

**GOV.UK GUIDANCE  
CLOSING CERTAIN BUSINESSES AND VENUES IN ENGLAND**

**This guidance applies to England, except for where local restrictions apply. See [GOV.UK](#) for the list of local restrictions.**

On 23 March 2020, the Government required by law that certain businesses and venues were to close in order to reduce the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). A number of businesses providing essential goods and services were permitted to remain open.

Though there has been tragic loss of life, thanks to the hard work and sacrifice of the British people, the UK slowed the spread of coronavirus. Following earlier easements in May and June, further businesses and venues were allowed to open in July as part of the Government's plan to return life to as near normal as we can.

The Prime Minister announced on 31 July that the changes that had been proposed for 1 August would be delayed until at least 15 August, due to concerns of rising prevalence of COVID-19 in the community within England. After reviewing the latest data, the Government announced on 13 August that further businesses and venues would be able to reopen from 15 August.

Certain businesses and venues needed to remain closed after 15 August (see Section 3 below). These restrictions will be kept under review and it remains our intention, subject to the prevalence of the virus, to open these businesses venues as soon as it is safe to do so.

The Government's announcement also set out other changes to guidance on indoor performance, close contact services, wedding and civil partnership receptions, and the piloting of spectators at live sport events

These changes do not apply in any protected area for which there are local restrictions.

To prevent the spread of the virus, Government has announced that from 14 September, there will be legal limits on how many people someone can spend time with in a group at any one time.

Whether indoors or outdoors people from different households must not meet in groups of larger than 6. This limit does not apply to meetings of a single household group or support bubble which is more than 6 people.

Venues following COVID-19 secure guidelines can host more than 6 people in total, but no one should visit or socialise in a group of greater than 6, unless they are from the same household or support bubble. See further information in Section 5, including links to relevant guidance on exemptions.

**1. Reopening of businesses and venues from 15 August**

The following businesses and venues were permitted to reopen from 15 August, as outlined in the table below:

- Bowling alleys
- Indoor skating rinks
- Indoor play areas, including soft play areas
- Casinos
- Exhibition halls and conference centres (although this should only be for government endorsed pilots)

<b>Guidance to ensure safe reopening of businesses and venues from 15 August</b>	
<b>Business or venue</b>	<b>Guidance for reopening safely</b>
<b>Recreation and leisure</b>	

Bowling alleys Indoor skating rinks Indoor play areas, including soft play Casinos	See <a href="#">here</a> for guidance for bowling alleys. See <a href="#">here</a> for guidance on indoor skating rinks as part of wider guidance for providers of sports and gym/leisure facilities. See <a href="#">here</a> for guidance on indoor play areas. See <a href="#">here</a> for guidance on casinos.
<b>Non-residential institutions</b>	
Exhibition halls and conference centres	These are allowed to open but should be for Government-endorsed pilots only. They should not be open to wider business meetings or events until 1 October at the earliest and this will be subject to prevalence of COVID-19 remaining low. See <a href="#">here</a> for guidance for exhibition halls and conference centres.

## 2. Businesses and venues already permitted to reopen

The following businesses were permitted in law to reopen in June and July following amendments to the law. Links to guidance to ensure their safe reopening are provided.

<b><u>Guidance to ensure safe reopening of businesses and venues</u></b>	
<b><u>Business or venue</u></b>	<b><u>Guidance for re-opening safely</u></b>
<b>Retail</b>	
All retail is permitted to be open. Non-essential retail was permitted to reopen from 15 June.	See <a href="#">here</a> for guidance for people who work in or run shops, branches, stores or similar environments.  From 24 July, face coverings must be worn in shops and supermarkets. See <a href="#">here</a> for guidance on this.
<b>Food and Drink</b>	
All indoor and outdoor hospitality including, cafes, bars, pubs, and restaurants, can open unless:  They are a part of the premises of a business or venue which must remain closed; or are a part of the premises of a business or venue which must remain closed, and are not in self-contained units that can be accessed from the outside. Please see Section 3 for	People are strongly advised to only visit a restaurant in their household groups or support bubbles (where an adult who lives alone or with dependent children, can spend time with one other household indoors), or with one other household, or with up to five other people outdoors.  Venues should not allow standing drinking and eating. Tables and

