus

Menus are notoriously bad for picking up dirt and grime. To think that the sticky menus that were touched by hundreds of customers used to be the norm is somewhat unimaginable now. Ditching menus and offering mobile ordering as well as menu boards that can be ordered from without being touched are the way to go.

Using a mobile ordering service means that people don't have to touch anything other than their phone and can collect their food from a collection point or waiter with minimal contact.



Minimising the challenges of the job

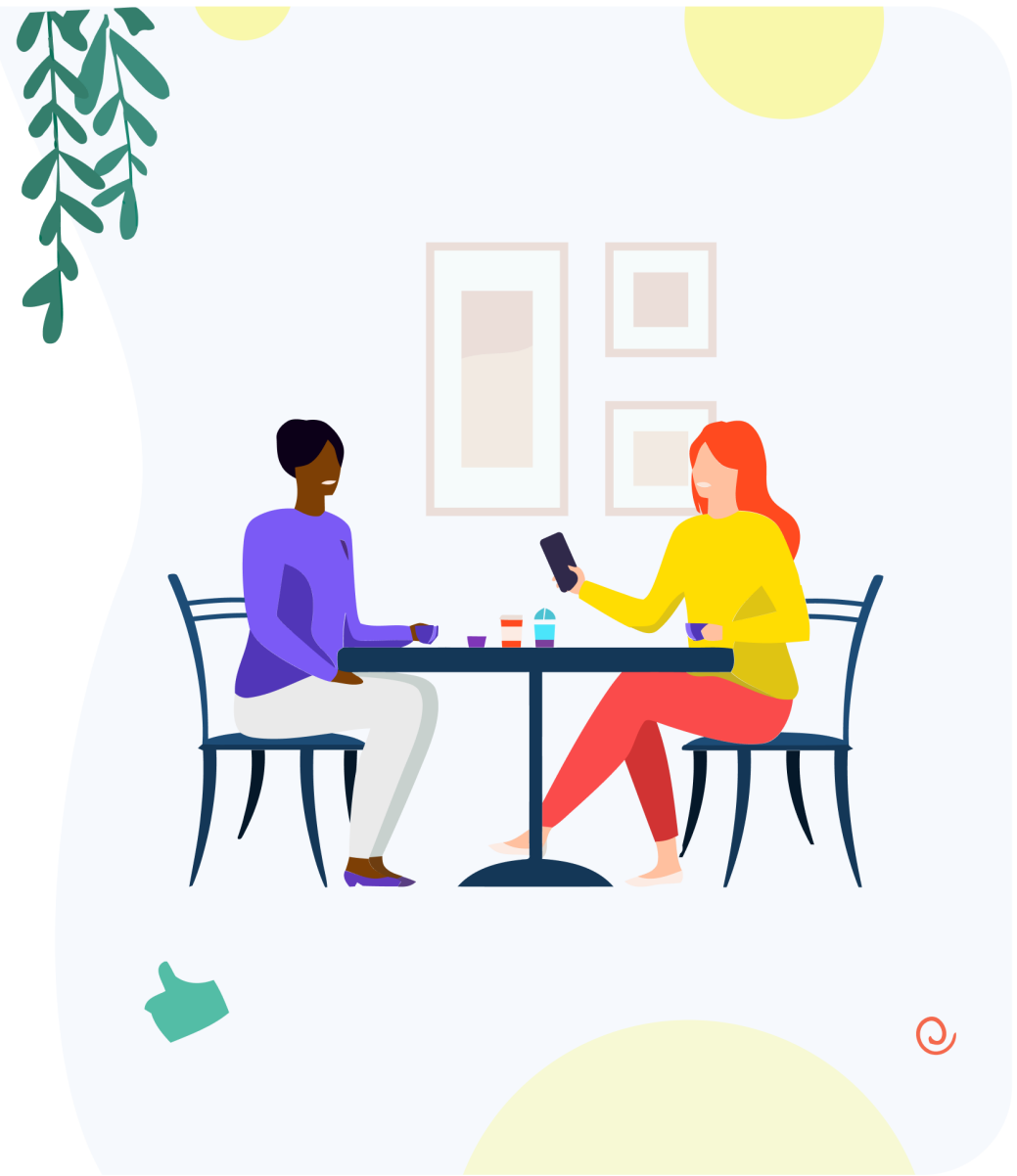
One area that has been blamed for staff shortages is hospitality jobs themselves. While people have had time to reflect on their career, many have opted to pursue a path that feels less stressful and more fulfilling.

