



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) – Social Distancing

The following information is taken from the Government guidance [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Meeting with others safely \(social distancing\) 22 September 2020](#):

If you live in an area where local restrictions are in place you should also consult the [local restrictions guidance](#), for information about what you can and can't do to manage the outbreak.

It is critical that everybody observes the following key behaviours:

- **HANDS** - Wash your hands regularly and for 20 seconds.
- **FACE** - Wear a face covering in indoor settings where social distancing may be difficult, and where you will come into contact with people you do not normally meet.
- **SPACE** - Stay 2 metres apart from people you do not live with where possible, or 1 metre with extra precautions in place (such as wearing face coverings or increasing ventilation indoors).

Visiting public places and taking part in activities

What are the 'COVID-19 Secure' safety guidelines?

The Government has set out clear, practical steps that businesses should take to ensure they are [COVID-19 Secure](#) and customers are confident to visit.

From 28 September further measures will become law:

- a wider range of leisure and entertainment venues, services provided in community centres and close contact settings will be subject to COVID19 Secure requirements in law. This includes ensuring visitors observe the rule of six, and appropriate social distancing through signage, layout, and managing visitor entry.
- Visitors must be reminded to wear face coverings where mandated.

How will health and safety regulations be enforced?

Local authorities also have powers to place restrictions upon or close any premises if they believe it necessary to help prevent transmission of COVID-19.

Hospitality businesses are required to ensure there are no unlawful gatherings in their premises.

Are there restrictions on how far I can travel?

No. You can travel irrespective of distance, but you should take hygiene and safety precautions if using services on the way.

You can use public transport but it is better to travel in other ways if possible. It is difficult to socially distance during car journeys and transmission of coronavirus can occur in this context. So avoid travelling with someone from outside your household or your support bubble unless you can practise social distancing.

[Further guidance on car sharing is available](#). If you need to use public transport, you should follow the [safer travel guidance for passengers](#). When travelling on public transport you are legally required to wear a face covering.

Can I stay overnight?

If you are in a support bubble, or if the group consists solely of people you live with, you can stay overnight without needing to maintain social distancing. People in the same support bubble can also gather together indoors even if the group size is more than 6.

Take particular care to maintain excellent hygiene – washing hands and surfaces – and avoid using shared facilities like bathrooms wherever possible.

What happens if I become unwell while in overnight accommodation?

If you develop [symptoms of coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) while staying in overnight accommodation you should inform the accommodation provider immediately, self-isolate where you are to minimise any risk of transmission, and request a test by calling 119 or online at [nhs.uk](#). If your test is positive you should return home as quickly and directly as possible. You should use private transport but only drive yourself if you are well enough to do so safely and can avoid contact with others on your journey home.

Avoid using public transport in order to reduce the spread of the virus. If you cannot avoid using public transport, you should continue to self-isolate in your accommodation and call 111 for further advice.

In most cases, it will not be possible to self-isolate at your accommodation. In these cases, you should make arrangements to travel home as safely as possible, while minimising the risk of infecting others.

It may be possible for you to agree with the accommodation provider to extend your stay in order to self-isolate until you are well enough to travel. Unless otherwise provided for in the contractual terms of the booking, you will be expected to pay the costs of an extended stay in all but [exceptional circumstances](#).

Once home, you should continue to follow the government guidance on [self-isolation](#), [household isolation](#) and [social distancing](#).

What if I can't travel home?

If you feel so unwell that you cannot travel, or if you cannot avoid using public transport, (for example because you do not have the means to travel via private transport), you should call 111 and ask to discuss your circumstances with an appropriate health care professional.

What happens if I am contacted by NHS Test and Trace?

If NHS Test and Trace contacts you while you are away from home to tell you that you have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus, you should tell your accommodation provider immediately and make arrangements to return home as quickly and directly as you can.

You should self-isolate for 14 days from the last day you had contact with the person who tested positive, even if you remain well. If you cannot avoid using public transport to get home, you should continue to self-isolate where you are staying and call 111 for advice.

If it is agreed with the accommodation provider that you can extend your stay in order to self-isolate until you are able to make safe travel arrangements, unless otherwise provided for in the contractual terms of the booking, you will be expected to pay the costs of an extended stay in all but [exceptional circumstances](#).

In many cases it will not be possible to self-isolate at your holiday accommodation. In these cases, you should make arrangements to travel home as safely as possible, while minimising the risk to others. If this isn't possible because you feel so unwell that you cannot travel, or if you cannot avoid using public transport, you should call 111 for advice.

If you start to feel unwell during your self-isolation period, get a test either online at www.nhs.uk/coronavirus or by calling 119.

People you have been travelling with, or people you live with, do not need to self-isolate if you do not have symptoms, unless contacted and asked to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace.

Can I go to a pub or restaurant with people I don't live with?

When eating or drinking out with people you do not live with (and who are not in your support bubble), you must keep to the wider rules on group sizes: you must only attend these places in groups of up to 6 people. You can attend in larger numbers with the people you live with or who are in your support bubble - in this case the maximum size of the group will be just those you live with or your support bubble.

If you visit pubs, restaurants and other venues in the hospitality sector you must provide your contact information, or check in using the official NHS QR code before being allowed entry to the venue.

In all cases, people from different households should ensure they socially distance as much as possible. You should think about where to sit at a table with this in mind – the premises should also take reasonable steps to help you do so in line with COVID-19 Secure guidelines. It remains the case that you do not need to maintain social distancing with those in your support bubble. This change also does not affect the support you receive from your carers.

It is mandatory to wear a face covering in a pub or restaurant, except for when eating or drinking.

Do I have to wear a face covering in public?

People are also strongly encouraged to wear face coverings in any other enclosed public spaces where there are people they do not normally meet.

You will need to wear face coverings in hospitality venues, when you are not eating or drinking.

You do not need to wear a face covering if you have a legitimate reason not to. This includes (but is not limited to):

- children under 11
- because of a physical or mental illness or impairment, or disability
- to communicate with someone who relies on lip reading
- to avoid harm or injury; to identify yourself
- to eat or drink if necessary

You can carry something that says you do not have to wear a face covering for medical reasons. This is a personal choice, and is not necessary in law – you should not routinely be required to produce any written evidence to justify the fact you are not wearing a face covering.

[Relevant guidance on face coverings is available here](#)

Clinically vulnerable groups and clinically extremely vulnerable groups

If you have any of the health conditions [listed in the clinically vulnerable guidance](#) or are over 70 you could be at higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus.

Specific advice can be found in the [clinically vulnerable guidance](#).

What is the current guidance for people identified as clinically extremely vulnerable who were previously advised to shield?

Formal shielding advice is currently paused nationally – [check any local variations](#).

This means:

- you can continue to go to work as long as the workplace is COVID-19 Secure but should carry on working from home wherever possible
- clinically extremely vulnerable children should attend education settings in line with the [wider guidance on reopening of schools](#) and [guidance for full opening: special schools and other specialist settings](#)
- you can go outside as much as you like but you should still try to keep your overall social interactions low and keep to the new gathering limit of 6
- you can visit businesses, such as supermarkets, pubs and shops, whilst keeping 2 metres away from others wherever possible or [1 metre plus other precautions](#)
- you should continue to pay particular attention to washing your hands carefully and more frequently than usual and maintaining thorough cleaning of frequently touched areas in your home and/or workspace

* For venue specific guidance see [COVID-19: Guidance for the safe use of multi-purpose community facilities](#)

Users and hirers of a community facility have responsibility for managing risks arising from their own activities when they have control of premises and should take account of any guidance relevant to their specific activity or sector.