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Covid in Scotland: New guidance for shops and hospitality venues

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Coronavirus



Physical distancing will be reintroduced to shops and supermarkets

The Scottish government has published new guidance for shops, hospitality venues and other businesses in a bid to stem the transmission of Covid.

The details set out **legal restrictions** - but mostly advice - which come into force at 00:01 on Friday.

They include the greater physical distancing and one-way entrances and exits to shops and supermarkets.

In pubs, the guidance stops short of making table service mandatory, but does say it is "strongly encouraged".

However, what it calls "major life events" such as weddings and funerals are allowed to carry on without additional restrictions.

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Nicola Sturgeon announced the publication of the guidance **during First**Minister's Questions at Holyrood.

The Scottish government had previously said it would provide £100m of funding to help firms in hospitality and food supply chains which have been hit by advice to cancel work Christmas parties.

Ms Sturgeon said she was "acutely aware of and deeply concerned" about the impact of the advice on businesses.

The new guidance is for all businesses and workplaces and provides "advice on measures that you should take to reduce risk and create a safe environment for customers and staff".

For **retail, shops and shopping centres**, it says enhanced mitigations should be put in place, such as:

- Manage the inflow/outflow of premises through one-way systems and/or traffic lights systems
- Wherever possible, put in place separate entrance and exits
- Use public address systems, signs, floor markings and queue management systems to help people keep a safe distance from others
- Use screens to create a physical barrier between people at till points and self-service checkouts.

Queuing inside premises "should be avoided where possible". Where it is not possible, numbering systems or queue marshals should be used.



Table service in bars or ordering by using apps is not mandatory

For **pubs**, **restaurants** and **hospitality venues**, the government says "it is for each premises to determine what is practical and operationally possible for their setting in what is a diverse sector".

The document says there should be voluntary limits on maximum capacity "where appropriate".

The guidance also encourages the use of apps for ordering and electronic ticketing.

While table service is not mandatory in hospitality settings, businesses are urged to use it to reduce the amount of people coming into contact with each other.

The use of screens between tables and at service points "should also be considered".

'Challenging period'

The government publication says mandatory protective measures will be reviewed on a three-weekly basis to ensure they remain "proportionate".

It adds: "These guidance points are not exhaustive but are suggested to help operators manage risk and understand what may be considered a reasonable measure."

Scotland's Finance Secretary Kate Forbes said the government had worked "extremely quickly" to get the revised guidance in place.

She said: "It is crucial that everyone follows this guidance to support businesses to keep their premises safe and prevent transmission of Omicron, especially as we ramp up booster vaccinations.

"I am also making a plea to be considerate to staff who are doing their best during this challenging period."

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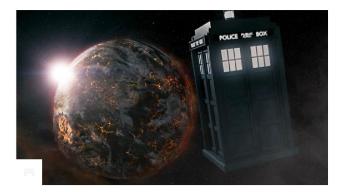
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