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News

## Western Isles in lockdown

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Part of: [Public safety and emergencies](#), [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) in Scotland](#)

Action needed due to rise in cases.

Due to an increase in prevalence of coronavirus (COVID-19) and an increase in infection rates Na h-Eileanan Siar will move to Level 4 from 00.01 Saturday.

New cases following a previous rise – including a community outbreak on Barra - have placed a significant strain on hospital capacity in the Western Isles Health Board area and the hospital on Stornoway is now reaching full capacity within available staffing resources. Some non-urgent procedures will be rescheduled but the hospital will maintain a full emergency service.

Clinical advice is that the move to lockdown is necessary to avoid the NHS becoming overwhelmed.

Nobody who lives in an area under lockdown should leave or remain outside their home except for an essential purpose like caring responsibilities, outdoor exercise and work that cannot be done from home.

Health Secretary Jeane Freeman said:

“When the situation demands it, we must act quickly and decisively to safeguard health, save lives and protect the NHS.

“As we said we would, we have kept the island areas under review. The advice of our clinical advisers is that due to a rising trend of infections, lockdown is now necessary in the Western Isles. Discussions are underway to offer support and ease the pressure on local health services.

“It is essential that we further limit interaction between different households to stem the spread and bring the situation back under control, while we vaccinate more people.

“At the moment, lockdown is the best way of keeping each other safe, as vaccination continues. It is how we can protect ourselves and our loved ones.

“I continue to be very grateful to people across the country for their patience and resilience in the face of this extraordinary challenge and I am sure those in the Western isles will realise the seriousness of the current situation makes this move necessary and respond accordingly.”

## Background

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): stay at home guidance](#)

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): local protection levels - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

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