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Guidance

Coronavirus: how to stay safe and help prevent the spread

- English
- العربية (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-do.ar)
- বাংলা (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-do.bn)
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- Soomaaliga (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-do.so)
- اردو (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-do.ur)

Find out how to stay safe and help prevent the spread of coronavirus.

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Applies to:
England (see guidance for Wales (https://gov.wales/coronavirus), Scotland (https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/), and Northern Ireland (https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/coronavirus-covid-19))

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Print this page

Easy read

This guidance is available in easy read format.

Coronavirus: how to stay safe and help prevent the spread (easy read) (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1010352/how-to-stay-safe-and-prevent-spread-from-19-july-easy-read.pdf)

PDF, 5.55MB, 29 pages

This file may not be suitable for users of assistive technology.

▶ Request an accessible format.

England has moved to Step 4

Although most legal restrictions have been lifted at Step 4 and many people have been vaccinated, it is still possible to catch and spread COVID-19, even if you are fully vaccinated.

COVID-19 will be a feature of our lives for the foreseeable future, so we need to learn to live with it and manage the risk to ourselves and others.

As COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, it is important that we all use personal judgment to manage our own risk. All of us can play our part by exercising common sense and considering the risks. No situation is risk free, so we all need to understand the factors and settings that increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission and the actions that we can all take to reduce COVID-19 infection, both for ourselves and for others.

Following this guidance will help you to understand situations where there is a greater risk of catching or spreading COVID-19 and the steps that you can take to stay safe and protect others. Every action to help reduce the spread will reduce any further resurgence of the virus in the coming months.

What has changed

Most legal restrictions to control COVID-19 have been lifted at Step 4. This means that:

- You do not need to stay 2 metres apart from people you do not live with. There are also no limits on the number of people you can meet. However, you should limit the close contact you have with those you do not usually live with, and increase close contact gradually. This includes minimising the number, proximity and duration of social contacts. You should meet outdoors where possible and let fresh air into homes or other enclosed spaces.
- The government is no longer instructing people to work from home if they can. However, the government expects and recommends a gradual return over the summer.
- The requirement to wear face coverings in law has been lifted. However, the government expects and recommends that people wear face coverings in crowded areas such as public transport.
- There are no longer limits on the number of people who can attend weddings, civil partnerships, funerals and other life events (including receptions and celebrations). There is no requirement for table service at life events, or restrictions on singing or dancing.
- There are no longer restrictions on group sizes for attending communal worship.

What you should do

COVID-19 has not gone away, so it's important to remember the actions you can take to keep yourself and others safe. While cases are high, everybody needs to continue to act carefully and remain cautious.

This is why it's important to:

- get a test if you develop COVID-19 symptoms, even if your symptoms are mild
- isolate if you test positive for COVID-19 or when told to do so by NHS Test and Trace
- meet others outside or let fresh air in
- minimise the number, proximity and duration of social contacts
- quarantine when returning from red list countries and for those people not fully vaccinated arriving from amber list countries

In addition, the government expects and recommends that people wear face coverings in crowded areas such as public transport.

Whilst the government is no longer instructing people to work from home if they can, the government would expect and recommend a gradual return over the summer.

You can read more about the government's plan to keep people safe at Step 4 in the Moving to Step 4 of the roadmap (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-summer-2021-roadmap/moving-to-step-4-of-the-roadmap) publication.

The government is also maintaining key protections, including targeted asymptomatic testing in education, high risk workplaces and to help people manage their personal risk. The government is encouraging and supporting businesses and large events to use the NHS COVID Pass in high risk settings. The government will work with organisations where people are likely to be in close proximity to others outside their household to encourage the use of this. If sufficient measures are not taken to limit infection, the government will consider mandating certification in certain venues at a later date.

Understanding the risks of COVID-19

The risk of catching or passing on COVID-19 can be higher in certain places and when doing certain activities. The main way of spreading COVID-19 is through close contact with an infected person. When someone with COVID-19 breathes, speaks, coughs or sneezes, they release particles containing the virus that causes COVID-19. These particles can be breathed in by another person. The particles can also land on surfaces and be passed from person to person via touch. In general, the risk of catching or passing on COVID-19 is higher:

- in crowded spaces, where there are more people who might be infectious
- in enclosed indoor spaces where there is limited fresh air

Some activities can also increase the risk of catching or passing on COVID-19. This happens where people are doing activities which generate more particles as they breathe heavily, such as singing, dancing, exercising or raising their voices.

