

Coronavirus – government to announce moving to Phase 3 today

The First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, will address parliament at 12.20pm and update MSPs on the government's response to Covid-19.

This will be a hybrid session with some MSPs in the chamber and others working from home.

The announcements today are expected to relax some of the restrictions introduced in March 2020, but is only some. It builds on the relaxations she announced yesterday for those who are shielding and also on air bridges which we detail below.

Outdoor spaces at bars and cafés opened on Monday 6 July. From tomorrow face coverings are mandatory in shops, as well as on public transport.

Perhaps the best news for some is that hairdressers will reopen on 15 July 2020, and for others it will be the new guidance on churches and other places of worship.

We already know that the following is likely to be introduced:

[su_spoiler class="my-custom-spoiler" title="Indicative dates"]People can meet in extended groups outdoors (with physical distancing) – 10 July

Households can meet indoors with up to a maximum of two other households (with physical distancing) – 10 July

Organised outdoor contact sports can resume for children and young people (subject to guidance) – 13 July

All dental practices begin to see registered patients for non-aerosol routine care. Work will begin to return aerosol generating procedures to practice safely – 13 July

Increasing capacity within community optometry practices for emergency and essential eye care – 13 July

Non-essential shops inside shopping centres can re-open (following guidance and with physical distancing) – 13 July

All holiday accommodation permitted (following relevant guidance) – 15 July

Indoor hospitality (subject to physical distancing rules and public health advice) – 15 July

Hairdressers and barbers – with enhanced hygiene measures – 15 July
Museums, galleries, cinemas, monuments, libraries – with physical distancing and other measures (e.g. ticketing in advance) – 15 July

All childcare providers can open subject to individual provider arrangements – 15 July [/su_spoiler]

What we are likely to hear from the First Minister today is set out below – although we know that these measures will probably not come into effect before 23 July 2020.

[su_spoiler class="my-custom-spoiler" title="Likely changes by 23 July "]Non-essential offices and call centres can re-open following implementation of relevant guidance (including on physical distancing).

Working from home and working flexibly remain the default

Universities and colleges – phased return with blended model of remote learning and limited on campus learning where a

priority.

Public health measures (including physical distancing) in place.

Places of worship can re-open for congregational services, communal prayer and contemplation with physical distancing and limited numbers

Easing of restrictions on attendance at funerals, marriages, civil partnerships, with physical distancing (limited numbers).[/su_spoiler]

Further announcements are likely to include live outdoor and indoor events subject to physical distancing, indoor gyms, beauty salons and other indoor entertainment venues like bingo clubs and theatres.

There will also be ministerial statements today later on in the meeting on the Government's response to the Chancellor's summer economic update, and higher and further education.

You can watch [here](#).



AIR BRIDGES

At yesterday's media briefing the First Minister indicated that it was likely she would announce these relaxations today, and announced figures showing a reduction in the numbers of those who have died from Covid-19 for the tenth week in a row. She also announced so called air bridges – places that people can now travel from without the necessity of quarantine when they get to Scotland.

She said: "I can confirm that from 10th of July onwards, if you are travelling to Scotland from any of the 39 places the UK Government has rated as green, we will not require you to

self-isolate upon arrival in Scotland. A full list of those countries will be published on our website – however they include Germany, Austria, Norway and Malta.

“Australia is also on that list, so let me mention that now. Despite the recent outbreak in Melbourne which I talked about, it is still assessed to be a low risk country. Because, as I mentioned – they have acted quickly to impose a strict localised lockdown so people in Melbourne can’t travel

“We will also lift quarantine for the countries on the amber list that have a prevalence below or not significantly higher than Scotland. That list includes France, Greece, the Netherlands, Italy, and Poland.

“However unfortunately, and I do mean that, we cannot in good conscience at this stage lift restrictions on people arriving from Spain because of the significantly higher prevalence.”

The First Minister explained at length yesterday that the ‘prevalence’ in Scotland is that for every 100,000 people in the population, 28 people have Covid. That’s a prevalence of 0.028%. She continued: “Scotland’s position is a bit different from that of the UK as a whole. Across the UK, it is estimated that around 180 people in every 100,000 currently have Covid.

“That’s higher than the 28 which is our central estimate for Scotland. And this is relevant to the decisions we take on the relaxation of quarantine.”

Although you do not need to self-isolate if returning from the 39 countries on the UK list, there are still restrictions on travelling to some of these. You should consult the [Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice](#) for the country you intend travelling to. You are also advised to consult your travel insurance company to make sure that you are covered.