



Rolling Brief: Covid-19

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Stay at home, protect the NHS, save lives

The Coronavirus is the biggest threat this country has faced in decades – and this country is not alone. All over the world we are seeing the devastating impact of this invisible killer. Which is why the Government is working to a scientifically-led, step-by-step action plan – taking the right measures at the right time.

In dealing with this unprecedented challenge, what everyone must recognise is that our NHS – like any health service around the world – only has a limited number of doctors, nurses, and specialist equipment. This means it can only deal with so many sick people at once.

The more people that get sick with Coronavirus at any one time the harder it is for the NHS to cope – meaning more people are likely to die from the Coronavirus, as well as other serious illnesses. Therefore, if we can slow the spread of Coronavirus so fewer people are sick at any one time, we can protect the NHS's ability to cope.

That's why, in addition to lifting the capacity of the NHS, the Government is asking everyone to stay at home – unless they have one of the reasons that have been set out. It's simply the best weapon we have to slow the spread of the virus. That way we can protect the NHS and save lives.

During this difficult time for the country, we recognise the extreme disruption the necessary actions are having on people's lives, their businesses, their jobs and the nation's economy. And that's why we have produced a huge and unprecedented programme of support both for workers and for business, and we'll do everything we can to ensure people can pay their bills, stay in their home and put food on their table.

We know this will not be a short battle – beating Coronavirus will take months, not weeks. But the Government is keeping all the current restrictions, and any further action that might be required, under constant review and they will be relaxed if and when the evidence shows we are able to.

However, the reality is the way ahead is hard and many lives will sadly be lost. But as we so many times in the past, the people of the United Kingdom will rise to this current challenge and we will beat the Coronavirus together.

At this moment of national emergency – it is vital that we all stay at home, protect our NHS and save lives.

Stay at home

You must stay at home, only leaving for the following very limited purposes:

- Shopping for basic necessities, as infrequently as possible.
- One form of exercise a day – for example, a run, walk or cycle – alone or with members of your immediate household.
- Any medical need, to provide care or to help a vulnerable person.
- Travelling to and from work, but only where this absolutely cannot be done from home.

Protect the NHS

You must stay at home to protect the NHS:

- The NHS only has a limited number of doctors, nurses and specialist equipment.
- We are working around the clock to increase NHS capacity.

- The more people who get sick, the harder it is for the NHS to cope.
- We must slow the spread of the disease so that fewer people are sick at any one time.

Save lives

You **must** stay at home to **protect the NHS** and **save lives**. The police will have the powers to enforce the following restrictions:

- Dispersing gatherings of more than two people in public, excluding people you live with.
- Issuing fines to anyone who does not comply with these rules.
- Closing shops that are not essential, as well as playgrounds and places of worship.

Recent action we have taken:

- **Instructed** the British people to stay at home – to protect the NHS and save lives. The Prime Minister has also written to all 30 million households across the UK, to outline the guidance everyone should follow and the measures the Government has put in place to fight coronavirus and to support businesses and workers.
- **Extended** visas for NHS frontline workers and their families for a year – demonstrating how valued overseas NHS staff are to the UK. Doctors, nurses and paramedics with visas due to expire before 1 October 2020 will have them automatically extended for one year, free of charge. By giving them the peace of mind that they do not need to apply for a visa extension, this will allow those at the frontline to focus fully on combatting coronavirus and saving lives.
- **Waived import taxes** on medical equipment crucial to the fight against coronavirus – reducing red tape to ensure equipment gets to frontline health workers faster. NHS suppliers will no longer have to pay customs duty and import VAT on specific medical goods coming from outside the EU, including ventilators, coronavirus testing kits and protective clothing.
- **Launched a national voucher scheme** to make sure children who usually benefit from free school meals still have access to healthy and nutritious meals while they are not attending school. Schools can continue to provide meals for collection or delivery themselves, but where this is not possible, the scheme will allow schools to provide vouchers worth £15 to families to spend at supermarkets while schools are closed due to coronavirus.
- **Reached a new agreement** with the airlines to help get British nationals back home. The Government has reached an agreement with Virgin, Easyjet, Jet2 and Tital Airways, so that they will offer passengers alternative routes where the original flight has been cancelled, and allow people to change tickets, including between carriers.
- **Providing £75 million to charter special flights** to bring British nationals home where commercial options do not exist. These flights will be operated by the airlines which have reached an agreement with the Government, and will fly to priority countries to bring back UK residents, especially those who are elderly or vulnerable. Special charter flights will be prioritised according to the number of stranded British travellers and their vulnerability, including an assessment of the local health provision.
- **Ramped up delivery** of Personal Protective Equipment to our frontline medical staff so they are fully equipped to tackle Coronavirus. We have established the national supply distribution response team, supported by the Armed Forces, to deliver equipment to people who need it the most. We have

delivered 170 million FFP3 masks, surgical masks and other PPE equipment. We've also made it easier for businesses to supply more PPE, removing administrative barriers to the manufacturing of hand sanitizer, by reducing the amount of red tape so firms can bring their products to market more quickly.

- **[Called](#) on 65,000 former nurses and doctors to re-join the NHS to help tackle Covid-19 and save lives.** 20,000 former NHS professionals have so far signed up to return to the NHS in the first few days.
- **Working to increase our [testing capacity](#) to 25,000 hospital patients a day.** The Prime Minister and Health Secretary promised industry leaders that they would be given whatever support they need to help government increase testing capabilities across the country – and our capacity is currently more than 10,000 tests a day. We are also ensuring that frontline NHS staff get the [tests](#) they need to keep safe and treat patients.
- **Launched a new scheme to recruit [volunteers](#) who can help the NHS support vulnerable people during the coronavirus pandemic – with 750,000 people now signed up.** These volunteers will be to help up to 1.5 million people who have been asked to shield themselves from coronavirus because of underlying health conditions.
- **Unveiled a major new package of measures to [protect up to 1.5 million people in England](#) who are the most vulnerable – and delivered the first [food parcels](#) to those people unable to leave their homes because of Covid-19.** The first 2,000 food parcels have already been delivered to those who cannot leave their homes because severe health conditions leave them most vulnerable to the virus.
- **Providing additional resources to help people with their [mental health](#) during the Covid-19 outbreak.** We will provide £5 million to support leading mental charities and Public Health England has published new guidance to help people look after their mental wellbeing during these extraordinary times.
- **Putting all parts of our country on an emergency footing – an unprecedented step in peacetime – and establishing strategic coordination centres to lead local responses.** In each centre we will bring together senior members of the emergency services, local authorities, military planners and the NHS to lead communities.
- **Doing more to support companies that may be experiencing difficulties because of Covid-19.** We will introduce measures to improve the insolvency system to help companies that need to undergo financial rescue or restructuring to keep trading.
- **Allowed workers to carry over their statutory [annual leave](#) that they don't use this year because of Covid-19.** New regulations will allow up to 4 weeks unused leave to be carried into the next two leave years, meaning people don't lose out.
- **Opening temporary NHS Nightingale hospitals in London, Manchester and Birmingham.**
- **Delivered a [new scheme](#) to support self-employed people.** The fair, targeted and deliverable scheme will pay self-employed people a grant worth 80 per cent of their average monthly profits over the last three years if they get into coronavirus-related difficulties – and is one of the most generous schemes in the world.
- **Given the police new [enforcement powers](#) to ensure people are staying at home,** protecting the public and keeping as many people as possible safe from this terrible disease.
- **Launched a gov.uk Coronavirus Information service on [WhatsApp](#).** The new free to use service aims to provide official, trustworthy and timely information and advice about coronavirus and will further reduce the burden on NHS services.