The risk is greatest where these factors overlap, for example in crowded indoor spaces where people are raising their voices.

In situations where there is a higher risk of catching or passing on COVID-19, you should be particularly careful to follow the guidance on keeping yourself and others safe as we return to normality. Every little action helps to keep us all safer.

If you are clinically extremely vulnerable

Clinically extremely vulnerable people are advised to follow the same guidance as everyone else. However, as someone who is at a higher risk of becoming seriously ill if you were to catch COVID-19, you should think particularly carefully about precautions you can continue to take. These precautions are included in the guidance for the clinically extremely vulnerable (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/19-july-guidance-on-protecting-people-who-are-clinically-extremely-vulnerable-from-covid-19).

If you are pregnant

If you're pregnant, your chance of getting COVID-19 is not higher than anyone else and it's very unlikely you'll get seriously ill with it.

As a minimum, you should follow the same guidance as everyone else. If you are more than 27 weeks pregnant, or if you are pregnant and have an underlying health condition that puts you at a greater risk of severe illness from COVID-19 at any point in pregnancy, you may want to consider limiting close contact with people you do not normally meet with regularly.

If you live in an area receiving an enhanced response to COVID-19

The government is working with local authorities in areas which need an enhanced response to COVID-19 to avoid the NHS facing unsustainable pressure. Enhanced Response Areas will receive additional support, such as surge testing and logistical resources to maximise vaccine uptake, for a 5 week period. If you live in one of the affected local authority areas, you should read the local COVID-19 information and advice for your area:

- Cornwall Council (https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/information-about-coronavirus/)
- Darlington Borough Council (https://www.darlington.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/public-health/coronavirus/)
- Devon County Council (https://www.devon.gov.uk/coronavirus-advice-in-devon/)

- Durham County Council (https://www.durham.gov.uk/coronavirus)
- Gateshead Council (https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/14980/Coronavirus-COVID-19)
- Hartlepool Borough Council (https://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/coronavirus-info)
- Council of the Isles of Scilly (https://scilly.gov.uk/community-safety/coronavirus-covid-19-information-and-advice)
- Middlesbrough Council (https://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/community-support-and-safety/coronavirus-covid-19)
- Newcastle City Council (https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/services/public-health-wellbeing-and-leisure/public-health-services/coronavirus-covid-19)
- North Tyneside Council (https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/1429/coronavirus-covid-19)
- Northumberland County Council (https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/coronavirus.aspx)
- Plymouth City Council (https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/coronaviruscovid19information)
- Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council (https://www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk/coronavirus/Pages/coronavirus.aspx)
- South Tyneside Council (https://www.southtyneside.gov.uk/article/69129/Coronavirus-COVID-19-)
- Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (https://www.stockton.gov.uk/coronavirus)
- Sunderland City Council (https://www.sunderland.gov.uk/article/17309/Coronavirus-information)
- Torbay Council (https://www.torbay.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/public-health/coronavirus/)

It is particularly important for people living in these areas to follow the guidance on this page which will help to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and to help protect yourself and others.

Keeping yourself and others safe

There are still cases of COVID-19 in England and there is a risk you could catch or pass on the virus, even once you are fully vaccinated. This means it is important that you understand and consider the risks of catching or spreading COVID-19 in all situations.

While no situation is risk free, there are easy and effective actions we can take to protect ourselves and others around us.

If you are worried about going back to a more 'normal' life, there is information from the NHS on how to cope with anxiety about lockdown lifting (https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/coronavirus/tips-to-cope-with-anxiety-lockdown-lifting/).

Get tested and self-isolate if you have symptoms

If you have symptoms or test positive

For most people, COVID-19 will be a mild illness. However, if you develop COVID-19 symptoms (https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/), self-isolate immediately and get a PCR test (https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing/get-tested-for-coronavirus/), even if your symptoms are mild.

The most important symptoms of COVID-19 are recent onset of any of the following:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell

You should self-isolate at home while you book the test and wait for the results. You must self-isolate if you test positive. Your isolation period includes the day your symptoms started (or the day your test was taken if you do not have symptoms), and the next 10 full days. This is the law (https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2020/1045/made). You must self-isolate immediately and for the next 10 full days because this is the period of time when the virus is most likely to be passed on to others (the infectious period).

Self-isolating is important because you could pass the infection on to others, even if you do not have symptoms. You must stay at home for the full amount of time you are told to. This remains the law (https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2020/1045/made), regardless of whether you have been vaccinated.

