

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). Most businesses and venues are now allowed to open, following COVID-19 Secure guidelines, as part of the Government's plan to return life to as near normal as we can, with only a small number required to remain closed.

On 22 September, the Government announced additional measures to address an increase in coronavirus cases. See Section 1 for the increased restrictions in the hospitality and leisure industry, which are in force from 24 September.

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

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

These are in addition to wider social contact rules: for more information on those, please refer to GOV.UK guidance on [Staying Alert and Safe](#), the [FAQ](#), and [Meeting with others safely](#).

1. Restrictions on Businesses and Venues from 24 and 28 September

From 24 September, businesses selling food or drink (including cafes, bars, pubs and restaurants), social clubs, casinos, bowling alleys, amusement arcades (and other indoor leisure centres or facilities), funfairs, theme parks, and adventure parks and activities, and bingo halls, must be closed between 10pm and 5am. This will include take-aways, but delivery and drive-thru services can continue after 10pm. In both indoor and outdoor licensed premises, food and drink must be ordered from, and served at, a table. Licensed and unlicensed businesses must also take all reasonable steps to ensure that the customer remains seated whilst consuming the food or drink on the premises. Cinemas, theatres and concert halls can continue beyond 10pm, but only if the performance started before 10pm, and food and drink cannot be served after 10pm.

From 28 September, businesses and organisations will face stricter rules to make their premises COVID-19 Secure:

- A wider range of leisure and entertainment venues, services provided in community centres, and close contact services will be subject to COVID-19 Secure requirements in law and fines of £1000, and rising up to £10,000 for repeated breaches.
- Employers must not knowingly require or encourage someone who is being required to self-isolate to come to work.
- Businesses must remind people to wear face coverings where mandated, as set out in Section 10 below.

2. Businesses and venues already permitted to reopen

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

<u>Guidance to ensure safe reopening of businesses and venues</u>	
<u>Business or venue</u>	<u>Guidance for re-opening safely</u>
Retail	
<p>All retail is permitted to be open. Non-essential retail was permitted to reopen from 15 June.</p>	<p>See here for guidance for people who work in or run shops, branches, stores or similar environments.</p> <p>From 24 July, face coverings must be worn by customers in shops and supermarkets.</p> <p>From 24 September, staff in retail and hospitality settings will be required to wear a face covering and all businesses must remind customers to wear a face covering where mandated, such as by displaying posters.</p> <p>See Section 10 for more information on face coverings.</p>
Food and Drink	
<p>All indoor and outdoor hospitality including, cafes, bars, pubs, and restaurants, can open unless:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 24 September they must be closed from between the hours of 10pm and 5am, as set out in Section 1. 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 businesses and venues that 	<p>Please see Section 1 for restrictions and stricter rules on certain food and drink businesses and venues from 24 and 28 September, which must close from between the hours of 10pm and 5am.</p> <p>Cafes and restaurants in airports, ports, and service stations are exempt from the early closing requirement.</p> <p>From 24 September, staff in retail and hospitality settings will be required to wear a face covering and all businesses must remind customers to wear a face covering where</p>

<p>must remain closed.</p>	<p>mandated, such as by displaying posters.</p> <p>See Section 10 for more information on face coverings.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>In both indoor and outdoor areas of licensed premises, food and drink must be ordered from, and served at, a table. Licensed and unlicensed businesses must also take all reasonable steps to ensure that the customer remains seated whilst consuming the food or drink on the premises.</p> <p>Venues should take account of the Performing Arts guidance in organising any performances of drama, comedy, and music.</p> <p>All food and drink establishments are strongly advised to follow guidance on how to open and operate safely.</p> <p>See guidance on wedding receptions and celebrations. Wedding receptions and celebrations may take place, but from 28 September only 15 people may attend. See Section 10 for information on face coverings.</p>
<p>Accommodation</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 guidance on social mixing outside of household groups/outside of the home.</p> <p>Other shared facilities (including</p>

