

Government changing the rules on face coverings

First Minister Nicola Sturgeon announced today that the wearing of face coverings is to become mandatory in communal workplace areas, such as corridors, canteens and social spaces.

During a statement to Parliament, which was delivered virtually, the First Minister also announced that the business support scheme will start taking online applications from 20 October 2020. The Council Leader in Edinburgh, Cllr Adam McVey confirmed the council officers who will be administering the payments stand ready. In total, £40 million of support is available, including a £20 million grant fund which will be administered by local authorities.

Changes to face covering regulations are:

The wearing of face coverings in a workplace canteen, when not seated at a table, such as when queueing, entering or leaving the canteen (in line with other hospitality venues) – from Friday 16 October

The wearing of face coverings in other indoor communal workplaces, such as corridors and social spaces – from Monday 19 October

Exemption for couples during their indoor marriage ceremony or civil partnership registration, providing there is a partition or 2 metres can be maintained between the couple and other people – Friday 16 October

Existing coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions will remain in place and will be kept under review.

The First Minister said: “We introduced restrictions on household meetings three weeks ago, together with very tough additional restrictions last week.

“However, the most recent of those changes, in particular, will not yet be having an impact on case numbers.

“And there is no doubt that we are currently in a precarious position.

“That explains why I can confirm to the parliament that all of our existing Covid restrictions will remain in place.”

Regarding travel during this time, the First Minister continued:

“People living in any of the central Scotland health board areas under tighter restrictions should not travel outside their own area unless they really need to – and people in other parts of Scotland should not travel to these areas unless absolutely necessary.

“Please avoid travel to other parts of the UK considered high risk areas. We specifically ask people not to go on trips to Blackpool unless necessary – there are now 286 infection cases in Scotland associated with Blackpool.

“These restrictions are hard – for individuals and businesses – but they are essential.”