

## SUMMARY – STEP 4 GUIDANCE



- All remaining limits on social contact will be removed
- All settings will be able to open, without limits or social distancing
- All restrictions on life events such as weddings, removed
- COVID-status certification will not be required in law as a condition of entry for visitors to any setting.
- The legal requirements to wear a face covering will be lifted in all settings.
- Social distancing rules (2 metres or 1 metre with additional mitigations) will be lifted.
- For individual settings where the risks of rapid spread are particularly acute, PH will support continued social distancing for time limited periods (Homeless Shelters).
- It is no longer necessary for Government to instruct people to work from home.
- ‘Working Safely’ guidance will be updated to provide examples of sensible precautions that employers can take to reduce risk in their workplaces. Employers should take account of this guidance in preparing the risk assessments they are already required to make under pre-pandemic health and safety rules.
- Businesses must not require a self-isolating worker to come to work, and should make sure that workers and customers who feel unwell do not attend the setting.
- Businesses will be encouraged to ask staff and customers to clean their hands regularly and clean surfaces that people touch regularly. The Government will provide guidance on how businesses can reduce unnecessary contact in the workplace, where it is practical. Operators will still be encouraged to use outside space where practical, and to consider the supply of fresh air to indoor spaces. Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) monitors could be used to help identify where a space is poorly ventilated with businesses encouraged to take steps to improve ventilation if CO<sub>2</sub> readings are consistently high.
- Businesses will be encouraged to display QR codes for customers to check in using the NHS COVID-19 app, to support NHS Test and Trace, although it will no longer be a legal requirement.
- From step 4 children will no longer need to be in consistent groups (‘bubbles’), and early years settings, schools or colleges will not be required to routinely carry out contact tracing, which will help to minimise the number of children isolating. Contact tracing in specific educational settings would only be triggered if deemed necessary in response to a local outbreak.
- The Government also intends to exempt under 18s who are close contacts of a positive case from the requirement to self-isolate, in line with the approach for those who are fully vaccinated (as set out below). Further detail will be published in due course and the changes are likely to come into effect later in the summer. There will be no restrictions on in-person teaching and learning in universities.
- The Department for Education will shortly set out more detail and publish new guidance for arrangements in education settings from step 4, covering both the summer period and the following term.
- In care homes, the Government will lift restrictions that limit visitors.

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Lifting restrictions does not mean that the risks from COVID-19 have disappeared. Instead it marks a new phase in the Government's response to the pandemic during which people need to manage the risks to themselves and others as the country learns to live with the virus. Building on the updated guidance on meeting friends and family, announced as part of step 3, the Government will provide advisory guidance on how people can manage the risks to themselves and to others. It sets out how the following behaviours are beneficial:

1. Meeting in well-ventilated areas where possible, such as outdoors or indoors with windows open.
2. Wearing a face covering where you come into contact with people you don't normally meet in enclosed and crowded spaces.
3. Washing your hands with soap and water or using hand sanitiser regularly throughout the day.
4. Covering your nose and mouth when you cough and sneeze.
5. Staying at home if unwell, to reduce the risk of passing on other illnesses onto friends, family, colleagues, and others in your community.
6. Considering individual risks, such as clinical vulnerabilities and vaccination status.

The Government will continue to urge people to get vaccinated, and to self-isolate and get tested if they have symptoms. It will remain a legal requirement for people to self-isolate if they test positive or are told to do so by NHS Test and Trace. The public will continue to be encouraged to download and use the latest version of the NHS COVID-19 app to help reduce the spread of the virus.

Individuals may choose to limit the close contact they have with those they do not usually live with in order to reduce the risk of catching or spreading COVID-19, particularly if they are clinically extremely vulnerable. It is important to respect and be considerate of those who may wish to take a more cautious approach as restrictions are lifted.