

# COVID-19 – Reopening guidance for pubs and restaurants

## Introduction

This guidance is divided into 2 sections:

- A summary of the key points from the guidance
- Appendices providing more detail and key links

## Why is it important to follow this guidance?

Employers have a legal responsibility to protect their employees and other people on site. Full guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-business-reopening>

## Summary

### Social distancing

Maintaining social distancing of 2m is the best way to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 (coronavirus).

Maintaining 2 metres will:

- Help protect your staff and customers
- Mean that staff may not have to stop work if a customer or another staff member tests positive for Coronavirus.
- Keep your business trading as you will not risk a large number of staff going into self-isolation at the same time.

### Risk assessment

You must carry out a risk assessment before reopening.

- Write down the findings of your risk assessment. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has a [risk assessment template](#) and [information on how to do a risk assessment](#). Guidance is also available from [www.gov.uk/coronavirus-business-reopening](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-business-reopening).
- Talk to your employees when completing the risk assessment.
- Take into account anything that may make a particular member of staff or customer more at risk and think about staff or customers who might need more help in understanding the precautions.
- Share the results of your risk assessment with your workforce. Go through it with staff when they return to work. Display reminders prominently in your workplace, as well as on your website.

### Keeping records

We all need to help reduce Coronavirus by supporting the NHS Test and Trace process. Keeping some information about staff and visitors will help Public Health contain an outbreak of the illness.

Keep a record of your customers and visitors for 21 days, in a way that is manageable for your business. Keep the Date and time of visit, name and contact number. This should be easy for advance bookings. If you have a group booking, the number of people in the booking and the details

of the lead contact should be enough. If you are a restaurant, the table number could also be useful. Let the customer know why you are asking for the information.

### Your premises

What is the maximum number of visitors you can have safely on your premises? You may need to move or remove some seats and/or tables. Can people be 2m apart? If not, do you have screens or other measures in place? Put up signs and markers to remind everyone of the social distancing rules.

Provide table service and make the most of outdoor space wherever possible. Consider one-way systems. Can people enter through one door and leave from another? Work with your local authorities and neighbouring businesses to minimise the impact of your processes on public spaces (e.g. queuing systems, etc.).

Encourage customers to use hand sanitiser when they enter the premises. Customer toilets will need increased cleaning, social distancing markers and guidance, as well reminders to practice good hand hygiene. Give consideration to a “one in, one out” policy if space is limited and the addition of hand sanitiser after hand-washing to promote good hand hygiene.

Note down the areas where a lot of people walk through and all the places where hands touch surfaces. These areas will need more frequent cleaning. Write down how and when these areas will be cleaned. Hand-touch points will need to be sanitised after cleaning.

If it is safe to do so, keep doors open to minimise hand contact surfaces.

The illness spreads more easily inside. Increase ventilation by opening windows wherever possible.

Have enough cleaning products (e.g. soap, sanitiser and paper towels).

Keep all wash-basins well-stocked with liquid soap and paper towels. Put notices at public and staff wash-basins to remind people about the 20 second rule.

Working areas should support social distancing, but if this is not possible then staff should either work side by side or facing away from each other as opposed to face to face, or screens should be installed.

### Your staff

Any staff who have [symptoms](#) of the coronavirus should be told to go home immediately and follow the government’s [Stay at home](#) and [Staying safe outside your home guidance](#). They should apply for a test and not return to work until they have either tested negative or completed their self-isolation period and are symptom free.

If possible get staff to arrive and leave work at different times (e.g. staggering times and setting clear entrance/exit routes). Have a staff rota that minimise contact between groups or shifts of employees. Keep a record of the days and times of when people are working.

Wherever possible a full table service should be offered, but social distancing must still be practiced.

Encourage staff to take breaks in a safe, outside space if possible at different times. Don’t allow staff to group together, for example in smoking areas.

Tell staff clearly what they need to do and why and check that they understand.

All staff will need to understand the importance of cleaning. You will need to instruct and supervise staff to make sure they are cleaning correctly. Staff must know how, when and where to use sanitisers. Some sanitisers need to be on a surface for a long time to kill the virus. Use disposable cloths / paper towels.

Staff should wash hands and dry thoroughly as soon as they get to work and frequently throughout the day.

### Your customers

Encourage customers to follow social distancing measures. Minimise self-service of food or drink. Don't allow customers to collect their own cutlery or shared condiments. Replace shared menus with chalk or white boards in suitable locations.

It is recommended that customers remain at their tables wherever possible to minimise contact with staff and other customers.

Contactless payments (or payment via an app) is the safest way for people to pay.

Don't play music that means people will have to talk loudly or shout to be heard, shouting increases the risk of spread of infection.