If you are told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace

You must also self-isolate if you are told to do so by NHS Test and Trace. This may be because you live in the same household as someone who has tested positive (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection) or because you have come into contact with someone outside your household who has tested positive (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-contacts-of-people-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person/guidance-for-contacts-of-people-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person#main-messages).

In the small number of situations where the self-isolation of close contacts would result in serious disruption to critical services, a limited number of named workers may be able to leave self-isolation under specific controls for the purpose of undertaking critical work only. Further information can be found in the guidance for employers.

Guidance on self-isolating

When self-isolating, follow the stay-at-home guidance for people with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 and other members of their household (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection) or the stay-at-home guidance for non-household contacts of people with confirmed COVID-19 (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-contacts-of-people-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person/guidance-for-contacts-of-people-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person#main-messages). This will help reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 to other members of your household and community. In both cases you must stay at home at all times and not have contact with other people. There are only very limited circumstances when you do not have to do this, such as seeking medical assistance. If you do leave your home during your period of self-isolation for a permitted reason, you should maintain social distancing, keep 2 metres apart from other people and wear a face covering where possible.

You may be entitled to a one-off payment of £500 through the NHS Test and Trace Support Payment scheme if you are required to stay at home and self-isolate, or you are the parent or guardian of a child who has been told to self-isolate. You should visit your local authority website (https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council) for information on Test and Trace Support Payments and other support offered in your area.

You could be fined if you do not self-isolate after being told to by NHS Test and Trace.

Self-isolation exemptions if you are fully vaccinated

You're not required to self-isolate if you live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19, and any of the following apply:

- you're fully vaccinated
- you're below the age of 18 years and 6 months
- you've taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial
- you're not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons

NHS Test and Trace will contact you to let you know that you have been identified as a contact and check whether you are legally required to self-isolate. If you're not legally required to self-isolate, you will be provided with advice on testing and given guidance on preventing the spread of COVID-19. Even if you do not have symptoms, you will be advised to get a PCR test (https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test) as soon as possible.

You should not arrange to have a PCR test if you have previously received a positive PCR test result in the last 90 days, unless you develop any new symptoms of COVID-19, as it is possible for PCR tests to remain positive for some time after COVID-19 infection.

You can find further guidance for household contacts (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection) and guidance for non-household contacts (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-contacts-of-people-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person/guidance-for-contacts-of-people-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person) of people with confirmed COVID-19 infections.

Get vaccinated

All adults in England have now been offered at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. The vaccines are safe and effective. They give you the best protection against COVID-19.

If you have not yet received the COVID-19 vaccine, you should get vaccinated (https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirus-vaccine/). Evidence indicates that two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine provide very effective protection against hospitalisation. It usually takes around 2 to 3 weeks for your body to develop its protective response. You need 2 doses of vaccine for maximum protection against COVID-19.

However, even if you have been fully vaccinated, you could still get COVID-19 and pass it on to others. Whilst the vaccines provide a high level of protection against severe disease, hospitalisation and death, a recent PHE report shows that around 1 in 5 people who have had both doses are still vulnerable to getting infected with the Delta variant and showing symptoms. You can also still spread COVID-19 to others. We all need to do what we can to reduce the spread of COVID-19 to protect others and to reduce the risk of new variants developing and spreading.

Following the advice in this guidance will help you to protect your friends, family, and communities, including those who have been vaccinated.

Use the NHS COVID-19 app

Using the NHS COVID-19 app (https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/nhs-covid-19/) helps stop the spread of the virus by informing you that you have been in close contact with someone who has since tested positive for COVID-19, even if you don't know each other. The app is free and easy to use and doing so can help you protect your loved ones and others.

The app also allows people to report symptoms, order a coronavirus test, and check in to venues using a QR code. To help protect yourself and others, download and use the latest version of the NHS COVID-19 app (https://www.covid19.nhs.uk/).

Wear a face covering

COVID-19 spreads through the air by droplets and aerosols that are exhaled from the nose and mouth of an infected person. The government expects and recommends that people wear face coverings in crowded and enclosed areas where you come into contact with people you do not normally meet, such as public transport.

Meet outside or let fresh air in

When a person infected with COVID-19 coughs, talks or breathes, they release droplets and aerosols which can be breathed in by another person. Fresh air blows away these particles, reducing the chances of COVID-19 spreading. To reduce the risk of catching or spreading COVID-19, you should consider if you can meet outdoors or, if you're indoors, think about how you can let fresh air in.

