

COVID-19 - Advice for Restaurants, Pubs and Bars



On 23rd June the Prime Minister announced a further easing of lockdown restrictions to come into effect from Saturday 4th July.

[Read the lockdown easing announcement here](#)

The following advice is aimed at assisting businesses to take measures to keep both their staff and customers safe. **It is strongly advised that you take the time to read the Government's comprehensive guidance documents:**

www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19

www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/restaurants-offering-takeaway-or-delivery

This guidance applies to any food preparation or service setting where food and drink is sold for consumption at venues or for takeaway or delivery - for example restaurants, pubs, bars, beer gardens, food-to-go, cafes and social clubs.

Risk assessments

Employers have a legal responsibility to protect workers and customers from risks to their health and safety. If you are an employer this means you need to think about the risks they face and do everything reasonably practicable to minimise them. A risk assessment of the threat from COVID-19 must be conducted and suitable control measures proposed.

Employees should be involved in the risk assessment process. To find out more on talking with your workers about working safely during the Coronavirus outbreak, visit www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/working-safely/talk-to-workers.htm

If you have fewer than 5 workers, or are self-employed, you don't have to write anything down as part of your risk assessment, though we would **strongly recommend** you do so. There are interactive tools available to support you from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) at www.hse.gov.uk/risk/assessment.htm

Live music

At present **venues should not permit live performances**, including drama, comedy and music, to take place in front of a live audience. All venues are required to take steps to avoid people needing to unduly raise their voices to each other. This includes - but is not limited to - refraining from playing music or broadcasts that may encourage shouting, including if played at a volume that makes normal conversation difficult, loud background music, communal dancing, group singing or chanting.

Keeping customers and visitors safe

The opening up of the economy following the COVID-19 outbreak is being supported by NHS Test and Trace. We strongly recommend you assist this service **by keeping a temporary record of your customers and visitors for 21 days** in a way that is manageable for your business. You should do this in accordance with the **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)** as it applies in the UK.

Additional measures you can take include:

1. Calculating the maximum number of customers who can reasonably follow social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable) at the venue.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. Working with neighbouring businesses to provide additional parking or facilities such as bike-racks, where possible, to help customers avoid using public transport.
5. 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.
6. Managing outside queues to ensure they do not cause a risk to individuals, other businesses, additional security risks or obstruct public highway, footpaths, rights of way, etc.
7. Providing clear guidance on social distancing and hygiene to people on arrival, for example with signage and visual aids, and before arrival, such as by phone, on the website or by email.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. Encouraging customers to use hand sanitiser or handwashing facilities as they enter the venue.
11. Ensuring any changes to entrances, exits and queue management take into account reasonable adjustments for those who need them, including disabled customers.
12. Looking at how people move through the venue and how you could adjust this to reduce congestion and contact between customers, for example one-way flow.
13. 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.

14. Working with neighbouring businesses to consider how to spread the number of people arriving throughout the day, for example by staggering opening hours.
15. 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.
16. It is the licensed premises' responsibility to ensure all activities are included in the risk assessment to ensure they are safe and are not subject to any restrictions. We would recommend giving careful consideration to indoor sports or entertainment such as pool/snooker tables and gaming machines.

Outdoor seating licence

If you are considering implementing or extending current outdoor seating, please complete an application form - they can be found on the Hartlepool Borough Council website here:

www.hartlepool.gov.uk/info/20089/roads_and_pavements/982/outdoor_seating_licence_application

Please note that conditions may be attached to the use of your outdoor seating, such as restrictions on the times it may be used.

The Council's Highways team will assess each premises individually, and if COVID-19 guidelines can be adhered to then permission will be granted, subject to conditions. As businesses are currently under a huge financial strain this licence will be provided free of charge. You can contact the Highways team by emailing highways@hartlepool.gov.uk

If you only have off-sales on your licence

Once the new Business and Planning Bill 2020 is introduced, premises that are not currently authorised to sell alcohol for consumption off the premises at all (in other words "on-sales only") will be authorised to provide off-sales until 30th September 2021 without the need to make any application to the licensing authority. Any restrictions on the licence are suspended in so far as they are inconsistent with this new authorisation for off-sales. For example, if you had a condition stating "No off-sales" this would not apply.

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/lbill/58-01/119/5801119.pdf>

Managing service of food and drink at a venue

Measures you can take include:

1. Maintaining social distancing (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable) from customers when taking orders from customers.
2. 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.

3. Minimising customer self-service of food (i.e. carvery - the staff should use the utensils rather than the customers), cutlery and condiments to reduce risk of transmission. For example, providing cutlery and condiments only when food is served.
4. Providing only disposable condiments or cleaning non-disposable condiment containers after each use.
5. 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.
6. Encouraging contactless payments where possible and adjusting the location of card readers to social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable).
7. 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).
8. Ensuring all outdoor areas, with particular regard to covered areas, have sufficient ventilation. For example, increasing the open sides of a covered area.

Staff and customer interaction within a venue

Measures you can take include:

1. Encouraging the use of contactless ordering from tables where available. For example, through an ordering app.
2. 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, prevent customers from remaining at the bar or counter after ordering.
3. Adjusting processes to prevent customers from congregating at points of service. For example, having only staff collect and return empty glasses to the bar.
4. Minimising contact between kitchen workers and front-of-house workers. For example, by having zones from which front of house staff can collect food.
5. Encouraging the use of outdoor areas for service where possible. For example, increasing outdoor seating or outdoor points of service such as stalls.

Customer toilets

Public toilets, portable toilets and toilets inside premises should be kept open and carefully managed to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Below are points to consider:

1. 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.

2. Using 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).
3. 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.
4. 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 the use of disposable cloths or paper roll to clean all hard surfaces.
5. Keep the facilities well ventilated, for example by fixing doors open where appropriate.
6. Special care should be taken for cleaning of portable toilets and larger toilet blocks.
7. Putting up a visible cleaning schedule can keep it up-to-date and visible.
8. Providing more waste facilities and more frequent rubbish collection.

Outdoor play areas

The link below provides guidance to owners and operators responsible for playgrounds and outdoor gyms with practical advice on how these can be reopened and managed effectively to enable their use while minimising the transmission risk of COVID-19:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-managing-playgrounds-and-outdoor-gyms/covid-19-guidance-for-managing-playgrounds-and-outdoor-gyms

Monitoring arrangements and review

You must implement adequate monitoring arrangements and periodically review the controls you have put in place to make sure they are working. You should also review them if:

- they may no longer be effective
- there are changes in the workplace that could lead to new risks such as changes to staff, a process or the substances (e.g. cleaning agents) or equipment used

Also consider a review if your workers have spotted any problems or there have been any reported cases of COVID-19 associated with your workplace. Update your risk assessment record with any changes you make.