Areas where hospitality roles themselves comes into question include:

Low pay rates

Staff shortages are inevitable when pay rates are exceptionally low. The pandemic has put a lot of hospitality venues in a difficult position, where their profits have been cut and they've had to reduce staff wages. However, if businesses can support their staff and offer a fair wage, they are much more likely to retain employees.

Many businesses are finding that with mobile ordering services acting as a support, they need less team members on the ground, and are therefore able to pay those who are working more fairly.





Lack of breaks

Giving staff regular breaks is always a goal for any kitchen team. However, anyone who has worked in hospitality knows how frantic it can get. When things are busy, it's very hard to take a break.

However, with mobile ordering reducing the need for staff members to wait tables, more break times become available for staff. By reducing the 'mad rush' that often occurs around meal times, teams can give staff more breaks and ensure that they are relaxed and happy on shift.

Horrible customers

There is no sure fire way to minimise nasty customer contact in your venue. However, what you can do is minimise the amount of things that customers have to complain about. A huge cause of frustration with customers is incorrect orders, or servers taking too long to reach their table.

With many venues reopening with mobile ordering, customers can take charge of their own ordering and minimise the need for staff contact. By putting the power in the customer's hands, you can minimise staff contact, and decrease the likelihood of complaints about service. This makes for satisfied customers, and happier team members who can minimise contact with the public.

Stock Management

In one study on chef shortages in the UK, stock management was an area of concern for many chefs, who found the process stressful and challenging. The study suggested that to combat this “restaurants could offer greater training to their staff, particularly as the need to manage new skills such as stock control are encountered”.

Technology that helps manage stock is also of great benefit, and can make the process much easier for staff. With a real time stock management system, staff needn't worry about running out of supplies, or being under stress because they don't have items on the menu.



Age Discrimination Concerns

Discrimination against older workers has been found to be an issue within hospitality. Despite older workers seeking to take on hospitality roles, there seems to be a stigma against hiring older people, perhaps for fears that they won't be able to handle the physical demands of the role.

The nature of a waiting role is very hands on and physically active. Studies have found that in one shift, waiters can cover 23,000 steps. Hence, it is easy to see how these concerns about older workers arise. One study from Auckland University found that the industry is "discriminatory towards older job seekers in both principle and practice, even though some companies' policies appeared to address age discrimination". However, with technology meaning that customers are now able to order on their phone, workers have a lot less distance to cover. A waiter's role has become more stationary, and there is less likelihood that they will be clocking up so many steps on the job.

This should be a great thing for older workers seeking employment, and will hopefully break down any physical barriers that may have existed prior to mobile ordering technology being heavily adopted.



The "Pingdemic"

It goes without saying that venues must always abide by the government advice and legal requirements with regards to COVID-19. However, there are a few solutions to the issue of the "pingdemic" wiping out entire work forces. They are:

Staff bubbles

The creation of staff bubbles has saved many businesses from losing half of their workforce in one go. A common problem with the COVID track and trace app is that if one person comes into contact with a COVID case, this can then take out an entire kitchen team if they have all been in contact.

By splitting teams into groups that regularly work with each other, and minimising contact with other groups, businesses can ensure that they don't wipe out their entire workforce if one person tests positive. These are being dubbed "staff bubbles" and whilst not the most sociable way of working, they are effective at minimising the impacts of the "pingdemic".

Speak to the self-isolation service hub

With rules changing on who does and doesn't have to isolate, employers are being urged to contact the isolation services as soon as they find out someone has tested positive in their venue.

With vaccination rates on the rise, in many cases team members may not have to isolate. However, this is always assessed on a case by case basis and of course, if any staff members have COVID-19 symptoms they shouldn't come into work.

As soon as you're aware that a worker has tested positive or been in close contact with a positive case, you should call the Self-Isolation Service Hub on 020 3743 6715 for next steps.

You're not alone

Remember, you're not alone in this. With **63% of hospitality businesses** saying that they've been affected by staff shortages, it's becoming a major issue for the industry.

But there are solutions. Discover more about Yoello - the award winning mobile ordering platform that has helped plenty of businesses survive the COVID-19 pandemic. **Reach out for more information** and get mobile ordering set up in your venue today!

yoello
Order & Pay

**The Multi-Award Winning
Mobile Ordering Solution**

In-venue | Takeaway | Delivery

