

Written 23 September 2020

## **C19 BUSINESS UPDATE**

The Government is taking further measures to stem the recent rise in the number of coronavirus cases.

There are several local restrictions because of Covid-19 and the Government has already reduced the number of social gatherings in England down to 6 from the 14 September.

The latest changes announced for England are:

- People should work from home wherever possible
- Pubs, bars and restaurants to close at 22:00 BST
- They will also be restricted to table service only
- Face masks compulsory for bar staff and non-seated customers, shop workers and waiters
- Limit on guests at weddings reduced from 30 to 15
- Plans to allow fans to return to sporting events paused
- "Rule of six" now applies to indoor team sports
- Fines for not wearing masks or following rules increased to £200 for first offence

The death rate remains low at 1% of deaths in England and Wales and we all hope this surge has a very different outcome to the last one. Like many businesses we have taken steps to maintain social distancing and protect our employees and clients and think that now it is a good time for all of us to reiterate these and make sure everyone is protected as best they can.

### **The key question for many of us is should we work from home or the workplace?**

The new guidance to "work from home where possible" is a change from Government advice in July and the campaign last month to encourage people back to the workplace. The best we can do here is keep you informed of any changes in the guidance as they come out.

In Scotland, First Minister Nicola Sturgeon announced:

- A ban on meeting inside other people's homes.
- A 10pm curfew on pubs and restaurants from Friday 25<sup>th</sup>.
- Up to six people from two different households can meet outdoors, including in private gardens.
- There will be no limit on the number of children under 12 who can meet or play together outdoors.
- Young people aged 12 to 18 are exempt from the two-household limit and can meet outdoors in groups of up to six.

Ms Sturgeon raised the possibility of a two-week "circuit breaker" with further restrictions for Scotland in October, although she said no decision had been made.

In Wales up to 30 people can meet outdoors and four households can form an “extended household with a maximum of six people aged 11+.

For Northern Ireland six from two households in a private garden and up to 15 in a public place can meet. There are no social visits to private homes but up to 15 people can meet at other venues.

It is expected these rules will change and we will keep you informed of them as and when they happen.

For FAQ’S see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do>

## KICKSTART SCHEME LATEST NEWS

The Kickstart Scheme provides funding to employers to create new 6-month job placements for young people who are currently on Universal Credit and at risk of long-term unemployment.

Funding will cover for each job placement:

- 100% of the relevant National Minimum Wage for 25 hours a week
- The associated employer National Insurance contributions
- Employer minimum automatic enrolment contributions

There will also be extra funding to support young people to build their experience and help them move into sustained employment after they have completed their Kickstart Scheme funded job.

There have been several updates regarding the Kickstart scheme including a new video which can be found at: <https://youtu.be/lr8OkmPy9YA>



For the latest updates see:

Check if you can apply for a grant through the Kickstart Scheme:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-if-you-can-apply-for-a-grant-through-the-kickstart-scheme>

Apply for a grant through the Kickstart Scheme:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-a-grant-through-the-kickstart-scheme>

Check if you can apply for a Kickstart Scheme grant on behalf of a group of employers: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-if-you-can-apply-for-a-grant-as-a-representative-of-a-group-of-employers-through-the-kickstart-scheme>

Find someone to apply for a Kickstart Scheme grant on your behalf:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/find-someone-to-apply-for-a-kickstart-scheme-grant-on-your-behalf>

#### **ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR SERVICE CHARITIES**

The Office for Veterans' Affairs (OVA) and the MOD have announced that 100 UK Armed Forces charities will benefit from nearly £6 million of extra funding to support serving personnel, veterans and their families during the coronavirus pandemic.

For more information see: [https://www.gov.uk/government/news/extra-funding-for-service-charities-as-veterans-support-is-stepped-up?utm\\_source=453acfe1-9b15-410f-892e-2c4ddd5aea50&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=immediate](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/extra-funding-for-service-charities-as-veterans-support-is-stepped-up?utm_source=453acfe1-9b15-410f-892e-2c4ddd5aea50&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate)

#### **NEW PACKAGE TO ENFORCE SELF ISOLATION**

People will be required by law to self-isolate from 28 September, supported by payment of £500 for those on lower incomes who cannot work from home and have lost income as a result. New fines for those breaching self-isolation rules will start at £1,000 – bringing this in line with the penalty for breaking quarantine after international travel - but could increase to up to £10,000 for repeat offences and for the most egregious breaches, including for those preventing others from self-isolating.

For example, this could include business owners who threaten self-isolating staff with redundancy if they do not come to work, sending a clear message that this will not be tolerated.

A number of steps will be taken to make sure that people are complying with the rules, these include:

- NHS Test and Trace call handlers making regular contact with those self-isolating, with the ability to escalate any suspicion of non-compliance to Local Authorities and local police;

- Using police resources to check compliance in highest incidence areas and in high-risk groups, based on local intelligence;
- Investigating and prosecuting high-profile and egregious cases of non-compliance; and
- Acting on instances where third parties have identified others who have tested positive but are not self-isolating.

Recognising that self-isolation is one of the most powerful tools for controlling the transmission of Covid-19, this new Test and Trace Support payment of £500 should ensure that those on low incomes are able to self-isolate without worry about their finances.

Just under 4 million people who are in receipt of benefits in England will be eligible for this payment, which will be available to those who are required to self-isolate from 28 September.

Local Authorities will be working to set up these self-isolation support schemes and the Government expects them to be in place by 12 October. Those who start to self-isolate from 28 September will receive backdated payments once the scheme is set up in their Local Authority.

This financial support comes as the government places a legal requirement on people to self-isolate when instructed to by NHS Test and Trace and introduces tougher fines for breaking the rules.