- **Exempted estate agents, lettings agencies and bingo halls from paying business rates this coming financial year.** We have already announced that the business rates retail discount would be increased to 100 per cent next year and would be expanded to the hospitality and leisure sectors. We have now gone further – some of the exclusions for this relief have been removed, so that retail, leisure, and hospitality properties that have closed as a result of the Covid-19 restriction measures will now be eligible for the relief.
- **Granted a 6-month exemption for MOT testing, enabling vehicle owners to travel to work where this absolutely cannot be done from home, or shop for necessities.** All cars, vans and motorcycles which usually would require an MOT test will be exempted from needing a test from 30 March 2020. Vehicles must be kept in a roadworthy condition, and garages will remain open for essential repair work. Drivers can be prosecuted if driving unsafe vehicles.
- **Provided free car parking for our NHS and social care workers.** These workers will be able to park in on street parking bays and council owned carparks without having to worry about cost or time restrictions.
- **Giving businesses an additional 3 months to file accounts with Companies House, helping companies avoid penalties as they deal with the impact of COVID-19.** All businesses will be able to apply for a 3 month extension for filing their accounts – with those citing issues around COVID-19 being automatically and immediately granted an extension. Applications can be made through a fast-tracked online system which will take just 15 minutes to complete.
- **Extended Visas for those who cannot return home due to the COVID-19 pandemic.** This will apply to anyone whose leave expired after the 24 January and who cannot leave the country because of travel restrictions or self-isolation.
- **Protected commercial tenants by ensuring that, if they cannot pay their rent because of coronavirus, they will not be evicted.** These measures, included in the emergency Coronavirus Bill will mean no business will be forced out of their premises if they miss a payment in the next three months.
- **Announced Emergency Measures Agreements, so we can make sure our railways stay open.** These agreements will suspend the normal franchise agreements and transfer all revenue and cost risk to the Government. This will last for an initial period of 6 months, with options for further extension or earlier cancellation as agreed.
- **Set out a Plan for People’s Jobs and Incomes to protect jobs, offer more generous support to those without jobs, strengthen the safety net for the self-employed and help people to stay in their homes.** This includes helping pay people’s wages through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme – offering grants to employers who promise to retain their staff, covering most of the cost of paying people’s wages.
- **Relaxed competition laws to allow supermarkets to work together to ensure that everyone has access to food and essential supplies when they need them.** Food retailers will now be able to share data on their stock levels, cooperate to keep stores open and share staff, distribution depots and delivery vehicles. This will help keep shops open and staffed and better able to meet high demand.
- **Made it easier for workers to obtain an isolation note, which can be used as evidence for their employer if they have to take more than 7 days off work.** Workers can now obtain an isolation note through the NHS website and NHS 111 online, and then emailed to the user
- **Introduced new emergency measures with the energy industry to keep gas and electricity flowing, looking after vulnerable customers who may be in financial difficulty due to Covid-19.** Any household in financial distress will be supported by their supplier so that their energy does not get cut off.
- **Closed schools for the vast majority of children until further notice.** This will mean there will be far fewer children in schools and that will help us to slow the spread of the disease.

- **Introduced emergency legislation including measures to protect renters, so that no one gets evicted if they cannot pay their rent.** Emergency legislation will be taken forward so that landlords will not be able to start proceedings to evict tenants for at least a three-month period
- **Announced an unprecedented package of Government-backed loans and support for business.**
- **Introduced a three month mortgage holiday for those in difficulty due to coronavirus, so that people will not have to pay a penny towards their mortgage while they get back on their feet.** We are extending the three month mortgage holiday to landlords whose tenants are experiencing financial difficulty due to coronavirus
- **Announced a temporary relaxation of planning rules so that pubs and restaurants can operate as hot food takeaways to serve people having to stay at home.**
- **Reaffirmed our commitment to giving councils the support they need to contribute to the national effort,** including giving them more flexibility to focus their resources on the response to coronavirus.

For awareness: The Prime Minister's health

The Prime Minister has coronavirus and is self-isolating at home in Downing Street.

He began experiencing mild symptoms on Thursday afternoon and was tested on the advice of England's Chief Medical Officer.

The Prime Minister is continuing to lead the Government's response to coronavirus, chairing meetings and communicating with key members of his team through video conferencing.

Q: Will this lockdown last for six months?

Our message is clear – people should stay at home. This will save lives, protect the vulnerable and protect the NHS. As the PM said in his address to the nation last week, 'we will keep these restrictions under constant review. We will look again in three weeks, and relax them if the evidence shows we are able to.'

Plan for People's Jobs and Incomes

Issue: On 20 March 2020, the Chancellor announced our Plan for People's Jobs and Incomes.¹

We know people are deeply worried about the Coronavirus – the impact it will have on their jobs, their incomes and their ability to provide for their families. We said we would support the British people – and we meant it. We will do whatever it takes and we will get through this.

Our Plan for People's Jobs and Incomes, will protect people's jobs; offer more generous support to those who are without jobs; strengthen the safety net for the self-employed; and help people stay in their homes.

The Government is standing behind employers – and we are asking that they do their bit and stand behind workers.

