

16.07.2021 – Current rules and upcoming changes to lockdown measures for each nation

## England

On 12 July 2021, the Prime Minister confirmed that England will move to the Step 4 of the roadmap out of lockdown on 19 July. Boris Johnson has announced the lifting of almost all social distancing and lockdown measures including the legal requirement for face coverings and the number of people allowed to meet.

Some of the key changes include:

- 'work from home if you can' requirement will be lifted, but the government recommends a gradual return to offices over summer
- legal mandate on face coverings is to be removed although the government 'expects and recommends' face coverings in crowded areas
- no limit on the number of people you can meet, with no requirement to keep socially distanced from others

Though there is no legal enforcement, the government urges people to limit the volume of close contact as well as duration of social contact with other households. They also recommend increasing the volume, proximity and duration of social contacts in a gradual manner.

There are a few key changes for businesses and venues, including:

- no capacity limit at events, sports venues or hospitality and retail businesses
- no requirement for table service at hospitality venues

The government has also published a range of measures that they recommend for businesses such as:

- businesses and organisations in higher risk settings should use the NHS COVID Pass as a condition of entry
- businesses and venues are encouraged to continue to collect customer contact details or offer the use of the NHS Covid-19 app by displaying the QR codes

The government also reminds employers that they have a legal duty to manage risks to staff and customers.

REC CEO Neil Carberry said ""After the struggles of the past 18 months, businesses are looking forward to opening up. But as employers, the remaining risk of the virus to staff and customers is on all our minds. Companies need clarity from government on how to remain compliant with health and safety law during this final stage of unlocking, so that they can keep their staff and customers safe as they re-open."

Read [the official guidance](#) from the government and [the REC's health and safety guide for recruiters](#) for more information.

## Scotland

Most of Scotland currently remains in Level 1 with a few remote islands in Level 0 and areas with higher rate of infection in Level 2. The Scottish government has confirmed on 13 July that all areas

not already in Level 0 will move to Level 0 from 19 July, where the number of people allowed to meet will be increased to 15 people.

More details of the measures in Level 0 are:

- mandatory face coverings will stay in place
- most businesses are allowed to open, except nightclubs and adult entertainment venues
- up to 15 people can meet to socialise outdoors
- up to 10 people from 4 households can meet at an indoor venue such as a pub or a restaurant
- work from home where possible

Most of the remaining social distancing and lockdown measures are expected to be removed 9 August, subject to review.

Read [the guidance](#) from the Scottish government for more information.

## **Wales**

On 14 July, the Welsh government has announced that the nation will move on to alert level 1 from 17 July and to alert level 0 from 7 August.

The measures under alert level 1 include:

- up to six people can meet indoors in private homes
- organised events are allowed to take place with up to 1,000 seated audience or with up to 200 standing audience
- ice rinks are allowed to reopen

The below rules will be applied from 7 August, subject to the review of infection rates:

- limit on the number of people allowed to meet to be removed
- no legal requirement for social distancing

Unlike England, Wales is following the move by the Scottish Government by continuing the face coverings requirement on public transport and most public places.

Read [the guidance](#) from the Welsh government for more information.

## **Northern Ireland**

The next phase of lockdown easing will take place from 26 July – subject to the results at an executive meeting among Stormont ministers on 22 July. The changes that are likely to be agreed are:

- further reopening of the economy including reopening of theatres and larger events such as conferences and exhibitions
- “Linked households and bubble” to be removed
- reduced social distancing measures, which will be set at 1m for both indoors and outdoors
- increased numbers of people allowed to meet to up to 10 people for indoors in a private home and up to 15 people at a private garden

Read [the official guidance](#) for more information.