The more fresh air you let into your home or other enclosed spaces, the less likely a person is to inhale infectious particles.

You can let in fresh air by uncovering vents and opening doors and windows. Do not prop fire doors open. If you have an extractor fan at home, for example in your bathroom or kitchen, think about leaving it running for longer than usual with the door closed after someone has used the room. This is particularly important when meeting people you do not live with indoors.

If you are concerned about noise, security or the costs of heating, opening windows for shorter periods of time can still help to reduce the risk of the virus spreading. Wearing extra layers can help you to keep warm. You may be able to change the layout of your room so that you do not sit close to cold draughts from open windows or doors.

Test twice a week even if you do not have symptoms

Around 1 in 3 people with COVID-19 do not have any symptoms. This means they could be spreading the virus without knowing it. Testing twice a week increases the chances of detecting COVID-19 when you are infectious but aren't displaying symptoms, helping to make sure you do not spread COVID-19.

Rapid lateral flow testing is available for free to anybody, but is particularly focused on those who are not fully vaccinated, those in education, and those in higher-risk settings such as the NHS, social care and prisons.

People may also wish to use regular rapid lateral flow testing to help manage periods of risk such as returning to the workplace, close contact in a higher risk environment or when spending prolonged time with a more vulnerable individual. You can get tests from pharmacies or online. Find out more about how to get rapid lateral flow tests (https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing/regular-rapid-coronavirus-tests-if-you-do-not-have-symptoms/).

If you develop COVID-19 symptoms (https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/), self-isolate immediately and get a PCR test (https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing/get-tested-for-coronavirus/).

Cover coughs and sneezes and wash your hands regularly

Wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitiser regularly throughout the day. Regular hand washing is an effective way to reduce your risk of catching illnesses, including COVID-19.

It is particularly important to wash your hands:

- after coughing, sneezing and blowing your nose
- before you eat or handle food
- after coming into contact with surfaces touched by many others, such as handles, handrails and light switches
- after coming into contact with shared areas such as kitchens and bathrooms
- when you return home

Where possible, avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. If you do need to touch your face, for example to put on or take off your face covering, wash or sanitise your hands before and after.

Hands touch many surfaces and can become contaminated with viruses, including COVID-19. You can transfer viruses to your eyes, nose or mouth from your hands if they are contaminated. Then viruses can enter your body and infect you. Washing or sanitising your hands removes viruses and other germs, so you're less likely to become infected if you touch your face. Using soap and water is the most effective way to clean your hands, especially if they are visibly dirty. Use hand sanitiser if there is no soap and water available.

Coughing and sneezing increases the number of droplets and aerosols released by a person, the distance they travel and the time they stay in the air. A cough or sneeze of an infected person which is not covered will significantly increase the risk of infecting others around them.

These actions will reduce the spread of droplets and aerosols carrying COVID-19 and other viruses, including those that cause coughs and colds:

- Cover your mouth and nose with disposable tissues when you cough or sneeze.
- If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into the crook of your elbow, not into your hand.
- Dispose of tissues into a rubbish bag and immediately wash your hands.

Stay home when unwell

If you develop COVID-19 symptoms (https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/), self-isolate immediately and get a PCR test (https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing/get-tested-for-coronavirus/), even if your symptoms are mild. You should self-isolate at home while you book the test and wait for the results. You must self-isolate if you test positive.

If you feel unwell but do not have COVID-19 symptoms, or your COVID-19 test is negative, you may still have an illness which could be passed on to other people. Many common illnesses, like the flu or the common cold, are spread from one person to another. This can happen:

- through the air when someone infected with an illness breathes, speaks, coughs or sneezes, they release particles containing the viruses which can be breathed in by another person
- through surfaces and belongings which can also be contaminated when people who are infected with an illness cough or sneeze near them or if they touch them, the next person to touch that surface may then become infected

Staying at home until you feel better reduces the risk that you will pass on an illness to your friends, colleagues, and others in your community. This will help reduce the burden on our health services.

Limit close contact

The main way of spreading COVID-19 is through close contact with an infected person. When someone with COVID-19 breathes, speaks, coughs or sneezes, they release particles containing the virus that causes COVID-19. These particles can be breathed in by another person.

You may choose to limit the close contact you have with people you do not usually live with. You may also choose to take a free test before being in close contact and also encourage those people you are meeting with to do so also which will help to manage the periods of risks. This includes returning to the workplace, close contact in a higher risk environment or when spending prolonged periods of time with a vulnerable individual.

