

Coronavirus – new testing to be introduced for passengers arriving in Scotland

The Scottish Government has announced that all passengers arriving into Scotland from abroad will be required to have proof of a negative test taken a maximum of 72 hours before travel.

The new public health requirement, which the government says will be introduced as soon as practically possible, will be another safeguard against imported cases, and in particular a protection against new strains of coronavirus such as those identified in Denmark and South Africa.

All travellers arriving into Scotland will have to take the pre-departure test (PDT) up to 72 hours before leaving the country they are in. Those coming from countries not on the quarantine exemption list will still be required to self-isolate for 10 days on arrival.

Non-essential travel to or from Scotland is currently illegal and will not immediately change with the introduction of pre-departure testing.

Transport Secretary Michael Matheson said: “Travel into or out of Scotland is currently illegal and that will remain the case while we work to suppress the new strain of Covid-19.

“The Scottish Government has been consistently clear about the

risks associated with international travel and the importance of public health measures in helping to stop the spread of coronavirus. That is why we have been in regular dialogue with the UK Government and the other devolved administrations about what further measures can be put in place, including the introduction of pre-departure testing (PDT).

“The requirement for pre-departure testing will add to our suite of public health measures as we seek to help drive down transmission of the virus to safeguard health, protect the NHS and save lives.

“It is important to emphasise that this additional measure does not remove the requirement for all passengers arriving from countries not on the quarantine exemption list to self-isolate for ten days, even with a negative test. Likewise, all passengers will continue to have to complete a Passenger Locator Form and, of course, they will be subject to national lockdown restrictions, which currently bar people from leaving their home or other fixed address without a reasonable excuse for doing so.

“As the UK Government has made clear, there are still some outstanding issues to address and it is important that we consider the implications, but we are keen to implement this as soon as it is possible.”

[su_spoiler class="my-custom-spoiler" title="Stay At Home Guidance"]

To minimise the risk of spreading the virus, you must stay at home as much as possible. By law, in a level 4 area, you can only leave your home (or garden) for an essential purpose. There is a list of examples of reasonable excuses below. Although you can leave home for these purposes, you should stay as close to home as possible. Shop on-line or use local shops and services wherever you can. Travel no further than

you need to reach to a safe, non-crowded place to exercise in a socially distanced way. To minimise the risk of spread of Coronavirus it is crucial that we all avoid unnecessary travel.

Examples of reasonable excuses to go out:

for work or an activity associated with seeking employment, or to provide voluntary or charitable services, but only where that cannot be done from your home.

for education including, school, college, university or other essential purposes connected with a course of study.

for essential shopping, including essential shopping for a vulnerable person. You should use online shopping or shops and other services in your immediate area wherever you can.

to obtain or deposit money, where it is not possible to do so from home.

for healthcare, including COVID-19 testing and vaccination.

for childcare or support services for parents or expectant parents.

for essential services, including services of a charitable or voluntary nature such as food banks, alcohol or drug support services.

to access public services where it is not possible to do so, including from home:

services provided to victims (such as victims of crime),

social-care services,

accessing day care centres,

services provided by the Department for Work and Pensions,

services provided to victims (including victims of crime),

asylum and immigration services and interviews,

waste or recycling services,

to provide care, assistance, support to or respite for a vulnerable person

to provide or receive emergency assistance.

to participate in or facilitate shared parenting.

to visit a person in an extended household.

to meet a legal obligation including satisfying bail conditions, to participate in legal proceedings, to comply

with a court mandate in terms of sentence imposed or to register a birth.

for attendance at court including a remote jury centre, an inquiry, a children's hearing, tribunal proceedings or to resolve a dispute via Alternative Dispute Resolution.

for essential animal welfare reasons, such as exercising or feeding a horse or going to a vet.

local outdoor recreation, sport or exercise, walking, cycling, golf, or running that starts and finishes at the same place (which can be up to 5 miles from the boundary of your local authority area) as long as you abide by the rules on meeting other households

to attend a marriage ceremony or registration of a civil partnership.

to attend a funeral or for compassionate reasons which relate to the end of a person's life. This includes gatherings related to the scattering or interring of ashes, a stone setting ceremony and other similar commemorative events.

if you are a minister of religion or worship leader, for the purposes of leading an act of worship (broadcast or online), conducting a marriage or civil partnership ceremony or a funeral.

to donate blood.

for activities in connection with moving home (including viewing a property), or for activities in connection with the maintenance, purchase, sale, letting, or rental of residential property that the person owns or is otherwise responsible for. Travelling for the purposes of undertaking essential work on a property other than your main residence should not be used as a pretext for a holiday. You should not stay longer than for the length of time required to undertake the necessary work.

to avoid injury, illness or to escape a risk of harm.

for those involved in professional sports, for training, coaching or competing in an event.

to visit a person receiving treatment in a hospital, staying in a hospice or care home, or to accompany a person to a medical appointment.

to register or vote in a Scottish or UK Parliament, Local Government or overseas election or by-election, including on behalf of someone else by proxy

to visit a person detained in prison, young offenders institute, remand centre, secure accommodation or other place of detention.

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