Clean and sanitise customer tables and chairs between sittings.

Display posters or information showing customers how to behave at your venue to keep everyone safe. Posters with clear pictures and directions are better than posters with lots of writing. If customers are visually impaired, make sure you spend time to help them understand the rules.

**Read the government's 'Covid Secure' guidance for your business**

## Appendices

1. Preparing your premises for reopening
2. Preparing your staff for reopening
3. Keeping your staff safe
4. Keeping your customers safe
5. Service of food and drink
6. General service
7. Customer toilets
8. Providing guidance
9. Staff arrival and departure
10. Staff movement
11. Working areas
12. Food preparation areas
13. Back of house and common areas
14. PPE

## Appendix 1 - Preparing your premises for reopening

- Notify your Local Authority of your intention to [restart operations](#).
- Notify your Local Authority of any change to the business activities you are registered for. This includes the introduction of any new delivery or takeaway service.
- Carry-out a full site assessment to determine if you can undertake a thorough clean or if a professional deep clean is needed.
- Source suitable cleaning and disinfection consumables and check existing stocks are within their use-by date. Cleaning products made-up or diluted before any closure should be disposed of as effectiveness reduces over time. See our guidance [if your regular cleaning products are not available](#).
- Assess if staff need re-training on dilution rates and cleaning procedures.
- Increase frequency of cleaning and disinfection, paying particular attention to shared equipment and high through-put and touch areas.
- Obtain enough of your regular cleaning consumables such as soap, sanitiser and paper towels. Provide suitable alternatives if your regular products are unavailable.
- Consider providing hand sanitiser in addition to hand-washing facilities at appropriate locations.
- Increase ventilation. You should assess the possibility to do this without introducing new risks or hazards to food safety and hygiene. See [Before reopening](#).

## Appendix 2 – Preparing your staff for reopening

- Check staff are [fit for work](#) and wearing clean work clothes. Staff should be fit for work at all times. During COVID-19, staff who are displaying [symptoms](#) of the disease should follow the government's [Stay at home](#) and [Staying safe outside your home guidance](#). You must make sure that staff understand your Fitness to Work policy and are aware of any updates that have been made in relation to COVID-19. You may wish to consider any appropriate changes to your visitor questionnaires to address COVID-19 exposure risks.
- Consider adjustments to fitness for work procedures to take account of [COVID-19 symptoms](#). Initial telephone interviews with staff may be beneficial in assessing fitness to work.
- Review the [government advice on use of Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\)](#) outside of medical and care settings. [Working safely during coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) has further guidance for restaurants offering takeaway or delivery.
- If your business requires staff to wear PPE, check you have adequate stocks available.
- Review any PPE laundering procedures, where appropriate, to ensure PPE worn by staff can be safely changed and cleaned regularly.
- Ensure any changes to procedures are communicated to staff and training is provided where appropriate, including training of any new staff.
- Consider updating staff training in line with government advice that staff should [wash their hands more frequently than usual](#). This should be for 20 seconds with warm water and soap.

### Appendix 3 – Keeping your staff safe

- Review the government advice on social distancing in the workplace in [Working safely during coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).
- Provide where possible for 2 metre social distancing. See [Social distancing at work](#) and [Food preparation](#).
- Consider steps to minimise staff-customer interactions. See [Managing your customers, visitors and contractors](#).
- Consider how you will communicate with, update and where necessary train staff in new procedures. See [Communications and training](#).
- Identify staff at higher risk. See [Protecting people at higher risk](#).
- Cohort working teams to lower staff mixing. See [Workforce management](#).

