



Government briefing – All non-essential businesses to close

On 23 March the government stepped up measures to prevent the spread of coronavirus and save lives. All businesses and premises outlined in the table below must now close.

Takeaway and delivery services may remain open and operational in line with guidance on Friday 20 March. Online retail is still open and encouraged and postal and delivery service will run as normal.

Mr Johnson announced, ‘as a country’, we all need to do what we can to reduce the spread of coronavirus. That is why the government has given clear guidance on self-isolation, staying at home and away from others, and asked that schools only remain open for those children who absolutely need to attend. Employers who have people in their offices or onsite should ensure that employees are able to follow Public Health England guidelines including, where possible, maintaining a 2 metre distance from others, and washing their hands with soap and water often for at least 20 seconds (or using hand sanitiser gel if soap and water is not available).

Further nationwide social distancing measures were brought into place:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults#summary-of-advice>

Parks will remain open but only for individuals and households to exercise **once a day**. Communal spaces within parks such as playgrounds and football pitches will be closed.

Food and drink	Exceptions
Restaurants and public houses, wine bars or other drinking establishments	Food delivery and takeaways can remain operational and can be a new activity supported by the new permitted development right. This covers the provision of hot or cold food that has been prepared for consumers for collection or delivery to be consumed, reheated or cooked by consumers off the premises.
Cafés and canteens	<p>Food delivery and takeaway can remain operational (and as above).</p> <p>Cafés and canteens at hospitals, care homes or schools; prison and military canteens; services providing food or drink to the homeless.</p> <p>Where there are no practical alternatives, other workplace canteens can remain open to provide food for their staff and/or provide a space for breaks. However, where possible, staff should be encouraged to bring their own food, and distributors should move to takeaway. Measures should be taken to minimise the number of people in the canteen at any one given time, for example by using a rota.</p>
Retail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supermarkets and other food shops • Health shops • Medical services (such as dental surgeries, opticians and audiology clinics, physiotherapy clinics, chiropody and podiatry clinics, and other professional vocational medical services)

- Pharmacies and chemists
- Petrol stations
- Bicycle shops
- Hardware shops
- Veterinary surgeries and pet shops
- Corner shops and newsagents
- Off-licences and licenced shops selling alcohol, including those within breweries
- Laundrettes and dry cleaners
- All Post Offices
- Car rental services and car parks in towns, cities and near to takeaways may remain open, to facilitate essential activity (e.g. where they are supporting hospitals, supermarkets or takeaways)
- High street banks, building societies, short-term loan providers, credit unions and cash points
- Storage and distribution facilities, including delivery drop off points
- Public toilets
- Market stalls which offer essential retail, such as grocery and food. Shopping centres should stay open if they contain units which are not required to close.
- Car garages and repair shops

NB: Please note above text in Red indicates guidance taken from another source.

Mr Johnson said ‘We are asking the businesses and premises and other venues outlined above **not to open for trade from close of trade 23 March 2020.**

The first point of review for these measures will be in three weeks. This review will consider their necessity and effectiveness in light of changing circumstances.

Compliance

Everyone is instructed to comply with the rules issued by the government in relation to coronavirus, in order to protect both themselves and others. As of 2pm on 21 March 2020, **closures on the original list from 20th March are now enforceable by law** in England and Wales due to the threat to public health. The government will extend the law and enforcement powers to include the new list of premises for closure. Further measures on enforcement could be taken following the passage of the Coronavirus Bill through parliament.

A business operating in contravention of the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Business Closures) Regulations 2020 will be committing an offence. As agreed with the devolved administrations these measures will be extended to Scotland and Northern Ireland by Ministerial Direction once the Coronavirus Bill is in force.

Environmental Health and Trading Standards officers will monitor compliance with these regulations, with police support provided if appropriate. Businesses and premises that breach them will be subject to **prohibition notices**, and potentially **unlimited fines**.

For further information please see below guidance link:

Full guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-businesses-and-premises-to-close/further-businesses-and-premises-to-close-guidance>

Guidance on Social Distancing: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/business-and-other-venues-subject-to-further-social-distancing-measures/businesses-and-other-venues-subject-to-further-social-distancing-measures>