These are personal choices which can help reduce your risk of catching or spreading COVID-19. It is important to consider that others may wish to take a more cautious approach as we open up. We should all be considerate of this and provide the opportunity and space for others to reduce close contacts if they wish.

Travelling in the UK and abroad

International travel

There is a traffic light system for international travel (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/red-amber-and-green-list-rules-for-entering-england). You should not travel to countries or territories on the red list.

Travelling to England from outside the UK

What you must do when you arrive in England from abroad depends on where you have been in the last 10 days before you arrive.

People planning to travel to England should follow the guidance on entering the UK (https://www.gov.uk/uk-border-control).

Find out which list the country you are travelling from is on and what you need to do (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/red-amber-and-green-list-rules-for-entering-england).

Travelling in the UK, Ireland and Channel Islands

There are no restrictions on travel within England.

You should check the rules at your destination if you're planning to travel to Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, or to Ireland or the Channel Islands as there may be restrictions in place.

Do not travel if you have COVID-19 symptoms or are self-isolating. Get a test (https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing/get-tested-for-coronavirus/) and follow the stay at home guidance (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection).

Businesses and venues

All remaining closed businesses and venues such as nightclubs and adult entertainment venues are able to reopen. All capacity limits at sporting, entertainment, or business events have been lifted.

Hospitality venues such as pubs, restaurants and bars are no longer required to provide table service or follow other social distancing rules.

All businesses should follow the principles set out in the working safely guidance (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-covid-19). Whilst the government is no longer instructing people to work from home if they can, the government would expect and recommend a gradual return over the summer.

Employers still have a legal duty to manage risks to those affected by their business. The way to do this is to carry out a health and safety risk assessment, including the risk of COVID-19, and to take reasonable steps to mitigate the risks you identify. The working safely guidance sets out a range of mitigations employers should consider including:

- cleaning surfaces that people touch regularly
- identifying poorly ventilated areas in the venue and taking steps to improve air flow
- ensuring that staff and customers who are unwell do not attend the workplace or venue
- communicating to staff and customers the measures you have put in place

Businesses are also encouraged to continue displaying QR codes for customers wishing to check in using the NHS COVID-19 app, or to continue collecting customer contact details to support NHS Test and Trace, however this will no longer be a legal requirement.

NHS COVID Pass

The NHS COVID Pass allows people to check their COVID-19 status and demonstrate that they are at lower risk of transmitting to others through full vaccination, a recent negative test, or proof of natural immunity.

We encourage organisations in certain settings to use the NHS COVID Pass as a condition of entry to reduce the risk of COVID-19. This will especially be the case in large, crowded settings (such as nightclubs) where people are likely to be in close proximity to others outside their household.

To support organisations and individuals in these settings, the NHS COVID Pass will be made available through the NHS App, NHS.UK, or as a letter that can be requested by calling NHS 119. Visitors will also be able to show text or email confirmation of test results. Organisations should ensure they are in compliance with all legal obligations, including on equalities.

There are some settings where the NHS COVID Pass should not be used as a condition of entry to ensure access for all. This includes essential services and essential retailers which have been able to stay open throughout the pandemic.

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Last updated 27 August 2021 - hide all updates

1. 27 August 2021
   Added Cornwall Council, Devon County Council, Council of the Isles of Scilly, Plymouth City Council and Torbay Council as local authority areas receiving an enhanced response to COVID-19.
2. 20 August 2021
   Updated structure and clarified language throughout to improve readability.
3. 16 August 2021
   Removed references to 16 August in the self-isolation exemption criteria section. This is because the changes are now current.
4. 13 August 2021
   Added information on self-isolation changes from 16 August
5. 11 August 2021

Added easy read version of 'how to stay safe and help prevent the spread' guidance.

6. 4 August 2021

Edited get tested and self-isolate. The length of time 18 year olds who are a contact of a positive case will be exempt from self-isolation has changed from 4 months after their 18th birthday to 6 months after.

7. 28 July 2021

Added Gujarati translation.

8. 27 July 2021

Corrected the 'International travel' section which said people should not travel to countries or territories on the red or amber lists. It now says "You should not travel to countries or territories on the red list.".

9. 27 July 2021

Removed Greater Manchester Combined Authority from areas receiving an enhanced response (covering Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan)

10. 27 July 2021

Added translations for Step 4 guidance.

