

To whom it may concern,

## **PUBLIC HEALTH ANNOUNCEMENT FOR SEFTON BUSINESSES 23/09/2020**

Sefton Council is fully committed to supporting its communities and businesses to help control the spread and manage the impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19). This includes enabling our economy to operate safely under restrictions. This can only happen if residents and businesses take their personal and collective responsibilities seriously.

As you are aware, all businesses should be following setting-specific national guidance to minimise the risks of Coronavirus (COVID-19) transmission.

In addition, new local COVID-19 restrictions have been introduced in the North West. This means that in Sefton from Tuesday 22nd September, regulations now lawfully ban the following:

- Residents must not socialise with other people outside of their own households or support bubble in private homes and gardens
- Hospitality for food and drink will be restricted to table service only
- Late night restriction of operating hours will be introduced, with leisure and entertainment venues required to close between 10pm to 5am.

Residents are also advised to adhere to the following guidance to further reduce rates of infection:

- Residents should not socialise with other people outside of their own households in all public venues.
- Residents are advised to only use public transport for essential purposes, such as travelling to school or work
- Holidays should be taken within your own household or support bubble
- Residents are advised against attending amateur and professional sporting events as spectators.

These local measures have been supplemented by revised central government advice that was issued by the Prime Minister on Tuesday 22nd September 2020. This includes the mandatory wearing of face coverings in pub or restaurant settings, except from when eating or drinking from 24th September 2020.

The government states that if you operate a business or organise events you should take steps to ensure people do not socialise with people they do not live with, in line with COVID-19 secure guidance. Further information about the new restrictions can be found at [www.sefton.gov.uk/covid19](http://www.sefton.gov.uk/covid19).

Sefton Council will continue to provide advice and guidance to reaffirm Government and Public Health messages, including promoting COVID-secure businesses and settings. We will issue updates like this to help keep you informed about key changes in Merseyside and nationally, and what they mean for local businesses. Please take every step to ensure your business complies with the guidance to help ensure the safety of your staff and customers.

In addition to Environmental Health, the Council works closely with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), Merseyside Police and the wider community to monitor, enforce and seek closures and fines for persistent breaches of the COVID regulations. Sefton's Community Safety Partnership is committed to working together with the community to do all that we possibly can to ensure the restrictions are complied with and people are supported to feel safe.

Please find enclosed a 'Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) Factsheet' and 'Directory of Support' with additional information and advice for the business community. Thank you in advance for your co-operation and support.

Yours truly,



MARGARET JONES  
Director of Public Health  
Sefton Council

## Directory of Support

Guidance is subject to change, and you should review guidance relevant to your business frequently. Information on useful sources is available below:

### Key COVID-19 Business Support Sources

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

[www.sefton.gov.uk/covid19](http://www.sefton.gov.uk/covid19)

<https://www.investsefton.com/>

<https://coronavirusresources.phe.gov.uk/>

### National COVID-19 Guidance

Reopening your business safely during coronavirus (COVID-19) -

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-business-reopening>

Information on ensuring your workplace is COVID-Secure - <https://www.gov.uk/workingsafely>

Cleaning your workplace safely - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

Financial support for businesses finder - <https://www.gov.uk/business-coronavirus-support-finder>

### Other National COVID-19 Support Sources

Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) - <https://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus>

National Federation of Self Employed & Small Businesses (FSB) -

<https://www.fsb.org.uk/campaign/covid19.html>

UK Hospitality - <https://www.ukhospitality.org.uk/page/coronavirus>

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) (23/09/2020)

### What do I need to do as a business?

The priority actions that all businesses need to do to protect staff and customers are:

1. Complete a COVID-19 risk assessment and share it with all staff. Information about the risk assessment is available at [www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/working-safely/risk-assessment.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/working-safely/risk-assessment.htm).
2. Increase how often surfaces are cleaned, especially those being touched regularly, and ask staff, visitors and customers to use hand sanitiser/wash their hands frequently.
3. Ask customers to wear face coverings in indoor spaces or where required by law, unless they are exempt. Sefton Council encourages businesses to ensure customer facing staff wear face coverings. From 24th September 2020, it is mandatory to wear a face covering in a pub or restaurant, except for when eating or drinking. This includes staff and customers.
4. Enable social distancing by putting up signs or introducing a one-way system.
5. Increase ventilation by keeping doors and windows open where possible and running ventilation systems at all times.
6. Take part in NHS Test and Trace by keeping a record of all customers, staff and visitors. This is now a legal requirement; however, some exemptions do apply.
7. Turn away staff members, visitors or customers with COVID-19 symptoms, as they should be isolating.
8. Review guidance at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19> and follow site specific actions to make your workplace COVID-secure.

