

## FAQ Hotels and Other Guest Accommodation

### **What does 'hotels and other guest accommodation' include?**

Hotels and other guest accommodation includes: income generating accommodation for example, hostels, motels, inns, pubs, student accommodation, holiday parks, B&B's, short term serviced accommodation and similar letting, guest houses, caravans, boats (including for holiday hire) and hotels, sleeper trains, yurts, chalets, campsites and caravans.

### **Which hotels and other guest accommodations are permitted to open from the 4<sup>th</sup> of July?**

Current government guidance states that private rooms in all indoor accommodation with en suite showering facilities, or one designated shower facility per guest room, will be able to reopen. Shared toilet facilities can also be opened if government guidance is followed. Dormitory rooms will be closed (except where housing parties from the same household or support bubble). Outdoor accommodation (i.e. campsites) will be allowed to reopen shared showering facilities, as long as they are operated in accordance with the relevant government guidance; found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/hotels-and-other-guest-accommodation> - under "Section 2: Keeping your customers, visitors and contractors safe".

### **What about other facilities linked to my hotel/ guest accommodation such as: restaurants, bars, leisure facilities, beauty treatments or retail shops?**

Firstly, you must check if that specific facility is legally permitted to be open. If it is permitted to be open then the specific government industry guidance will apply in order for you to operate it safely.

- For restaurants, pubs & bars: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/restaurants-offering-takeaway-or-delivery>
- For retail shops: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/shops-and-branches>
- Current activities/ premises which are **NOT** permitted to operate from the 4<sup>th</sup> of July include: Indoor fitness and dance studios, indoor gyms, indoor sports venues/facilities, any swimming pools, nightclubs/ communal dancing, live performances in front of a live audience (including drama, comedy or music), music or broadcasts that may encourage chanting, cheering or shouting, casinos, bowling/ skittle alleys, indoor ice-skating rinks, indoor play areas (including soft-play), spas, nail bars, beauty salons, tanning salons, massage parlours or the use of any of your facilities for events such as exhibitions or conferences.

### **Can my venue be hired out for events such as weddings?**

Current government guidance states that from the 4<sup>th</sup> of July gatherings of more than 30 people will only be permitted in certain public places, including licensed venues where legal marriage ceremonies can take place. However, it is strongly advised that numbers are restricted to 30 people. Such ceremonies should only occur in COVID-19 secure environments. Outdoor weddings (permitted under the Marriage Act) must adhere to the legal restrictions on gatherings. Large wedding receptions or parties should not take place. Further government guidance for small marriages and civil partnerships can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-small-marriages-and-civil-partnerships/covid-19-guidance-for-small-marriages-and-civil-partnerships#key-principles-for-planning-covid-19-secure-marriages-and-civil-partnerships>

**I am unsure of which control measures to put in place is there a control measure checklist available?**

The industry specific government guidance does contain suggestions of what control measures could be introduced. This guidance suggests specific controls such as social distancing and mitigating measures (e.g. cleaning, hand hygiene, barriers, etc) based on what type of hotel or guest accommodation you have. This can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/hotels-and-other-guest-accommodation> - under "Section 2: Keeping your customers, visitors and contractors safe".

This should be read in conjunction with the government guidance on "the visitor economy" available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/the-visitor-economy>

Industry and institute guidance has also been produced available for you to use, including UK Hospitality, found here:

<https://view.publitas.com/ukh/coronavirus-advice-for-hotels-and-the-hospitality-industry-25-02-2020/page/13> -

**What about shared facilities such as kitchens where guests make their own food or communal areas?**

Communal kitchens where guests prepare their own food should be kept closed. Other communal areas (such as TV rooms) where social distancing can't be managed within current government guidelines should be closed.

**What about shared showers, toilets or changing facilities?**

Shared shower facilities should remain closed unless you can assign them to one household group or support bubble (effectively making them private), or by running a reservation and clean system/ rota between uses of each household. Where toilets are shared, set clear use and cleaning guidance to ensure they are kept clean and clear of personal items and that permits social distancing as much as possible. Refer to the government guidance on the nature and frequency of cleaning control measures available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/hotels-and-other-guest-accommodation>

**What about laundry?**

Laundry (including staff uniforms, bedsheets/ linens and towels) should be washed at temperatures above 60°C. If fabrics cannot be washed at this temperature a laundry sanitising agent should be used, such as Napisan. If this is not possible leave the laundry in a bag in a secure place for 72 hours

and then wash as normal. This can be managed more effectively if laundry occurs in-house or undertaken by a contractor/ service provider rather than staff taking items home. Staff should change into uniforms on site to prevent contamination on their way to work.

The UK Hospitality industry guidance provides further information on this here:

<https://view.publitas.com/ukh/coronavirus-advice-for-hotels-and-the-hospitality-industry-25-02-2020/page/8>

### **Do I need to keep a record of guests using/ staying at my premises?**

Yes. Government guidelines have stated that the opening up of the economy is being supported by NHS Test and Trace. Therefore, by keeping a temporary record of your guests/ visitors you can help assist with any reported clusters or outbreaks of COVID-19 and help to keep infection rates low. We are awaiting further guidance on how to implement this in line with data protection requirements. In the meantime any details must be stored in a way which limits access by general staff and must be destroyed after 21 days.

### **Should I provide staff (or guests) with PPE?**

Government guidance states providing PPE beyond what you would usually provide (e.g. for cleaning products) to control the risk of COVID-19 is extremely limited. Workplaces outside of clinical settings are able to much more effectively manage the risk of COVID-19 through social distancing measures, hygiene and fixed work/ partnering of teams. This should be reflected in your risk assessment.

### **What if guests do not abide by the control measures or guidelines implemented?**

You should try and inform guests and customers as much as possible about the control measures you have in place. Perhaps making contact before they come to stay and informing them of the restrictions will help manage their expectations and give them time to process them. Signs and reminders around your premises can also act as prompts. Most people should oblige and know that this is all done with their (and your staff's) health and safety in mind. However, those who blatantly disregard these measures, even after being encouraged to follow them, should be asked to leave for the safety of everyone else.

### **What if a COVID-19 case or outbreak is linked to my premises?**

Hopefully, this will not happen, however, it is better to be prepared in case it does. The most effective and safest way to deal with this eventuality is to leave the implicated room unoccupied and untouched for 72 hours as this significantly reduces the likelihood of the virus being able to survive on any surfaces –which is in line with current medical and government guidance. After 72 hours a normal cleaning regime may be resumed for the implicated room – further advice on cleaning, disinfecting and managing a COVID-19 case linked to your premises is provided by UK Hospitality here on page 16: <https://view.publitas.com/ukh/coronavirus-advice-for-hotels-and-the-hospitality-industry-25-02-2020/page/16>

### **What about Legionnaires' disease?**

Due to hotels and guest accommodation premises being closed for a prolonged period during lockdown water system stagnation can occur due to lack of use; which can increase the risks of

Legionnaires' disease. Please follow HSE advice for reinstating water systems, air conditioning units, hot tubs/spas, swimming pools and other related systems:

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/legionella-risks-during-coronavirus-outbreak.htm>

### **Do I need to undertake a risk assessment for COVID-19 for my business?**

Yes. A suitable and sufficient risk assessment must be undertaken by an employer for all reasonable and foreseeable risks to health and safety. i.e. identifying sensible measures to control the risks in your workplace and record any significant findings. If you employ fewer than 5 people or are self-employed legally you don't have to write this down, however, doing so is good practice and acts as a good reference point when reviewing your control measures. Employers have a duty to consult their staff on matters of health and safety. Employees are often the best people to understand the risks in the workplace and will have a view on how to work safely. Involving them in the decision making process shows that you are taking their health and safety seriously.

### **I am unsure of how to conduct my COVID-19 risk assessment is a template available?**

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) have developed a risk assessment template which can be used, available here:

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/index.htm>

However, each business will need to adapt this into the specific actions it needs to take, depending on the nature of their business, including the size and type of business, how it is organised, operated, managed and regulated. A site by site approach is essential and COVID-19 risk assessment for premises will be unique. Therefore, guidance should be used to translate to whatever areas are relevant to your business and any measures that are taken should fit safely with any operational needs.

### **What happens if I do not undertake a risk assessment or introduce suitable COVID-19 control measures?**

Failure to complete a risk assessment which takes account of COVID-19, or completing a risk assessment but failing to put in place sufficient measures to manage the risk of COVID-19, could constitute a breach of health and safety law. The actions the enforcing authority can take include the provision of specific advice to employers to support them to achieve the required standard, through to issuing enforcement notices to help secure improvements. Serious breaches and failure to comply with enforcement notices can constitute a criminal offence, with serious fines and even imprisonment for up to two years. Inspectors are carrying out compliance checks nationwide to ensure that employers are taking the necessary steps.

### **Does Coronavirus Legislation and Guidance supersede other Health & Safety Legislation?**

No. The Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974 and associated regulations all still apply. Employers have a legal duty of care to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, that employees, guests/customers, members of the public, visitors, volunteers, agency workers and contractors are not exposed to significant risks to their health and safety when entering your premises – including COVID-19. However, it is recognised that you cannot completely eliminate the risk of COVID-19, but

this risk should be minimised as far as is reasonably practicable. By implementing government guidance you can demonstrate that this duty is being fulfilled.

**Who is responsible if I let out my hotel or guest house accommodation to a third party or contractor?**

In such cases, whilst the premises remain under the direct control of the owner, the actual event or function is under the control of the event planner/organiser. Both parties should carry out risk assessments and ensure that responsibility for safety management is clearly articulated and agreed.

**What if my question has not been answered?**

Please do not hesitate to contact us at [envhealth@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:envhealth@cheltenham.gov.uk) if you have any further questions about reopening or operating your business safely.