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## To everyone working in the retail sector

As shops across England reopen their doors today, we welcome back thousands of shop owners and retail workers. I know how difficult it must have been for you to close and the particular challenges the UK's retail sector has faced over the past few months. I also appreciate how hard you have been working to get shops ready and safe to reopen.

On 25 May, we published our updated Covid-secure Safer Working Guidance for people who work in or run shops (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/shops-and-branches>) to give you and your customers the information and confidence to return safely. This guidance was developed in close consultation with both national and independent retailers, business representation groups, trades unions, Public Health England and the Health and Safety Executive. I would like to thank the British Retail Consortium, the Association of Convenience Stores, the British Independent Retailers Association, and the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers, along with many individual retailers and other organisations, for their valuable input into its development.

The guidance has benefitted enormously from the experience of retailers who have remained open throughout the lockdown and rapidly adapted to introduce social distancing early on. I would like to echo the comments made by the Business Secretary in his letter of 8 April thanking retail workers who have continued to work in our shops, online and supply chains throughout this challenging period. Your tremendous efforts have not only ensured the public have had continued and safe access to the goods they need over the last three months, you have also supported your communities to adhere to social distancing guidelines effectively and have helped to control the virus.

In this new normal, we are all getting used to shopping with social distancing and you have a vital role to play in ensuring it is adhered to in stores across the country. As we start to reopen closed sectors of the economy, we all need to continue to adapt. For example, I would encourage everyone to consider walking, cycling or driving to work or to the shops where possible to reduce the pressure on public transport networks operating with reduced capacity. The Department for Transport have produced guidance that may be of use (<https://extranet.dft.gov.uk/safer-transport-campaign/employee-guidance/>).

Finally, I would like to thank the retail sector for rising to the challenges of Covid-19. I have been astonished by the resilience you have shown throughout this crisis, it has been an incredible effort by all of you. Whether you have been working throughout this period or you are returning to work today, we support you and look forward to our incredible retail sector's successful return to business.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Paul Scully', is centered below the text 'Yours sincerely,'.

**PAUL SCULLY MP**  
Minister for Small Business, Consumers & Labour Markets  
Minister for London