

## Coronavirus Latest Information, Advice and Useful Links (Updated 13 May 2020)

### Special Edition: UK Government's Coronavirus Recovery Plan

This is a very fast-moving situation and our focus right now is on delaying the spread of coronavirus and ensuring our services are responding well. This is clearly hugely important and requires all of our attention.

Following the Prime Minister's address to the nation on Sunday night, **the government has now published its plan for rebuilding and recovering from the coronavirus.**

Given the importance of this plan, and the number of announcements and guidelines which have followed, this special edition of the briefing aims to bring together the latest information and key messages for the public for our elected members.

#### UK Government's Coronavirus Recovery Plan

The Government has published a [roadmap for how and when the UK will adjust its response to the coronavirus crisis](#). The document describes the progress the UK has made to date in tackling the coronavirus outbreak and sets out the plans for moving to the next phase of its response to the virus.

The strategy sets out a cautious roadmap to easing existing measures in a safe and measured way, subject to successfully controlling the virus and being able to monitor and react to its spread.

The roadmap will be kept constantly under review as the epidemic, and the world's understanding of it, develops.

Below provides a summary of the key steps outlined in the Plan.

#### **Step One (Comes into effect on Wednesday 13 May 2020):**

- **For the foreseeable future, workers should continue to work from home rather than their normal physical workplace, wherever possible.** People who are able to work at home make it possible for people who have to attend workplaces in person to do so while minimising the risk of overcrowding on transport and in public places.
- **All workers who cannot work from home should travel to work if their workplace is open.** Sectors of the economy that are allowed to be open should be open, for example this includes food production, construction, manufacturing, logistics, distribution and scientific research in laboratories. Food retailers and food markets, hardware stores, garden centres (from Wednesday 13 May) and certain other retailers can remain open. As soon as practicable, workplaces should be set up to meet the new COVID-19 secure guidelines.
- When travelling **everybody (including critical workers) should continue to avoid public transport wherever possible**, but where they are using public transport social distancing should be followed rigorously.
- **Government is advising that people should aim to wear a face-covering** in enclosed spaces where social distancing is not always possible and they come into contact with others that they do not normally meet, for example on public transport or in some shops.
- People may **exercise outside as many times each day as they wish**. You can also sit and rest outside – exercise or recreation can be alone, with members of your household, or with **one** other person from outside your household, while keeping two metres apart at all times.
- **People may drive to outdoor open spaces** so long as they respect social distancing guidance while they are there.
- **Vulnerable people should continue to take particular care to minimise contact with others outside their households. Those in the clinically extremely vulnerable group are strongly advised to stay at home at all times and avoid any face-to-face contact.**

*\*The content and timing of the second and third steps will depend on the most up-to-date assessment of the risk posed by the virus.*

#### **Step Two (Will come into effect no earlier than Monday 1 June 2020)**

- **A phased return for early years settings and schools.** The Government expects children to be able to return to early years settings, and for Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 to be back in school in smaller sizes, from this point. Secondary schools and further education colleges should also prepare to begin some face to face contact with Year 10 and 12 pupils.
- **Opening non-essential retail.** Further guidance on the approach expected on the approach taken to phasing, including which businesses will be covered in each phase and timeframes involved. All other sectors that are currently closed, including hospitality and personal care, are not able to re-open at this point because of the higher risk of transmission.
- **Permitting cultural and sporting events to take place behind closed-doors** for broadcast, while avoiding the risk of large-scale social contact.
- **Re-opening more local public transport in urban areas**, subject to strict measures.
- The Government is also exploring options to allow **those who are isolated some more social contact**, and to reduce the most harmful effects of the current social restrictions, while continuing to limit the risk of chains of transmission.

### **Step Three (Will come into effect no earlier than 4 July 2020)**

- **Open at least some of the remaining businesses and premises that have been required to close**, including personal care (such as hairdressers and beauty salons), hospitality (such as food service providers, pubs and accommodation), public places (such as places of worship) and leisure facilities (like cinemas). These businesses must meet the COVID-19 Secure guidelines.
- Some venues which are, by design, crowded and where it may prove difficult to enact distancing may still not be able to re-open safely at this point, or may be able to open safely only in part. Nevertheless, the Government will wish to open as many businesses and public places as the data and information at the time allows.
- In order to facilitate the fastest possible re-opening of these types of higher-risk businesses and public places, the Government will carefully phase and pilot re-openings to test their ability to adopt the new COVID-19 Secure guidelines.

### **Stay Alert To Stay Safe**

In his statement to the nation on Sunday 10 May, the Prime Minister stated that everyone's actions have helped to reduce the transmission of coronavirus in our communities, and that as the UK moves to the next phase in our fight against coronavirus, the most important thing we can do is to "stay alert, control the virus, and in doing so, save lives".

In line with the announcement, the Cabinet Office has now published [guidance on staying alert and safe](#) which clearly set out the new rules that come into force on Wednesday 13 May (as set out in Step 1 of the Government's Coronavirus Recovery Plan outlined in the previous section).

#### **The new 'Stay Alert' messaging reiterates the existing messaging for the public to:**

- stay at home as much as possible
- work from home if you can
- limit contact with other people
- keep your distance if you go out (2 metres apart wherever possible).
- wash your hands regularly
- Self-isolate if you or anyone in your household has symptoms.

#### **Frequently Asked Questions:**

The Cabinet Office [FAQ document](#) on what the public can and can't do during the coronavirus outbreak has also been updated to reflect the new rules and changes which come into force on Wednesday 13 May. For example:

- **Can I meet my friends and family in the park?** You can meet one other person from outside your household if you are outdoors. Public gatherings of more than 2 people from different households are prohibited in law.
- **Does easing restrictions apply to healthy 70 year olds and over?** The advice for those aged 70 and over continues to be that they should take particular care to minimise contact with others outside their household.
- **How long will shielding be in place?** We've advised individuals with very specific medical conditions to shield until the end of June and to do everything they can to stay at home. This is because we believe they are likely to be at the greatest risk of serious complications from coronavirus.

## Safe travel

The Government has produced [guidance](#) to help people understand how to travel safely during the coronavirus outbreak in England. It provides guidance for walking, cycling, using private vehicles (for example cars and vans), and travelling by taxis and public transport (for example trains, buses, coaches and ferries).

Key messages in the guidance include:

- Before you travel, consider if your journey is necessary and if you can, **stay local**.
- **Reduce your travel** by working from home where possible and shopping less frequently and shopping locally.
- **Consider walking and cycling** if you can as this will reduce pressure on the public transport system and the road network. If you can, wear a face covering if you need to use public transport.
- If you do travel, thinking carefully about the times, routes and ways you travel will mean we will all have more space to stay safe.
- **Maintain social distancing** when you walk or cycle, for example when approaching or passing other pedestrians or waiting at crossings and traffic lights, and when on public transport.
- When finishing your journey, **wash your hands for at least 20 seconds** or sanitise your hands as soon as possible.

## Staying safe outside the home

The Government has published [guidance](#) that sets out the principles the public should follow to ensure that time spent outside of home is as safe as possible. It asks the public to adopt the principles set out in the guidance wherever possible. The government is also using these principles as the basis of discussions with businesses, unions, local government and many other stakeholders, to agree how the principles should apply in different settings to make them safer.

The public are asked to act to lower the risk of transmission of the virus. This includes:

- Keep your distance (2 metres apart wherever possible) and avoid being face-to-face with people outside your household
- If you can, **wear a face covering\*** in an enclosed space where social distancing isn't possible and where you will come into contact with people you do not normally meet
- Wash your hands often using soap and water or sanitiser and avoid touching your face.
- Reduce the number of people you spend time with in a work setting.
- Avoid crowds.
- Wash your clothes regularly.

\*The Government has now advised the [public to consider wearing face coverings](#) in enclosed public spaces such as shops, trains and buses to help reduce the spread of coronavirus. [Guidance](#) is available providing instructions on how to wear and make a cloth face covering.

## Education, schools and settings

As part of national social distancing measures to limit the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19), the Government limited the numbers of children and young people attending educational and childcare settings, to ensure that pupils and staff attending could do so safely. That is why, since 23 March 2020, education and childcare settings have only been open to priority groups (vulnerable children and children of critical workers). Throughout this period, the work and dedication of critical workers has been crucial to our country.

The Government anticipate, with further progress, that we may be able, from the week commencing 1 June 2020 welcome back more children to early years, school and further education settings. This will only happen if the five key tests set by government justify the changes at the time, including that the rate of infection is decreasing and the enabling programmes set out in the Roadmap are operating effectively.

As a result, the Government are asking schools, colleges and childcare providers to plan on this basis, ahead of confirmation that these tests are met.

New guidelines outline the next steps for the phased wider opening of educational and childcare settings.

The Department for Education has published an FAQ document for parents and carers about the wider opening of nurseries, schools and colleges, transport, attendance, free school meals and remote education.

[INFO TO BE INCLUDED FROM CS]

### Going safely back to work

The Prime Minister announced that **all workers who cannot work from home should travel to work if their workplace is open.**

The government has stated that sectors of the economy that are allowed to be open should be open, for example this includes food production, construction, manufacturing, logistics, distribution and scientific research in laboratories. Food retailers and food markets, hardware stores, garden centres (from Wednesday 13 May) and certain other retailers can remain open. Workplaces should be set up to meet the new COVID-19 secure guidelines.

The Government has published guidance for employers to help them get their businesses back up and running and workplaces operating safely from Wednesday 13 May. The announcement is available [here](#).

This sets out steps for businesses focused on 5 key points, which should be implemented as soon as it is practical:

**1. Work from home, if you can** - All reasonable steps should be taken by employers to help people work from home. But for those who cannot work from home and whose workplace has not been told to close, our message is clear: you should go to work. Staff should speak to their employer about when their workplace will open.

