

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 is now (23 March 2020) introducing three new measures.

1. Requiring people to stay at home, except for very limited purposes
2. Closing non-essential shops and community spaces
3. Stopping all gatherings of more than two people in public

Every citizen must comply with these new measures. The relevant authorities, including the police, will be given the powers to enforce them – including through fines and dispersing gatherings.

These measures are effective immediately. The Government will look again at these measures in three weeks, and relax them if the evidence shows this is possible.

1. STAYING AT HOME

You should only leave the house for one of four reasons.

- **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**, or to provide care or to help a vulnerable person.
- **Travelling to and from work**, but only where this absolutely cannot be done from home.

These four 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.

If you work in a critical sector outlined in this guidance, or your child has been identified as vulnerable, you can continue to take your children to school.

2. CLOSING NON-ESSENTIAL SHOPS AND PUBLIC SPACES

Last week, the Government ordered certain businesses - including pubs, cinemas and theatres - to close.

The Government is now extending this requirement to a further set of businesses and other venues, including:

- **all non-essential retail stores** - this will 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 and key workers).

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 two exceptions to this rule:

- **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** - but workers should be trying 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 will exclude funerals, which can be attended by immediate family.

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 will therefore be ensuring the police and other relevant authorities have the powers to enforce them, including through fines and dispersing gatherings where people do not comply.

They 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.