See: [https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-package-to-support-and-enforce-self-isolation?utm\\_source=9bbf854f-0ede-4ae1-a21e-4e4b2c859357&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=immediate](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-package-to-support-and-enforce-self-isolation?utm_source=9bbf854f-0ede-4ae1-a21e-4e4b2c859357&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate)

## NHS TEST AND TRACE SERVICE IN THE WORKPLACE



The NHS Test and Trace service:

- provides testing for anyone who has symptoms of coronavirus to find out if they have the virus
- gets in touch with anyone who has had a positive test result to help them share information about any close recent contacts they have had
- alerts those contacts, where necessary, and notifies them they need to self-isolate to help stop the spread of the virus

This updated guidance explains how employers and businesses can play their part in the NHS Test and Trace service to slow the spread of the virus, protect the health and care system and save lives.

This guidance is for England only.

The law requires that employers take steps to keep workers and visitors safe. The Government states that by following the 5 steps for working safely, along with sector-specific guidance, employers can reduce the risk of co-workers having to self-isolate if a member of staff tests positive for COVID-19.

The NHS Test and Trace service does not change existing guidance that employees should work from home wherever possible.

Employers are required to:

- make their workplaces as safe as possible (where working from home is not possible)
- request that workers self-isolate if they have been asked to do so
- support their workers when in isolation

The NHS Test and Trace service:

- provides free testing for anyone who has symptoms of coronavirus
- asks those that test positive and their close contacts to self-isolate to stop the spread of the virus in the workplace

The Government states employers (and the self-employed) must continue to ensure the health, safety and welfare of their employees. They also have similar obligations in respect of other people, for example agency workers, contractors, volunteers, customers, suppliers and other visitors.

For the full guidance see: [https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-workplace-guidance?utm\\_source=0fd4d0af-b499-43bc-b9e9-f7bddca0bfd3&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=immediate](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-workplace-guidance?utm_source=0fd4d0af-b499-43bc-b9e9-f7bddca0bfd3&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate)

## **TRAVEL CORRIDORS – THE LATEST LIST AND GET EMAIL UPDATES**

The list of countries, territories and regions from where you can travel to England and may not have to self-isolate is regularly updated and you can now sign up for email alerts on the changes. This is useful if you or your employees have to travel abroad as part of your job.

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## Sign up to get emails

Get emails when information changes on GOV.UK about: Aviation passenger experience.

This will include: Airline complaint handling, airport accessibility, ATOL and holiday protection schemes.

There might be 0 to 5 changes a week.

You can choose how often you want to receive emails.

Sign up

See: <https://www.gov.uk/email-signup/?topic=/transport/aviation-passenger-experience>

### **HOSPITALITY, THE TOURISM AND LEISURE INDUSTRY, CLOSE CONTACT SERVICES AND LOCAL AUTHORITY FACILITIES; MAINTAINING RECORDS OF STAFF, CUSTOMERS AND VISITORS TO SUPPORT NHS TEST AND TRACE**

Designated venues in certain sectors must have a system in place to request and record contact details of their customers, visitors and staff.

Venues in hospitality, the tourism and leisure industry, close contact services and local authority facilities must:

- ask at least one member of every party of customers or visitors (up to 6 people) to provide their name and contact details
- keep a record of all staff working on their premises and shift times on a given day and their contact details
- keep these records of customers, visitors and staff for 21 days and provide data to NHS Test and Trace if requested
- display an official NHS QR code poster from 24 September 2020, so that customers and visitors can 'check in' using this option as an alternative to providing their contact details
- adhere to General Data Protection Regulations
- Hospitality venues must also refuse entry to those who refuse to participate.

 **GOV.UK** **COVID 19 - Poster generator**

**BETA** This is a new service – your [feedback](#) will help us to improve it.

## Where should we send your poster?

Your NHS QR code poster will be sent to this email address. We will ask you to verify this email address.

Email address

[Continue](#)

Failure to do any of these requirements will result in fixed penalty fines

This guidance provides further instructions on how to fulfil these requirements in a proportionate and effective way. This was recently updated to reflect the new legal requirements for designated venues to collect contact details and display official NHS QR code posters.

See: [https://www.gov.uk/guidance/maintaining-records-of-staff-customers-and-visitors-to-support-nhs-test-and-trace?utm\\_source=26574a86-d87a-46bf-8383-0035631a4235&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=immediate](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/maintaining-records-of-staff-customers-and-visitors-to-support-nhs-test-and-trace?utm_source=26574a86-d87a-46bf-8383-0035631a4235&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate)

## WORKING SAFELY DURING CORONAVIRUS

The guidance for Restaurants, pubs, bars and takeaway services has been updated with information on penalties for breaching the rules (section 1.1) and updated guidance on Test and Trace data and display of NHS QR codes (section 2.1).

See: [https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19?utm\\_source=52a40554-a921-4613-9460-dc44743ace97&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=immediate](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19?utm_source=52a40554-a921-4613-9460-dc44743ace97&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate)

## BUSINESS EVICTIONS - NEW GUIDANCE

Commercial tenants will be protected from the risk of eviction until the end of 2020.

This move will help those businesses most in need of additional support to remain in their premises without the threat of eviction for the rest of this year, giving them the chance to focus on rebuilding their business over the autumn and Christmas period.

See: [https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-extends-support-to-stop-business-evictions-this-year?utm\\_source=ef3c3b5a-92e8-4397-b84e-95b3924f40dd&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=immediate](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-extends-support-to-stop-business-evictions-this-year?utm_source=ef3c3b5a-92e8-4397-b84e-95b3924f40dd&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate)