

## NEW RULES ON STAYING AT HOME AND AWAY FROM OTHERS

The single most important action we can all take, in fighting coronavirus, is to stay at home in order to protect the NHS and save lives.

When we reduce our day-to-day contact with other people, we will reduce the spread of the infection. That is why the Government has introduced three new measures.

1. Requiring people to stay at home, except for very limited purposes.
2. Closing certain business and venues.
3. Stopping all gatherings of more than two people in public.

Every person in the UK must comply with these new measures, which came into effect on Monday 23 March. The relevant authorities, including the police, have been given the powers to enforce them – including through fines and dispersing gatherings.

The Government will look again at these measures after three weeks, and relax them if the evidence shows this is possible.

### 1. STAYING AT HOME

You should only leave the house for very limited purposes:

- **shopping for basic necessities**, for example food and medicine, which must be as infrequent as possible.
- **one form of exercise a day**, for example a run, walk, or cycle - alone or with members of your household.
- **any medical need**, including to donate blood, avoid or escape risk of injury or harm, or to provide care or to help a vulnerable person.
- **travelling for work purposes**, but only where you cannot work from home.

These reasons are exceptions - even when doing these activities, you should be minimising time spent outside of the home and ensuring you are 2 metres apart from anyone outside of your household.

These measures must be followed by everyone. Separate advice is available for individuals or households who are isolating, and for the most vulnerable who need to be shielded. Where parents do not live in the same household, children under 18 can be moved between their parents' homes.

The Government has also identified a number of critical workers whose children can still go to school or their childcare provider. **This critical worker definition does not affect whether or not you can travel to work** - if you are not a critical worker, you may still travel to work provided you cannot work from home.

Critical workers and parents of vulnerable children may leave the house to take children to and from school or their childcare provider.

Other critical public services – such as social services, support for victims, support provided by the Department for Work and Pensions, or the justice system – should be provided and accessed remotely whenever possible, but you can leave the house to access them when physical attendance is absolutely necessary. House moves should be delayed unless moving is unavoidable.

## 2. CLOSING CERTAIN BUSINESSES AND VENUES

To reduce social contact, the Government has ordered certain businesses and venues to close. More detailed information and exemptions can be found [here](#), including the full list of those businesses and other venues that must close, but they include:

- **pubs, cinemas and theatres.**
- **all retail with notable exceptions** – these closures include clothing and electronics stores; hair, beauty and nail salons; and outdoor and indoor markets, excluding food markets.
- **libraries, community centres, and youth centres.**
- **indoor and outdoor leisure facilities** such as bowling alleys, arcades and soft play facilities.
- **communal places within parks**, such as playgrounds, sports courts and outdoor gyms.
- **places of worship**, except for funerals attended by immediate families.
- **hotels, hostels, bed and breakfasts, campsites, caravan parks, and boarding houses for commercial/leisure use**, excluding permanent residents, key workers and those providing emergency accommodation, for example for the homeless.

Other businesses can remain open and their employees can travel to work, provided they cannot work from home.

## 3. STOPPING PUBLIC GATHERINGS

To make sure people are staying at home and apart from each other, the Government is also **stopping all public gatherings of more than two people.**

There are only exceptions to this rule for very limited purposes:

- **where the gathering is of a group of people who live together** - this means that a parent can, for example, take their children to the shops if there is no option to leave them at home.
- **where the gathering is essential for work purposes, or to fulfil legal obligations** - but workers should try to minimise all meetings and other gatherings in the workplace.

In addition, the Government is stopping social events, including weddings, baptisms and other religious ceremonies. This excludes funerals, which can be attended by immediate family.

#### **4. GOING TO WORK**

As set out in the section on staying at home, you can travel for work purposes, but only where you cannot work from home.

With the exception of the organisations covered above in the section on closing certain businesses and venues, the Government has not required any other businesses to close – indeed it is important for business to carry on.

Employers and employees should discuss their working arrangements, and employers should take every possible step to facilitate their employees working from home, including providing suitable IT and equipment to enable remote working.

Sometimes this will not be possible, as not everyone can work from home. Certain jobs require people to travel to, from and for their work – for instance if they operate machinery, work in construction or manufacturing, or are delivering front line services.

**If you cannot work from home then you can still travel for work purposes, provided you are not showing coronavirus symptoms and neither you nor any of your household are self-isolating.** This is consistent with advice from the Chief Medical Officer.

Employers who have people in their offices or onsite should ensure that employees are able to follow Public Health England [guidelines](#) including, where possible, maintaining a 2 metre distance from others, and washing their hands with soap and water often for at least 20 seconds (or using hand sanitiser gel if soap and water is not available).

Work carried out in people's homes, for example by tradespeople carrying out repairs and maintenance, can continue, provided that the tradesperson is well and has no symptoms. Again, it will be important to ensure that Public Health England guidelines, including maintaining a 2 metre distance from any household occupants, are followed to ensure everyone's safety.

No work should be carried out in any household which is isolating or where an individual is being shielded, unless it is to remedy a direct risk to the safety of the household, such as emergency plumbing or repairs, and where the tradesperson is willing to do so. In such cases, Public Health England can provide advice to tradespeople and households.

No work should be carried out by a tradesperson who has coronavirus symptoms, however mild.

As set out in the section on closing certain businesses and venues, the Government has published [guidance](#) on which organisations are covered by this requirement. Advice for employees of these organisations on employment and financial support is available at [gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus).

At all times, workers should follow the [guidance](#) on self-isolation if they or anyone in their household shows coronavirus symptoms.

## 5. DELIVERING THESE NEW MEASURES

These measures will reduce our day to day contact with other people. They are a vital part of our efforts to reduce the rate of transmission of coronavirus.

**Every citizen is instructed to comply with these new measures.**

The Government is therefore ensuring the police and other relevant authorities have the powers to enforce them where people do not comply.

If you leave your home or gather in public for any reason other than those specified, the police may:

- instruct you to go home, leave an area or disperse.
- instruct you to take steps to stop your children breaking these rules if they have already done so.
- take you home – or arrest you – if you do not follow their instructions, or where they deem it necessary.

**The police will act with discretion and common sense in applying these measures and we expect the public to act responsibly, staying at home in order to save lives.**

However, if the police believe that you have broken these rules – or if you refuse to follow their instructions – a police officer may issue you with a fixed penalty notice for £60 (reduced to £30 if paid within 14 days). If you have already received a fixed penalty notice, the amount will increase to £120 and double on each further repeat offence.

The Government will keep this under review and will increase the penalties if it becomes clear that this is necessary to ensure compliance.

Similarly, a business or venue operating in contravention with these measures will be committing an offence. Local authorities (for example, Environmental Health and Trading Standards officers) will monitor compliance, with support from the police if appropriate. Businesses and venues that breach them will be subject to prohibition notices and fixed penalty notices. Businesses that continue to contravene the measures will be forced to close down.

For both individuals and companies, if you do not pay, you may also be taken to court, with magistrates able to impose potentially unlimited fines.

The measures set out in this guidance will initially last for the three weeks from 23 March, at which point the Government will look at them again and relax them if the evidence shows this is possible.