

Coronavirus – Scottish Government tightens the rules

Indoor and outdoor gatherings – rules revised to keep virus under control.

From Monday, the number of people who can gather together, indoors or outdoors, will be set at a maximum of six people from two households.

Moves announced today by First Minister Nicola Sturgeon will be enforced but people are urged to 'abide by these stricter new limits immediately.'

Children under 12 from within the two households will not be counted in the new limit of six people.

The restrictions do not apply where there is other sector specific guidance in force, for example for gyms, for childcare or for organised sports, and there will be some other limited exceptions for larger households, education, and places of worship.

It does apply to hospitality.

Along with these new measures, and very much as anticipate, the First Minister also confirmed that Scotland will not move out of Phase 3.

As a result of a rise in Covid-19 infections, route map changes that had been given a conditional, indicative start date of Monday 14 September – conditional on progress against the epidemic – have now been given the new indicative date of Monday 5 October. A final decision will be taken nearer the

time on confirming this new indicative date.

Measures announced today are:

- group gatherings will only be allowed to a **maximum of six people from two households** in both indoor and outdoor settings, with limited exemptions (This becomes law from Monday 14 September 2020)
- **face coverings must be worn in hospitality settings**, apart from during the service of food and drink, with hospitality staff following the similar rules as retail staff (from Monday 14 September)
- up to 20 people will still be able to attend **funerals, weddings and civil partnerships ceremonies**, with the limit permitted for wakes and receptions rising to 20 in line with this, as long as they take place in regulated venues like hotels with strict guidance in place (from Monday 14 September)
- route map moves expected from Monday (14 September) are given a new indicative date of Monday 5 October

The First Minister said: "I am asking people to abide by these stricter new limits on gatherings immediately.

"In recent weeks, we have reopened significant parts of our economy. People are meeting up more, going out more, and travelling more. All of that is positive.

"But as we released ourselves from lockdown, we also released the virus. Rather than the threat to public health receding, the pandemic is accelerating again – albeit, and thankfully, from a low base and not as rapidly.

"The hospitality industry has put a lot of effort into creating safe spaces for people to meet. We hope that reducing the risk of transmission in hospitality settings through the use of face coverings and reducing group numbers will help keep the sector open.

“Unfortunately, the route map changes that had been given an indicative date of Monday, conditional on the progress of the epidemic, must be paused for a further three weeks. I must stress this remains an indicative date and a final decision can only be taken nearer the time.

“It is important we don’t lose sight of the objective to keep infection levels as low as possible. It is not a virus anyone should be relaxed about getting.

“I know that after six long, hard months, we are still asking the public to make a lot of difficult sacrifices. That is unavoidable, given the nature of the challenge we face. However, I want to be clear that while we still face a battle to get and keep Covid under control, we are in a stronger position than earlier in the year.”