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News

# Updated COVID-19 protection levels supported

Published: 19 November 2020 19:28

Part of: [Health and social care](#), [Public safety and emergencies](#), [Law and order](#), [Transport](#), [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) in Scotland](#)

Introduction of regulations to reduce transmission rates and keep people safe.

Measures to suppress the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19) have been supported in a debate and vote in the Scottish Parliament today.

Eleven local authorities will now move into the highest protection level at 6pm tomorrow (Friday) evening as efforts continue to suppress the incidence of in the weeks up to Christmas.

Regulations preventing people who live in a Level 3 or Level 4 area from travelling outside their local authority except for an essential purpose will also come into force. The regulations also prevent non-essential travel into a Level 3 or 4 local authority area, except for the same reasons.

The changes to protection levels will remain in place for three weeks until Friday 11 December.

Michael Matheson, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity, said:

"The decision to move local authorities into the highest protection level and to restrict travel between them was a difficult one to make. We recognise this will be difficult for many businesses and individuals in the affected areas.

"These decisions are hard, but driven by evidence and we have taken the additional measures of putting in place necessary and proportionate travel regulations because we have to limit the spread of the virus between Level 3 and 4 areas as well as out of them.

"These measures are essential to protect our communities and, especially at this time of year, to manage the pressures on the NHS, not only at Christmas, but also looking towards January, when the NHS faces its greatest challenge in any year, let alone with COVID. We all want Christmas. A decisive approach to move local authority areas to the highest level of restrictions now is intended to reduce the prevalence of the virus in a few weeks' time.

“For the moment, we can all play our part in ensuring that the current restrictions have their desired effect, by sticking to the rules.”

## Background

Find out [more about the COVID protection levels and what you can and cannot do at each level](#).

Find out more about the travel restrictions that will be introduced on Friday 20 November.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/health-protection-coronavirus-restrictions-and-requirements-local-levels-scotland-regulations-2020-amendment-regulations/>

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-travel-within-scotland-and-to-from-the-common-travel-area-impact-assessments/>

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/health-protection-coronavirus-restrictions-and-requirements-local-levels-scotland-amendment-no-4-regulations-2020/>

From 6pm Friday 20 November, the level allocations will be:

### Level 1:

Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar  
Highland  
Moray  
Orkney  
Shetland

### Level 2:

Aberdeen City  
Aberdeenshire  
Argyll and Bute  
Borders  
Dumfries and Galloway

### Level 3:

Angus  
Clackmannanshire  
Dundee City  
Edinburgh  
Falkirk  
Fife  
Inverclyde  
North Ayrshire  
Perth and Kinross

East Lothian and Midlothian will remain in Level 3 until Tuesday 24 November when they will move to Level 2.

**Level 4:**

East Ayrshire  
East Dunbartonshire  
East Renfrewshire  
Glasgow  
North Lanarkshire  
Renfrewshire  
South Ayrshire  
South Lanarkshire  
Stirling  
West Dunbartonshire  
West Lothian

The assessment of what level of protection should be applied to each local authority is broadly based on an analysis of five key indicators:

- number of positive COVID-19 cases per hundred thousand people over the last week
- percentage of positive tests
- forecast for new cases in the weeks ahead
- capacity of local hospitals
- capacity of local intensive care facilities

These factors are assessed alongside the advice and recommendations of local public health officials, National Incident Management Team, the Scottish Government's chief clinical and policy advisors, and consideration of local circumstances, such as: specific COVID-19 outbreaks; travel and work patterns; and the extent to which health services are provided by neighbouring health boards.

Final decisions are based on all of these factors.

Alongside a table setting out the levels, a detailed analysis paper has also been published setting out the Scottish Government's assessment and overall decision for each local authority.

The five-level strategic framework aims to tackle COVID-19 with measures strong enough to reduce virus prevalence while proportionate to the scale of the problem in different parts of the country - and in a way that minimises, as far as possible, the other harms caused by the pandemic.

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