<p>businesses and venues that must remain closed.</p>	<p>remote or server ordering are strongly advised.</p> <p>Venues should take account of the <a href="#">Performing Arts guidance</a> in organising any performances of drama, comedy, and music.</p> <p>All food and drink establishments are strongly advised to follow <a href="#">guidance on how to open and operate safely</a>.</p> <p><a href="#">Guidance</a> on weddings should also be followed.</p> <p>Wedding receptions and celebrations may take place with up to 30 people, in the form of a sit-down meal. See guidance on <a href="#">wedding receptions and celebrations</a>.</p>
<p><b>Accommodation</b></p>	
<p>Hotels, hostels, bed and breakfast accommodation, holiday apartments or homes, cottages or bungalows, campsites, caravan parks or boarding houses</p>	<p>Shared sleeping spaces (e.g. dormitory rooms) should not open to any groups, except those travelling in accordance with the current Government <a href="#">guidance</a> on social mixing outside of household groups/outside of the home.</p> <p>Other shared facilities (including shared showers and kitchens, but not toilets) should not open, except on campsites (and only in accordance with Government guidelines for cleaning and usage)</p> <p>All accommodation providers are strongly advised to follow <a href="#">guidance on opening accommodation safely</a>.</p> <p>Guidance can also be found on safely operating <a href="#">services in the visitor economy</a>.</p>
<p><b>Personal care</b></p>	

<p>Hair salons and barbers, including mobile hair businesses</p> <p>Spas</p> <p>Nail bars and salons and beauty salons</p> <p>Tanning booths and salons</p> <p>Massage parlours</p> <p>Tattoo parlours</p> <p>Body and skin piercing services</p>	<p>All close-contact service providers are strongly advised to follow <a href="#">guidance on how to work safely</a>.</p> <p>Face coverings are required by law to be worn in a number of indoor settings including: hair salons, barbers, nail salons, massage parlours, tattoo and piercing parlours). See below for a full list of setting this applies to and see <a href="#">here</a> for guidance.</p>
<p><b>Recreation and leisure</b></p>	
<p>Cinemas</p> <p>Theatres and concert halls</p> <p>Funfairs, theme parks, adventure parks and activities</p> <p>Swimming pools and water parks</p> <p>Gyms</p> <p>Sports courts and facilities</p> <p>Playgrounds</p> <p>Museums and galleries</p> <p>Bingo halls</p> <p>Outdoor skating rinks</p> <p>Amusement arcades and other entertainment centres</p> <p>Model villages</p> <p>Social clubs</p> <p>Indoor and outdoor attractions at aquariums, zoos, safari parks, farms, wildlife centres and any place where animals are exhibited to the public as an attraction</p> <p>Indoor and outdoor areas of visitor attractions including, gardens, heritage sites, film studios and landmarks</p>	<p>See <a href="#">here</a> for guidance for providers of sports and leisure facilities.</p> <p>It is strongly advised that close-contact activity only occurs within a household group/bubble or with one other household/bubble. See <a href="#">here</a> for guidance on forming support bubbles.</p> <p>All recreation and leisure businesses and facilities are strongly advised to follow guidance on <a href="#">operating within the visitor economy</a>.</p> <p>All operators of heritage locations are strongly advised to follow guidance on <a href="#">operating heritage locations</a>.</p> <p>See <a href="#">guidance for managing playgrounds and outdoor gyms</a>.</p> <p>Venues should take account of the <a href="#">Performing Arts guidance</a> in organising any performances of drama, comedy, and music.</p> <p>Close contact activity such as visiting an entertainment centre is strongly advised to only be conducted within a household group/bubble or with one other household/bubble.</p> <p>Face coverings are required by law to be worn in a number of public indoor settings including: visitor attractions and entertainment venues. See below for a full list of setting this applies to</p>

	and see <a href="#">here</a> for guidance.
<b>Non-residential institutions</b>	
<p>Places of worship</p> <p>Crematoria, including any buildings and grounds</p>	<p>All places of worship are strongly advised to follow <a href="#">guidance on their safe use</a>.</p> <p><a href="#">Guidance on weddings and civil partnerships</a> should also be followed.</p> <p>See <a href="#">here</a> for funerals guidance.</p> <p>Face coverings are required by law to be worn in a number of public indoor settings including places of worship. See below for a full list of setting this applies to and see <a href="#">here</a> for guidance.</p> <p>Wedding receptions and celebrations may take place with up to 30 people in the form of a sit-down meal. See guidance on <a href="#">wedding receptions and celebrations</a>.</p>
<p>Community Centres</p> <p>Libraries</p>	<p>Those managing community centres, village halls and other community facilities are strongly advised to follow <a href="#">guidance on re-opening safely</a>.</p> <p>Face coverings are required by law to be worn in a greater number of public indoor settings including public libraries. See below for a full list of setting this applies to and see <a href="#">here</a> for guidance.</p>

### **3. Businesses and venues which remain closed**

**All businesses and venues can remain open, or reopen as stated under Sections 1 and 2 above, except for those in the list below, which remain closed in law:**

- Nightclubs, dance halls, and discotheques
- Sexual entertainment venues and hostess bars

All indoor and outdoor hospitality including, cafes, bars, pubs, and restaurants, can open unless they are a part of the premises of a business or venue which must remain closed as set out above, unless they are in self-contained units that can be accessed from the outside.