In addition, businesses must comply with local restrictions. As of 22nd September 2020:

- Hospitality venues must only sell food and drink for consumption on the premises if it is served to customers sitting at a table.
- Hospitality venues may sell food and drink for consumption off the premises.
- Hospitality businesses and venues, amusement arcades and other indoor leisure centres, funfairs, theme parks and adventure parks, bingo halls and concert halls must close from 10pm to 5am each day (please see below an exemption for food and drink deliveries)
- Between 10pm and 5am each day hot food takeaways can only operate a delivery service.
- Businesses should take steps to ensure people do not socialise with people they do not live with, in line with COVID-19 secure guidance.
- Hospitality, tourism and the leisure industry must comply with guidance around the recording of customer, staff and visitor contact details for the purpose of NHS Test and Trace or could face a fixed penalty fine if they do not. This includes the display of QR codes. For more information see 'Do I have to keep a record of customer, staff and visitor details?'
- Travelling funfairs are prohibited

Further information can be found at [www.sefton.gov.uk/covid19](http://www.sefton.gov.uk/covid19).

## Do I have to keep a record of customer, staff and visitor details?

As of 18th September 2020, venues in hospitality, the tourism and leisure industry, close contact services and local authority facilities could face a fixed penalty fine if they do not:

- ask at least one member of every party of customers or visitors to provide their name and contact details
- keep a record of all staff working on their premises and shift times on a given day and their contact details
- keep these records of customers, visitors and staff for 21 days and provide data to NHS Test and Trace if requested
- display an official NHS QR code poster from 24th September 2020, so that customers and visitors can 'check in' using this option as an alternative to providing their contact details if they have the NHS Test and Trace App. Businesses must register for their unique code at <https://www.gov.uk/create-coronavirus-qr-poster>. They will then be sent an official NHS QR Code unique to their business.
- adhere to General Data Protection Regulations

Hospitality venues must also refuse entry to those who refuse to participate.

Detailed and up-to-date guidance for businesses can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/maintaining-records-of-staff-customers-and-visitors-to-support-nhs-test-and-trace>

## Are employees allowed to come to work?

With the exception of organisations listed in the national guidance on closing businesses and venues, the government has not required any other businesses to close to the public – it is important for business to carry on.

To help contain the virus, office workers who can work effectively from home should do so over the winter. Where an employer, in consultation with their employee, judges an employee can carry out their normal duties from home they should do so. Anyone else who cannot work from home should go to their place of work. The risk of transmission can be substantially reduced if COVID-19 Secure guidelines are followed closely. Extra consideration should be given to those people at higher risk.

More information can be found at [www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do)

## Will the new restrictions change how staff travel to work?

People living inside and outside of these areas can continue to travel for work or school. Workplaces and schools themselves should also be implementing COVID-secure measures.

Residents are advised to only use public transport for essential purposes, including travelling to work. Buses, trains and the Mersey Ferries are still running and have key measures in place including enhanced cleaning regimes. It is important to follow key advice about how to travel safely including wearing face coverings. Face coverings must be worn on board all public transport and at rail and bus stations, Mersey Ferries terminals and in Merseytravel Travel Centres unless you are exempt. Guidance around face covering exemptions can be found at [www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own)

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People are advised not to share a car with those outside their household or support bubble, and to use public transport for essential journeys instead. Please note that private hire taxis and hackney cabs are not classed as public transport, but a face covering is still required.

### **How will new restrictions impact childcare arrangements for staff?**

Staff can continue to use early years and childcare settings, including childminders and providers offering before or after school clubs or other out-of-school settings for children. They can also continue to employ nannies, including those living outside of the region.

Children of parents who are separated can continue to move between households. People looking after children under the age of 14 or vulnerable adults, can continue to do so when it is necessary for caring purposes and is a regular arrangement. This covers formal and informal arrangements for childcare - but not playdates or parties.

### **What do we do if we are notified of a positive case of COVID-19 in our business?**

If you are notified by NHS Test and Trace of a confirmed case in your workplace, please inform the Sefton Council Environmental Health Commercial Team at [ETSContact@sefton.gov.uk](mailto:ETSContact@sefton.gov.uk) or by telephone on 0345 140 0845.

Where you have been notified of two or more cases, you will also need to contact the local PHE Health Protection Team (Cheshire and Mersey) on 0344 225 0562 (option 1) or on 0151 434 4819 when calling out of hours.

National action cards have been produced with advice for businesses on identifying a COVID-19 outbreak, reporting it to the local health protection team and working with health protection team to manage the response. The action cards have been developed by the NHS Test and Trace service and can be printed or downloaded to keep on-hand at <https://coronavirusresources.phe.gov.uk/reporting-an-outbreak/resources/>

### **Do staff require a negative test result before they return to work?**

No, staff do not require a negative test result before they return to work and this should not be requested by the employer.

It is important that staff follow relevant guidelines on self-isolation if they are a contact of a positive case ([www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works)), a household member of a suspected or positive case, symptomatic, or if they receive a positive test result ([www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance)).

### **How do I support my own and my staff's health and wellbeing?**

Coronavirus (COVID-19) has had significant and unexpected impacts on different aspects of our lives, from our personal life to our day-to-day work. Many people will still be experiencing some feelings of worry, so it is important that we all know how to access support.

A public directory of support and services available across Sefton can be found at [www.sefton.gov.uk/miscellaneous-pages/health-and-wellbeing-directory.aspx](http://www.sefton.gov.uk/miscellaneous-pages/health-and-wellbeing-directory.aspx) and national information from the NHS can be found at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/mental-health-helplines/>