11. 26 July 2021

Added local authority areas receiving an enhanced response (Newcastle City Council, North Tyneside Council, Northumberland County Council, Durham County Council, Gateshead Council, South Tyneside Council, Sunderland City Council, Darlington Borough Council, Hartlepool Borough Council, Middlesbrough Council, Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council and Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council). Removed areas no longer receiving an enhanced response (Lancashire County Council, Blackpool Borough Council, Cheshire East Council, Cheshire West and Chester Council, Liverpool City Region, Warrington Borough Council, Bedford Borough Council, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council and Bolton Council).

12. 22 July 2021

Updated with information for people who are pregnant.

13. 21 July 2021

Removed Birmingham City Council from areas where the new variant is spreading.

14. 19 July 2021

Guidance updated for the move to COVID-19 rules step 4 on 19 July.

15. 12 July 2021

Guidance updated following the announcement of a move to step 4 on 19 July.

16. 12 July 2021

Added Brighton and Hove City Council to the areas where the Delta variant is spreading fastest.

17. 12 July 2021

Added Oxford City Council to the areas where the Delta variant is spreading fastest.

18. 8 July 2021

Removed Leicester City Council and North Tyneside Council from areas where the new variant is spreading.

19. 30 June 2021

Updated to clarify that a PCR test should be taken even if symptoms are mild.

20. 28 June 2021

Translations updated

21. 25 June 2021

Removed Kirklees from list of areas where there's an enhanced response to the spread of the Delta variant.

22. 23 June 2021

Updated international travel section with a link to new simplified guidance on international travel.

23. 22 June 2021

    Removed Hounslow from list of areas where there's an enhanced response to the spread of the Delta variant

24. 21 June 2021

    Translations updated to guidance published on 14 June.

25. 21 June 2021

    Updated in line with new rules from 21 June. There are updates to the rules on weddings and civil partnership ceremonies and wedding receptions or civil partnership celebrations, commemorative events following a death such as a wake, stone setting or ash scattering, care home visits and domestic residential visits for children.

26. 17 June 2021

    Updated to reflect the publication of revised guidance on arranging or attending a funeral during the coronavirus pandemic.

27. 15 June 2021

    Updated to reflect the publication of revised wedding and civil partnership ceremonies, receptions and celebrations guidance and new guidance on what you need to do if you're planning a wedding or civil partnership or funeral, wake or commemoration in venues such as gardens or marquees on private land.

28. 14 June 2021

    Updated the list of areas where the Delta variant is spreading with new councils.

29. 14 June 2021

    Updated summary with information on changes from 21 June.

30. 8 June 2021

    Added guidance for people living in areas with variants of concern.

31. 28 May 2021

    Page updated to align with updated travel guidance in Northern Ireland.

32. 28 May 2021

    Updated to provide clarity on the type of test to be used for those with or without symptoms. Changed the order of paragraphs in the support bubble section. Clarified the guidance on staying overnight in other people's homes.

33. 25 May 2021

    The guidance for areas where the new COVID-19 variant is spreading has been updated to make it clearer we are not imposing local restrictions

34. 21 May 2021

    Updated guidance for areas where the new COVID-19 variant is spreading

35. 17 May 2021

    Step 3 guidance updates

36. 14 May 2021

    Added additional guidance on new variant

37. 10 May 2021

    Updated with new summary: "How the rules will change on 17 May".

38. 26 April 2021

    Scottish Government travel restrictions updated.

39. 16 April 2021

    Updated translated versions of guidance in accordance with 12 April changes.

40. 14 April 2021

    Updated guidance on in-person teaching at universities and higher education.

41. 12 April 2021

    Updated in line with the latest government guidance.

42. 6 April 2021

    Updated with additional information on travelling within the Common Travel Area (CTA).
43. 5 April 2021

    Updated to include how coronavirus restrictions will change from April 12th.
44. 2 April 2021

    Added full translations to guidance.
45. 1 April 2021

    Updated to clarify the rules on indoor mixing with members of your support bubble.
46. 1 April 2021

    Updated with new advice for people who are clinically extremely vulnerable and clarification on the rules for staying overnight with members of your support bubble.
47. 30 March 2021

    Coronavirus restrictions page updated to include translated summaries of 29 March guidance changes.
48. 29 March 2021

    First published.

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- Report a COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test result (https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result)
- NHS COVID Pass (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-covid-pass)
- Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance and support (https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)
- Red, amber, green lists: check the rules for travel to England from abroad (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/red-amber-and-green-list-rules-for-entering-england)

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