- **We will help pay people's wages through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme – offering grants to employers who promise to retain their staff, covering most of the cost of paying people's wages.**
- **We are also deferring the next three months of VAT until the end of the financial year – an injection of over £30 billion of cash to businesses to help businesses pay people and keep them in work.**
- **We are also acting so that, if the worst happens, there is a stronger safety net to fall back on. So we are increasing Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit by £1,000 a year for the next 12 months – that's nearly £7 billion of extra support.**

We will ensure people get the support they need to do the right thing, to stay at home, protect our NHS, save lives.

Protecting people's jobs:

- **Stepping in and helping pay people's wages – through a scheme which is one of the most generous of any in the world – paying grants to support as many jobs as necessary.** Any employer in the country – large, small, charitable or for profit – who promises to retain their staff, can apply for a grant to cover most of the cost of paying people's wages. Government grants will cover 80 per cent of the salary of retained workers up to a total of £2,500 a month – above the median income. We will place no limit on these grants. The cost of wages will be backdated to 1st March and will be open initially for at least three months – and we will extend the scheme for longer if necessary.
- **Deferring the next three months of VAT tax, a direct injection of over £30 billion of cash to employers, equivalent to 1.5 per cent of GDP.** That means no business will pay any VAT from now until the end of June, and they will have until the end of the financial year to repay those bills.
- **Extending the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme so that is interest free for twelve months, an extension from the initial announcement of six months.** We have already introduced and announced an extension to the Business Interruption Loan Scheme, which is for small and medium-sized businesses. On Tuesday, the Chancellor expanded the amount that can be borrowed from £1.2 million to £5 million, and we are now extending the time frame of no interest on these loans from six months to twelve months.

Offering more generous support to those who are without employment:

- **Strengthening the safety net for those who need it – increasing Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit by £1,000 a year – a cash injection of nearly £7 billion in the welfare system.** We are increasing

¹ HMT, *Speech*, 20 March 2020, [link](#).

the Universal Credit standard allowance, for the next 12 months, by £1,000 a year. We will also increase Working Tax Credit by the same amount for the next 12 months. Together these measures will benefit over 4 million of our most vulnerable households.

Helping people stay in their homes:

- **Providing nearly £1 billion of support for renters, by increasing the generosity of housing benefit and Universal Credit**, so that the Local Housing Allowance will cover at least 30 per cent of market rents in local areas.

Other announcements to support businesses and workers:

We are standing behind businesses:

- **Standing behind businesses small and large – providing a £330 billion package of loans and guarantees – that’s worth 15 per cent of our GDP.** And if demand is greater than the initial £330 billion we are making available, we will go further and provide as much capacity as required. That means any good business in financial difficulty who needs access to cash to pay their rent, the salaries of their employees, pay suppliers, or purchase stock, will be able to access a government-backed loan, on attractive terms.
 - **We will support liquidity amongst large companies**, with a major new scheme being launched by the Bank of England.
 - **We will support lending to small and medium-sized businesses** by extending the Business Interruption Loan Scheme announced in the Budget. This means that, rather than providing loans of £1.2 million, it will provide loans of up to £5 million, with no interest for the first twelve months.
- **Helping all businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors – meaning that none of these companies will have to pay business rates.** All businesses in this sector are exempt from business rates for 12 months – that’s every single shop, pub, theatre, music venue, restaurant, and any other business in the retail, hospitality or leisure sectors. In addition, we will provide small businesses in these sectors with an additional grant scheme of up to £25,000. Any business with a rateable value of less than £51,000 can now get access to a government grant.
- **Exempting estate agents, lettings agencies and bingo halls from paying business rates this coming financial year.** We have already announced that the business rates retail discount would be increased to 100 per cent next year and would be expanded to the hospitality and leisure sectors. We have now gone further – some of the exclusions for this relief have been removed, so that retail, leisure, and hospitality properties that have closed as a result of the Covid-19 restriction measures will now be eligible for the relief.²
- **Giving businesses an additional 3 months to file accounts with Companies House, helping companies avoid penalties as they deal with the impact of COVID-19.** All businesses will be able to apply for a 3 month extension for filing their accounts – with those citing issues around COVID-19 being automatically and immediately granted an extension. Applications can be made through a fast-tracked online system which will take just 15 minutes to complete.³
- **Providing grants to the smallest of businesses of £10,000.** We are providing £10,000 grants to the 700,000 of our smallest businesses.