#### Appendix 4 – Keeping your customers safe

- Calculating the maximum number of customers that can reasonably follow social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable) at the venue. Taking into account total indoor and outdoor space, specific venue characteristics such as furniture as well as likely pinch points and busy areas.
- Reconfiguring indoor and outdoor seating and tables to maintain social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable) between customers of different households or support bubbles. For example, increasing the distance between tables.
- Working with your local authority or landlord to take into account the impact of your processes, including queues, on public spaces such as high streets and public car parks.
- Working with neighbouring businesses and local authorities to provide additional parking or facilities such as bike-racks, where possible, to help customers avoid using public transport.
- Reducing the need for customers to queue, but where this is unavoidable, discouraging customers from queuing indoors and using outside spaces for queuing where available and safe. For example, using some car parks and existing outdoor services areas.
- Managing outside queues to ensure they do not cause a risk to individuals, other businesses or additional security risks, for example by introducing queuing systems, having staff direct customers and protecting queues from traffic by routing them behind permanent physical structures such as street furniture, bike racks, bollards or putting up barriers.
- Providing clear guidance on social distancing and hygiene to people on arrival, for example, signage, visual aids and before arrival, such as by phone, on the website or by email.
- Managing the entry of customers, and the number of customers at a venue, so that all indoor customers are seated with appropriate distancing, and those outdoors have appropriately spaced seating or standing room. This is to ensure that the venue, including areas of congestion does not become overcrowded. Managing entry numbers can be done, for example, through reservation systems, social distancing markings, having customers queue at a safe distance for toilets or bringing payment machines to customers, where possible.
- Making customers aware of, and encouraging compliance with, limits on gatherings. For example, on arrival or at booking. Indoor gatherings are limited to members of any 2 households (or support bubbles), while outdoor gatherings are limited to members of any 2 households (or support bubbles), or a group of at most 6 people from any number of households.
- Encouraging customers to use hand sanitiser or handwashing facilities as they enter the venue.
- Ensuring any changes to entrances, exits and queue management take into account reasonable adjustments for those who need them, including disabled customers. For example, maintaining pedestrian and parking access for disabled customers.
- Reminding customers who are accompanied by children that they are responsible for supervising them at all times and should follow social distancing guidelines.

- Keeping indoor and soft play areas closed. For guidance on opening outdoor playgrounds safely, see guidance for managing playgrounds published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
- Looking at how people move through the venue and how you could adjust this to reduce congestion and contact between customers, for example, queue management or one-way flow, where possible.
- Planning for maintaining social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable) in the event of adverse weather conditions, being clear that customers cannot seek shelter indoors unless social distancing can be maintained.
- Working with neighbouring businesses and local authorities to consider how to spread the number of people arriving throughout the day for example by staggering opening hours; this will help reduce demand on public transport at key times and avoid overcrowding.
- Determining if schedules for essential services and contractor visits can be revised to reduce interaction and overlap between people, for example, carrying out services at night

## Appendix 5 – Service of food and drink

- Maintaining social distancing (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable) from customers when taking orders from customers.
- Using social distance markings to remind customers to maintain social distancing (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable) between customers of different households or [support bubbles](#).
- Minimising customer self service of food, cutlery and condiments to reduce risk of transmission. For example, providing cutlery and condiments only when food is served.
- Providing only disposable condiments or cleaning non- disposable condiment containers after each use.
- Reducing the number of surfaces touched by both staff and customers. For example, asking customers to remain at a table where possible, or to not lean on counters when collecting takeaways.
- Encouraging contactless payments where possible and adjusting location of card readers to social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable).
- Minimising contact between front of house workers and customers at points of service where appropriate. For example, using screens or tables at tills and counters to maintain social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable).
- Ensuring all outdoor areas, with particular regard to covered areas, have sufficient ventilation. For example, increasing the open sides of a covered area.

## Appendix 6 – General service

- Encouraging use of contactless ordering from tables where available. For example, through an ordering app.
- Adjusting service approaches to minimise staff contact with customers. Indoor table service must be used where possible, alongside further measures such as assigning a single staff member per table. Outdoor table service should also be encouraged, although customers are permitted to stand outside if distanced appropriately. Where bar or counter service is unavoidable, preventing customers from remaining at the bar or counter after ordering.
- Adjusting processes to prevent customers from congregating at points of service. For example, having only staff collect and return empty glasses to the bar.
- Minimising contact between kitchen workers and front of house workers. For example, by having zones from which front of house staff can collect food.
- Encouraging use of outdoor areas for service where possible. For example, increasing outdoor seating or outdoor points of service such as stalls.

## Appendix 7 – Customer toilets

- Using signs and posters to build awareness of good handwashing technique, the need to increase handwashing frequency and to avoid touching your face, and to cough or sneeze into a tissue which is binned safely, or into your arm if a tissue is not available.
- Consider the use of social distancing marking in areas where queues normally form, and the adoption of a limited entry approach, with 1 in, 1 out (whilst avoiding the creation of additional bottlenecks).
- To enable good hand hygiene consider making hand sanitiser available on entry to toilets where safe and practical, and ensure suitable handwashing facilities including running water and liquid soap and suitable options for drying (either paper towels or hand dryers) are available.
- Setting clear use and cleaning guidance for toilets, with increased frequency of cleaning in line with usage. Use normal cleaning products, paying attention to frequently hand touched surfaces, and consider use of disposable cloths or paper roll to clean all hard surfaces.
- Keep the facilities well ventilated, for example by fixing doors open where appropriate.
- Special care should be taken for cleaning of portable toilets and larger toilet blocks.
- Putting up a visible cleaning schedule can keep it up to date and visible.
- Providing more waste facilities and more frequent rubbish collection.