We hope to continue to phase reopening further businesses as soon as possible, and will work with local councils which have a high prevalence of COVID-19 to consider local measures and guidance reflecting where further business openings could be delayed.

### **4. Test and trace**

Continued opening up of the economy, and keeping local authority services and places of worship open, are reliant on NHS Test and Trace being used to minimise transmission of the virus. In order to ensure that businesses and venues are able to remain open, we are now mandating that certain businesses and venues must ask one member of every party who accesses their services to provide their contact details through NHS Test and Trace. You must have a system to ensure that you can collect contact information for your customers in place.

Many businesses and venues have bookings systems that can be used to effectively collect contact details for their customers, and if you do not already do so, you should do so in order to ensure that you are compliant with the new regulations on NHS Test and Trace.

Any designated business that is found not to be compliant with these regulations will be subject to financial penalties. Any local authority service that is found not to be compliant with these regulations will be subject to financial penalties. It is vital that you comply with these regulations to help keep people safe, and to stay open.

You must also keep records of staff working patterns for a period of 21 days to assist NHS Test and Trace contain clusters or outbreaks.

You can find out more about how NHS Test and Trace works [here](#).

### **5. Social contact**

To prevent the spread of the virus, from 14 September there will be legal limits on how many people someone can spend time with in a group at any one time. Whether indoors or outdoors people from different households must not meet in groups of larger than 6. This limit does not apply to meetings of a single household group or support bubble which is more than 6 people.

Venues following COVID-19 secure guidelines can host more than 6 people in total, in line with guidance for their sector, but no one should visit or socialise in a group of greater than 6 (unless they are all part of the same household or support bubble). It is also important that people from different households (who are not meeting as a support bubble) remain socially distanced. Further information on social contact rules, social distancing and the exemptions that exist can be found [here](#). These rules will not apply to workplaces or education settings, alongside other exemptions.

Businesses should demonstrate to their workers and attendees that they have properly assessed their risk and taken appropriate measures to mitigate it, for example by publishing their risk assessment online or making it available at the premises/event.

In particular, those operating venues or running events following COVID-19 Secure guidelines should take additional steps to ensure the safety of the public and prevent large gatherings or mass events from taking place.

Individual businesses or venues should also consider the cumulative impact of many venues reopening in a small area. This means working with local authorities, neighbouring businesses and travel operators to assess this risk and applying additional mitigations.

These could include:

- Further lowering capacity - even if it is possible to safely seat a number of people inside a venue, it may not be safe for them all to travel or enter that venue.
- Staggering entry times with other venues and taking steps to avoid queues building up in surrounding areas.
- Arranging one-way travel routes between transport hubs and venues.
- Advising patrons to avoid particular forms of transport or routes and to avoid crowded areas when in transit to the venue.

Local authorities should avoid issuing licenses for events that could lead to larger gatherings forming and provide advice to businesses on how to manage events of this type. If appropriate, both local authorities and the Government have powers to close venues, to restrict access to public outdoor spaces, or to cancel events.

The Police have the powers to issue a £10,000 FPN to anyone holding, or involved in the holding, of an illegal gathering of over 30 people.

## **6. Compliance**

As of 26 March 2020, Regulations (which have now been replaced with consolidated Regulations to take account of the gradual relaxation of restrictions) imposed enforceable restrictions on people in England. The Regulations are reviewed regularly to ensure they are effective and proportionate to the risk to public health. The most recent and up to date England Regulations can be found [here](#). Everyone is required to comply with these Regulations issued by the government in relation to coronavirus, in order to protect both themselves and others, to fail to do so can constitute a criminal offence.

An owner, proprietor or manager carrying out a business (or a person responsible for other premises) who contravenes the Regulations, without reasonable excuse, commits an offence.

In England, Environmental Health and Trading Standards officers will monitor compliance with these regulations, with police support provided if appropriate. Businesses and venues that breach restrictions will potentially be subject to prohibition notices, and a person who is 18 or over, who carries on a business in contravention of the Regulations may be issued with a fixed penalty.