**2. Carry out a COVID-19 risk assessment, in consultation with workers or trade unions** - This guidance operates within current health and safety employment and equalities legislation and employers will need to carry out COVID-19 risk assessments in consultation with their workers or trade unions, to establish what guidelines to put in place. If possible, employers should publish the results of their risk assessments on their website and we expect all businesses with over 50 employees to do so.

**3. Maintain 2 metres social distancing, wherever possible** - Employers should re-design workspaces to maintain 2 metre distances between people by staggering start times, creating one-way walk-throughs, opening more entrances and exits, or changing seating layouts in break rooms.

**4. Where people cannot be 2 metres apart, manage transmission risk** - Employers should look into putting barriers in shared spaces, creating workplace shift patterns or fixed teams minimising the number of people in contact with one another, or ensuring colleagues are facing away from each other.

**5. Reinforcing cleaning processes**

There are 8 sector-based workplace guidance documents now available under [Working safely during coronavirus \(COVID-19\) guidance](#).

As part of the announcement, the government has made available up to an extra £14 million for the HSE, equivalent to an increase of 10% of their budget, for extra call centre employees, inspectors and equipment if needed. [Digital products](#), that can be used to raise awareness of the announcement, have also been published.

#### Other national announcements

- **Furlough scheme extended** - The [Chancellor has announced](#) (12 May) that the government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme will remain open until the end of October. Furloughed workers across UK will continue to receive 80% of their current salary, up to £2,500 a month. From the start of August, furloughed workers will be able to return to work part-time with employers being asked to pay a percentage towards the salaries of their furloughed staff. The employer payments will substitute the contribution the government is currently making, ensuring that staff continue to receive 80% of their salary, up to £2,500 a month.
- **Funding for food aid charities** - The government have announced that those that run a front-line food aid charity can apply for a grant of up to £100,000 to help them to continue to provide food to the vulnerable. Further information on this fund can be found [here](#).

#### Additional local information

- **New bereavement service** - dealing with bereavement during this difficult time has become even harder. In response to this, the Norfolk Resilience Forum has set up a pro-active approach offering extra support to those who have lost a loved one. From this week, Norfolk County Council, in conjunction with the Working Together Partnership, will offer anybody who is calling to book an appointment to register a death a 30-minute bereavement support call. This new initiative aims to help people, who due to Covid-19 restrictions, have not been able to visit hospitals or care homes, or to travel to say goodbye to loved ones or to fulfil the funeral arrangements, as they would have wanted to with their friends and family. The calls will be made by trained members of the County Council's Library and Information Services and offer the opportunity for people to be supported by having a sympathetic, listening ear. Once the call is complete, the caller may be referred, if needed, for ongoing, longer-term support from a bereavement organisation. It will also be possible to defer counselling to when a person is ready to receive the bereavement service.
- **Use of PPE by voluntary services** - The use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is an important element of infection control in clinical and health care settings and the government have provided very clear advice on when and where it is appropriate to use it. Whilst there has been understandable focus on the need to make sure PPE is provided to those that need it, we must remember that the most effective ways we can all limit the spread of the virus is to reduce contact with others to only the essential tasks in line with government advice, where this cannot be avoided keeping your distance (2m) as far as is possible, as well as implementing hygiene measures, both environmental cleaning and personal hygiene. Government advice is clear, we should not encourage the precautionary use of extra PPE to protect against COVID-19 outside the prescribed circumstances. The demand on PPE is currently high, so it is important that we support the governments call to reserve PPE, including face masks for those who need them such as health and social care workers. Most voluntary activities, such as delivering food or other supplies, or befriending services, can be carried out in a safe way maintaining social distancing and good hygiene practices. PPE is not required or recommended. Where voluntary organisations are undertaking roles that mean they need PPE, such as working in an adult care setting, they have access to the emergency Resilience Forum stocks in the same way as other organisations.
- **PPE in schools** - Comprehensive guidance on PPE has also been made available to schools. Whilst schools are responsible for sourcing their own PPE, as with any other resources, NCC will be making centrally sourced stock available to schools, in recognition of the difficulties and high cost in procuring adequate supplies.

#### Trusted sources of information

- The most recent **verified data on cases in the UK and Norfolk** is available from Public Health England [here](#).
- Everyone has a key role in promoting [www.nhs.uk/coronavirus](http://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus) and [www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus) as **trusted sources of information to the public**. It is really important to ensure people go to the right sources of information and keep up to date with how to look after themselves.
- PHE is addressing **common questions** on its [Public Health Matters blog](#).

- **Keep up to date:** We have [a dedicated webpage for coronavirus updates](#) in Norfolk, and impacts on Norfolk County Council services. This is updated regularly so please do re-visit this page.
- The latest information on the **government response** can be found [here](#).