



**Briefing 20-17**

**March 2020**

## **Staying at Home Guidance COVID 19**

### **1. Introduction**

On 23 March the Prime Minister announced new measures to combat the spread of Coronavirus which includes 'stay at home' measures. Whilst the guidance informs the general public it should also be considered along with key worker guidance and decisions as to what staff should be deployed to cover services; particularly those services which will be regarded as critical at a local level. Councils are taking decisions on a daily basis as to the deployment of staff and therefore this guidance should be considered so that there is the maximum adherence to the social distancing policies whilst ensuring services to the most vulnerable are continued.

### **The New Rules on Staying at Home and Away from Others**

#### ***Below replicates the Government statement***

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 dispersal of 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. Where parents do not live in the same household, children under 18 can be moved between their parents' homes.

## **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).

More detailed information can be found [here](#), including a full list of those businesses and other venues that must close. Businesses and other venues not on this list may remain open.

### **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 only.

### **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 Government will look at them again and relax them if the evidence shows this is possible.

### **3. APSE Comment**

Many will welcome this further clarity on social distancing measures but clearly workers who are required to work to deliver critical council services, or who are seconded / deployed to deal with the delivery of such critical services, should also be so far as possible safeguarded. This will mean all appropriate measures being put into place to limit close contact, use of PPE, and appropriate training in its use, additional cleaning and other safeguards. This will also mean decisions may need to be reviewed as to what services are 'critical' or will need to be scaled back to enable effective social policy in implementing the 'stay at home' measures. Too broad an application of essential services will risk undermining the measures.

If you have any questions or comments on this issue please feel free to email through or to stay up to date and join the APSE Covid 19 WhatsApp Groups visit the [APSE COVID 19 web hub here](#).

Further service-related question boards will be uploaded today providing sector information on parks, refuse, leisure, catering, cleaning, transport and fleet and highways services.

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