

Coronavirus – Scottish Government advice changes for those who are shielding

Advice for people who are shielding is to change in the coming month.

Those affected will receive a letter from the Chief Medical Officer Dr Gregor Smith outlining new guidelines and the work to be done to move to pausing shielding from 1 August, as long the evidence is clear that it is safe to do so.

As well as this, from 10 July those shielding will no longer need to physically distance from people they live with.

From that date, they can meet in groups of up to eight people outdoors from two other households in a single day, as long as strict hand hygiene and physical distancing advice is followed.

Those who have been advised to shield will also be able to travel further than 5 miles from their house, book places to stay, such as self-catering accommodation without shared facilities, and use toilets in other people's houses if they are meeting them outdoors.

Those currently shielding can also form a 'extended household group' with one other household – this means that the shielding group can visit one other household indoors and stay overnight without physical distancing.

The decision on whether infection levels are low enough to allow shielding to be paused from 1 August will be announced

before the end of July. Further advice on going back to work, and whether children who are shielding can return to school, will also be issued before the end of the month.

Health Secretary Jeane Freeman said: "The implications of shielding have been enormous for every person affected. I know how hard it has been for those shielding, and their loved ones, and I do not want to ask anyone to live under those restrictions longer than they have to.

"But even though these changes will be welcome, I know many will also feel anxious too." But we have now reached a point where when restrictions can be carefully eased a bit more because the risk to those shielding from COVID-19 is now lower than before, and we know that easing shielding has benefits for both physical and mental health. "This will be a month of transition for many, and we urge all those affected to continue to follow safety precautions carefully."

Advice for those shielding

[su_spoiler class="my-custom-spoiler" title="Shielding advice"] From Friday 10 July, The Scottish Government advice will be that you can: stop physically distancing from the people you live with go indoors to use a toilet in someone else's house, when visiting them outdoors meet up to 8 people outdoors, from 2 other households, in a single day travel further than 5 miles from your house, as far as you want book self-catering accommodation or travel to a second home – try only to stay with people you live with at home People who live alone, or who live only with children under 18, can agree with another household to form an "extended household". This means that you are treated as being part of that household. You can visit this household indoors and stay over, without physical distancing. The Scottish Government is also advising any children under 12, who are not shielding, no longer need to physically distance outdoors from other children under 12.

This includes children under 12 who live with someone who is shielding. Adults who are shielding can also provide childcare to children under 12 outwith their household. The Scottish Government will publish further guidance on Friday 10 July. [/su_spoiler]