## Appendix 8 – Providing guidance

- Providing clear guidance on expected customer behaviours, social distancing and hygiene to people on or before arrival, for example on online booking forms and on-site signage and visual aids. Explaining to customers that failure to observe safety measures will result in service not being provided.
- Providing written or spoken communication of the latest guidelines to both workers and customers inside and outside the venue. You should display posters or information setting out how customers should behave at your venue to keep everyone safe. Consider the particular needs of those with protected characteristics, such as those who are hearing or visually impaired.
- Where necessary, informing customers that police and the local authorities have the powers to enforce requirements in relation to social distancing and may instruct customers to disperse, leave an area, issue a fixed penalty notice or take further enforcement action.
- Informing customers that they should be prepared to remove face coverings safely if asked to do so by police officers and staff for the purposes of identification.
- Encouraging workers to remind customers to follow social distancing advice and clean their hands regularly.
- Where visits to venues are required, for example, inbound supplier deliveries or safety critical visitors, providing site guidance on social distancing and hygiene on or before arrival.
- Ensuring information provided to customers and visitors, such as advice on the location or size of queues, does not compromise their safety.

## Appendix 9 – Staff arrival and departure

- Staggering arrival and departure times at work to reduce crowding into and out of the workplace, taking account of the impact on those with protected characteristics.
- Providing additional parking or facilities such as bike racks to help people walk, run, or cycle to work where possible.
- Reducing congestion, for example by having more entry points to the workplace. If you have more than one door, consider having one for entering the building and one for exiting.
- Using markings to guide staff coming into or leaving the building.
- Providing handwashing facilities, or hand sanitiser where not possible, at entry and exit points.
- Providing storage for staff clothes and bags.
- Requesting staff change into work uniforms on site using appropriate facilities/changing areas, where social distancing and hygiene guidelines can be met.
- Washing uniforms on site, where appropriate, or requesting workers to regularly wash uniforms at home.
- See [government guidance on travelling to and from work](#).

## Appendix 10 – Staff movement

- Reducing movement by discouraging non-essential trips within venues, for example, restricting access to some areas, encouraging use of radios, telephones or other electronic devices when sending orders from service areas to kitchens, where permitted, and cleaning them between use.
- Reducing job and location rotation, for example, assigning workers to specific areas or keeping temporary personnel dedicated to one venue.
- Introducing more one-way flow routes through buildings through signage that clearly indicate the direction of flow.
- Reducing maximum occupancy for lifts, providing hand sanitiser for the operation of lifts and encouraging use of stairs wherever possible.
- Making sure that people with disabilities are able to access lifts.
- Managing use of high traffic areas including corridors, lifts and staircases to maintain social distancing.

## Appendix 11 – Working areas

- Reviewing layouts and processes to allow staff to work further apart from each other.
- Only where it is not possible to move working areas further apart, arranging people to work side-by-side or facing away from each other rather than face-to-face. Where this is not possible, using screens to separate people from each other.
- Using floor tape or paint to mark areas to help people comply with social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable).

## Appendix 12 – Food preparation areas

- Following [government guidance on managing food preparation and food service areas](#).
- Allowing kitchen access to as few people as possible.
- Minimising interaction between kitchen staff and other workers, including when on breaks.
- Putting teams into shifts to restrict the number of workers interacting with each other.
- Spacing working areas to maintain social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable) as much as possible, recognising the difficulty of moving equipment such as sinks, hobs and ovens. Consider cleanable panels to separate working areas in larger kitchens.
- Providing floor marking to signal social distancing (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable).
- Using 'one way' traffic flows to minimise contact.
- Minimising access to walk-in pantries, fridges and freezers, for example, with only one person being able to access these areas at one point in time.
- Minimising contact at 'handover' points with other staff, such as when presenting food to serving staff and delivery drivers.

#### Appendix 13 – Back of house and common areas

- Staggering break times to reduce pressure on break rooms or places to eat and ensuring social distancing is maintained in staff break rooms.
- Using safe outside areas for breaks.
- Creating additional space by using other parts of the venue or building that have been freed up by remote working.
- Installing screens to protect staff in front of house areas or serving customers at till points.
- Using social distance marking for other common areas such as toilets, showers, lockers and changing rooms and in any other areas where queues typically form.

## Appendix 14 – PPE

Employers should support their workers in using face coverings safely if they choose to wear one. This means telling workers:

- wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before putting a face covering on, and before and after removing it
- when wearing a face covering, avoid touching your face or face covering, as you could contaminate them with germs from your hands
- change your face covering if it becomes damp or if you've touched it
- continue to wash your hands regularly
- change and wash your face covering daily
- if the material is washable, wash in line with manufacturer's instructions. If it's not washable, dispose of it carefully in your usual waste
- practise social distancing wherever possible