

Second Bakkavor worker dies amid Marks & Spencer supplier factory Covid outbreak



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Bakkavor Tilmanstone Salads must offer full pay for all covid-related absence

A second worker **has died amid a coronavirus outbreak** at a factory which produces food for Marks & Spencer.



Cases at the Bakkavor Tilmanstone Salads facility in Kent have rocketed from 35 in the third week of November to 99 as of today.

The factory has 800 employees, but many of those are office staff currently working from home.

GMB has called for the company to offer full pay to anyone taking covid-related absence, mass testing for staff and to perform a deep clean at the factory.

So far the company has only agreed to ask staff to wear face masks after pressure from GMB Union.

Bakkavor [hit the headlines in April when GMB exposed](#) a boss 'threatening to sack staff who miss work amid the outbreak'.

Frank Macklin, GMB Organiser, said:

"Sadly a second worker had died in a covid-19 related fatality. GMB's thoughts and sympathies are with their family and loved ones.

"Bakkavor Tilmanstone Salads had only experienced a few positive cases of covid-19 before November, but we have now seen the virus sweep through the factory at an alarming rate in just over four weeks.

"25% of the workforce has been affected by this outbreak – unfortunately Public Health England does not feel that this is enough to step in.



"GMB has already requested the factory close to allow mass testing of employees and a deep clean of its factory.

"The company has enlisted an independent company to clean the facility – but the process only took a few hours and the factory remained open. This is clearly not good enough.

"There is an urgent need for Bakkavor Tilmanstone Salads to pay employees their full salary if they have tested positive for covid-19 or have to self-isolate. That's the most important step they can take to eradicate this outbreak.

"GMB has lodged a formal collective grievance on behalf of our members, as we believe the health and safety of our members has been seriously compromised at the factory."

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