

## **COVID-19 AND KEY WORKERS IN THE FORESTRY AND WOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRY IN NORTHERN IRELAND**

The UK Government has recognised the important role of forestry and wood processing businesses in supplying wood for key goods, stating:

“Those involved in the supply chain of wood for key goods (including, but not limited to pallets, heating, packaging, tissue paper, timber harvesting, sawmills) should be considered key workers. Only necessary workers, producing key goods, should continue to attend workplaces. Working from home should be encouraged for administrative staff.”

In Northern Ireland, the Forest Service has confirmed that:

Consistent with the Defra statement “the supply of timber for the wood processing sector in Northern Ireland is also being treated as essential work in support of the key end uses as identified by Defra. Protecting the health, safety and wellbeing of people involved in the supply chain remains a top priority whilst delivering essential services in these unprecedented times.”

It is important that these key workers are able to travel to work, to take children to and from school where required, and to undertake their activities related to their role as key workers.

Further information on the forestry and wood supply chain is available at <http://www.confor.org.uk/covid-19/topics/key-workers/>

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