With the support of the police, prohibition notices can be used to require compliance with the Regulations including requiring that an activity ceases. It is also an offence, without reasonable excuse, to fail to comply with a prohibition notice.

If prohibition notices are not complied with, or a fixed penalty notice not paid, you may also be taken to court, with magistrates able to impose potentially unlimited fines.

## **7. Closing specific premises or public places**

Both a local authority or the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care have the power to

direct the closure of, or to restrict access to, a specific premises or public outdoor place where this is necessary and proportionate to manage a serious and imminent threat to public health relating to coronavirus in England. Exercise of this power is subject to a right of appeal by an owner or occupier to a Magistrates Court (or, if used by a local authority, through representations to the Secretary of State).

Where this power is used, people will not be allowed to enter or remain in the premises or outdoor place without reasonable excuse (such as that the person lives or works in the restricted area). Local authorities must advertise the extent of the restriction and they and owners/operators of the place whom are subject to the restriction must take reasonable steps to restrict access of people visiting the area. Failure to comply can be a criminal offence.

## **8. Business support**

In England, under the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant (RHLG) measures announced on Monday March 16, businesses and venues in England in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors will be eligible for cash grants of up to £25,000 per property.

Eligible businesses and venues in these sectors with a property that has a rateable value of up to £15,000 will receive a grant of £10,000. Eligible businesses and venues in these sectors with a property that has a rateable value of between £15,001 and £51,000 will receive a grant of £25,000. Businesses and venues with a rateable value of over £51,000 are not included in this scheme.

For more information please visit the [government's business support page](#).

## **9. Business rates**

In England, as announced on Monday 16 March, the Government will provide a business rates holiday for businesses and venues in the retail, hospitality and/or leisure sector. This includes the businesses and venues in scope for closure listed above. The relief will apply to business rates bills for the 2020 to 2021 tax year.

## **10. Face coverings**

In England, you must wear a face covering in the following indoor settings (a list of examples for each is included in the brackets):

- Public transport (aeroplanes, trains, trams and buses)
- Transport hubs (airports, rail and tram stations and terminals, maritime ports and terminals, bus and coach stations and terminals)
- Shops and supermarkets (places which offer goods or services for retail sale or hire)
- Shopping centres (malls and indoor markets)
- Auction houses
- Premises providing professional, legal or financial services (post offices, banks, building societies, high-street solicitors and accountants, credit unions, short-term loan providers, savings clubs and money service businesses)
- Premises providing personal care and beauty treatments (hair salons, barbers, nail salons, massage centres, tattoo and piercing parlours)
- Premises providing veterinary services
- Visitor attractions and entertainment venues (museums, galleries, cinemas, theatres, concert halls, cultural and heritage sites, aquariums, indoor zoos and visitor farms, bingo halls, indoor amusement arcades, indoor adventure activity centres, indoor funfairs, indoor theme parks, casinos, skating rinks, bowling alleys, indoor play areas including soft-play areas)
- Libraries and public reading rooms
- Places of worship



- Funeral service providers (funeral homes, crematoria and burial ground chapels)
- Community centres, youth centres and social clubs
- Exhibition halls and conference centres
- Public areas in hotels and hostels
- Storage and distribution facilities

You are expected to wear a face covering before entering any of these settings and must keep it on until you leave unless there is a reasonable excuse for removing it. More detailed advice on the application of these requirements in different settings can be found in the Government's guidance for [working safely](#).

If necessary, the police and Transport for London (TfL) officers have enforcement powers including issuing fines of £100 (halving to £50 if paid within 14 days for the first offence).

Repeat offenders receiving fines on public transport or in an indoor place will have their fines doubled at each offence. After the first offence, there will be no discount. As an example, receiving a second fine will amount to £200, a third fine will be £400, up to a maximum value of £3,200.

You should also wear a face covering in indoor places not listed here where social distancing may be difficult and where you will come into contact with people you do not normally meet.

Face coverings are also needed in NHS settings, including hospitals and primary or community care settings, such as GP surgeries. They are also advised to be worn in care homes.

Please be mindful that there are valid exemptions for some individuals and groups to not wear a face covering in these settings.

You can find the legislation [here](#) and the latest guidance [here](#).

## **11. Further information**

This guidance will be updated regularly as the situation develops and to reflect frequently asked questions. For information about support for business, please go to the government's [Business Support page](#) or visit [GOV.UK](#).

## **12. Scope of restrictions**

The Devolved Administrations have issued their own guidance and regulations on these matters. The guidance can be found below:

- [Wales](#)
- [Scotland](#)
- [Northern Ireland](#)