	<p>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 guidance on opening accommodation safely.</p> <p>Guidance can also be found on safely operating services in the visitor economy.</p>
Personal care	
<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>Please see Section 1 for stricter rules on certain close contact businesses and venues from 28 September.</p> <p>All close-contact service providers are strongly advised to follow guidance on how to work safely.</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 here for guidance.</p> <p>See Section 10 for more information on face coverings.</p>
Recreation and leisure	
<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>Indoor play areas, including soft play</p>	<p>Please see Section 1 for restrictions and stricter rules on certain recreation and leisure businesses and venues from 24 and 28 September, which must close from between the hours of 10pm and 5am.</p> <p>Cinemas, theatres and concert halls can continue beyond 10pm, but only if the performance started before 10pm (food and drink cannot be served after 10pm).</p> <p>Venues should take account of the Performing Arts guidance in</p>

<p>Museums and galleries</p> <p>Bingo halls</p> <p>Casinos</p> <p>Indoor and outdoor skating rinks</p> <p>Amusement arcades and other entertainment centres</p> <p>Bowling alleys</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>organising any performances of drama, comedy, and music.</p> <p>See here for guidance for providers of sports and leisure facilities. Organised outdoor sport or licensed outdoor physical activity, and supervised sporting activity (indoors or outdoors) for under-18s can occur in groups of greater than six. Organised indoor sport or exercise classes can also take place in larger numbers, provided groups of more than six do not mix. Organised indoor team sports for disabled people can take place in any number.</p> <p>All recreation and leisure businesses and facilities are strongly advised to follow guidance on operating within the visitor economy.</p> <p>See guidance for managing playgrounds and outdoor gyms.</p> <p>See here for guidance on indoor play areas.</p> <p>All operators of heritage locations are strongly advised to follow guidance on operating heritage locations.</p> <p>See here for guidance on casinos.</p> <p>See here for guidance for bowling alleys.</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 and see here for guidance.</p> <p>See Section 10 for more information on face coverings.</p>
<p>Non-residential institutions</p>	
<p>Places of worship</p> <p>Crematoria, including any buildings and grounds</p>	<p>All places of worship are strongly advised to follow guidance on their safe use.</p> <p>See guidance on wedding receptions and celebrations. Wedding receptions and celebrations may take place, but from 28 September only 15 people</p>

	<p>may attend. See Section 10 for information on face coverings.</p> <p>Up to 30 people are permitted to attend funerals. See here for further 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 here for guidance.</p> <p>See Section 10 for more information on face coverings.</p> <p>Wedding receptions and celebrations may take place with up to 15 people in the form of a sit-down meal. See guidance on wedding receptions and celebrations.</p>
<p>Community Centres</p> <p>Libraries</p>	<p>Please see Section 1 for stricter rules on community centres from 28 September.</p> <p>Those managing community centres, village halls and other community facilities are strongly advised to follow guidance on re-opening safely.</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 here for guidance.</p> <p>See Section 10 for more information on face coverings.</p>
<p>Exhibition halls and conference centres</p>	<p>These should not be open, other than for hosting meetings and business events for under 30 people. The planned return of business events and socially distanced crowds in stadia from 1 October and pilot events has now been paused.</p> <p>See here for guidance for exhibition halls and conference centres.</p>

3. Businesses and venues which remain closed

All businesses and venues can remain open as stated under Section 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

If any business or venue is 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, they must remain closed.

All indoor and outdoor hospitality including, cafes, bars, pubs, and restaurants, must close from between the hours of 10pm and 5am, though they may continue to operate a delivery and drive-thru service. Cafes and restaurants in airports, ports, and service stations are exempt from the early closing requirement.

4. Test and trace

Continued opening up of the economy and public services is reliant on NHS Test and Trace being used to minimise transmission of the virus. In order to ensure that businesses and local services are able to remain open, we will be mandating that organisations in designated sectors 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.

Any designated venue that is found not to be compliant with these regulations will be subject to financial penalties. It is vital that relevant venues comply with these regulations to help keep people safe, and to keep businesses open.

Designated venues will need to keep records of customers, visitors and staff for a period of 21 days and make them available when requested by NHS Test and Trace or local public health officials to help contain clusters or outbreaks.

You can find out more about these requirements here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/maintaining-records-of-staff-customers-and-visitors-to-support-nhs-test-and-trace>

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 within 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

Please see the latest face covering guidance [here](#).

From 23 September, there will be additional venues and areas where it will be mandatory to wear a face covering, unless you have an exemption.

From 24 September, staff in retail and hospitality settings will be required to wear a face covering and all businesses must remind customers to wear a face covering where mandated, such as by displaying posters.

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](#)