² HMT, *News story*, 25 March 2020, [link](#).

³ BEIS, *Press Release*, 25 March 2020, [link](#).

- **Protecting commercial tenants by ensuring that, if they cannot pay their rent because of coronavirus, they will not be evicted.** These measures, included in the emergency Coronavirus Bill currently going through Parliament, will mean no business will be forced out of their premises if they miss a payment in the next three months.⁴
- **Supporting small and medium-sized businesses to cope with the extra costs of paying Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) by refunding eligible SSP costs.** The criteria for eligible businesses are:
 - The refund will be limited to two weeks per employee who has claimed SSP as a result of Covid-19.
 - Employers with fewer than 250 employees will be eligible.
 - Employers should keep records but should not require employees to provide a doctor's note.
 - The eligible period will commence from the day on which regulations extending SSP come into force.
 - We will work with employers over the coming months to set up the repayment mechanism for employers as soon as possible.
- **Businesses and self-employed people may be eligible to receive support with their tax affairs through HMRC's Time to Pay service.** Arrangements are agreed case-by-case. Businesses can contact HMRC's new dedicated COVID-19 helpline from 11 March 2020 for advice.
- **Relaxing planning rules so pubs and restaurants can operate as hot food takeaways during the coronavirus outbreak.** Planning permission is normally required for businesses to carry out a change of use to a hot food takeaway. The Government has confirmed regulations will be temporarily relaxed to enable businesses to deliver this service without a planning application.⁵
- **Doing more to support companies that may be experiencing difficulties because of Covid-19.** We will introduce measures to improve the insolvency system which provides the legal options for companies running into major difficulties, in order to help companies that need to undergo financial rescue or restructuring to keep trading. New rules will mean companies undergoing restructuring can continue to get hold of supplies and raw materials.⁶
 - **Temporarily suspending wrongful trading provisions for company directors.** We will remove the threat of personal liability during the pandemic (with retrospective respect from the 1 March 2020). All other checks and balances will remain in force.
 - **Making it easier to hold Annual General Meetings.** We will ensure the AGMs can be held safely, including postponing, or moving the AGMs to phone or online using only proxy voting.

We are standing behind individuals:

- **Allowing workers to carry over their statutory annual leave that they don't use this year because of Covid-19.** New regulations will allow up to 4 weeks unused leave to be carried into the next two leave years. The changes will also ensure all employers affected by Covid-19 have the flexibility to allow workers to carry over leave at a time when granting annual leave could leave them short-staffed in some of Britain's key industries, such as food and healthcare.⁷
- **Introducing a three month mortgage holiday for those in difficulty due to coronavirus – so that people will not have to pay a penny towards their mortgage while they get back on their feet.** We

⁴ MHCLG, *Press Release*, 23 March 2020, [link](#).

⁵ MHCLG, *Press Release*, 17 March 2020, [link](#).

⁶ Alok Sharma, *Daily No 10 Press Conference*, 28 March 2020, [archived](#).

⁷ BEIS, *Press Release*, 27 March 2020, [link](#).

will work with trade unions and businesses to develop new forms of employment support to help protect people's jobs and incomes through this period.

- **Making Statutory Sick Pay available for people diagnosed with COVID-19 or who are self-isolating, helping people with their finances – and a doctor's note can be obtained via NHS 111.** We have already set out that SSP will be available from day one for people who have COVID-19. But the Budget sets out that this will now cover those who are unable to work because they have been advised to self-isolate as well as for people within the same household who display symptoms. Those who are advised to self-isolate will be able to obtain a doctor's note via NHS 111 as medical evidence for SSP.
 - **Allowing people to obtain a new isolation note online.** Isolation notes will provide employees with evidence for their employers that they have been advised to self-isolate due to coronavirus, either because they have symptoms or because they live with someone who has symptoms. The notes can be accessed through the [NHS website](#) and [NHS 111 online](#), and then emailed to the user (or a trusted friend or family member, or directly to an employer, if someone doesn't have email).⁸

We are making our benefits system more generous and supporting the self-employed:

- **Supporting people who are not eligible for Statutory Sick Pay, like the self-employed, through the welfare system so that nobody is penalised for doing the right thing.** We will make it quicker and easier to access benefits. Those on contributory ESA will be able to claim from day 1, instead of day 8. To make sure that time spent off work due to sickness is reflected in people's benefits, we are also temporarily removing the minimum income floor in Universal Credit. This means self-employed people who fall out of work will still get their full payment. And we are relaxing the requirement for anyone to physically attend a jobcentre – everything can be done by phone or online.
 - **Suspending face-to-face assessments for all sickness and disability benefits for the next 3 months.** This temporary move (effective from 17 March) is being taken as a precautionary measure to protect vulnerable people from unnecessary risk of exposure to coronavirus. We will ensure those who are entitled to a benefit continue to receive support, and that new claimants are able to access the safety net.
 - **Suspending new reviews or reassessments across all benefits for three months.** This includes Universal Credit (UC), Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), Personal Independence Payment (PIP), Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance and the Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit. Where awards are due to expire, we will be extending end-dates so that claimants continue to receive financial support at their current rate during this period.⁹

Q: What about people on zero-hours contracts?

People on zero-hours contracts are eligible for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and can have 80 per cent of their salaries paid by the Government if they are furloughed.

If the employee has been employed (or engaged by an employment business) for a full 12 months prior to the claim, employers can claim for the higher of either:

- The same month's earnings from the previous year
- Average monthly earnings from the 2019-20 tax year

If the employee has been employed for less than a year, you can claim for an average of their monthly earnings since they started work.

⁸ DHSC, *Press Release*, 20 March 2020, [link](#).

⁹ DWP, *Press Release*, 23 March 2020, [link](#).

Supporting self-employed workers

Issue: On 26 March 2020, the Chancellor announced new measures to help those who are self-employed.¹⁰

- **The Government said we would do whatever it takes to protect people's jobs and incomes – and we meant it. We know many self-employed people are deeply anxious about the support available for them.**
- **That is why the Chancellor has announced a new Self-Employed Income Support Scheme – helping many of our country's self-employed workers: the musicians, the sound engineers, the plumbers, the electricians, the taxi drivers, the hairdressers, the childminders, the driving instructors, and many others.**
- **Through this scheme, the Government will pay self-employed people a taxable grant worth 80 per cent of their average monthly profits over the last three years, up to £2,500 a month – that's unlike almost any other country and makes our scheme one of the most generous in the world.**
- **We know there are challenging times ahead, but we are confident that the measures we have put in place will support millions of people, businesses and self-employed workers to get through this, and emerge on the other side both stronger and more united as a country.**

The Government's support is fair, targeted at those who need it the most, and crucially, it is deliverable:

- **We are launching the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme, to make sure people who work for themselves are getting the financial support they need.** The Government will pay self-employed people across the whole UK who have been adversely affected by coronavirus a taxable grant worth 80 per cent of their average monthly profits over the last three years, up to £2,500 a month, for three months – but we will extend it for longer if necessary.
- **We will make it simple for self-employed people to get the financial support they need.** Self-employed people who are eligible will be contacted by HMRC directly, asked to fill out a simple online form, and HMRC will pay the grant directly into their bank account. We expect people to access the scheme by the beginning of June.
- **We are ensuring our support reaches those self-employed people who are most in need of it.** The scheme will only be open to those with trading profits up to £50,000, leaving 95 per cent of people who are majority self-employed eligible for the scheme. HMRC will also ask people to demonstrate that the majority of their income comes from self-employment, and, to minimise fraud, only those who are already in self-employment, and who have a tax return for 2019, will be able to apply.

This builds on the support that is available to self-employed people:

- **For self-employed people who are struggling now, we've also made sure that many will be able to access loans through the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loans Scheme.** This scheme provides loans of up to £5 million, which will be interest free for twelve months.
- **Supporting people through the welfare system so that nobody is penalised for doing the right thing.** We will make it quicker and easier to access benefits. Those on contributory ESA will be able to claim from day 1, instead of day 8. And we are relaxing the requirement for anyone to physically attend a jobcentre – everything can be done by phone or online.

¹⁰ HMT, *Speech*, 26 March 2020, [link](#).

- **Suspending the minimum income floor for twelve months – meaning self-employed people can now access, in full, Universal Credit at a rate that is equivalent to Statutory Sick Pay for employees.**
- **Deferring income tax self-assessment payments for July until the end of January 2021.**

Q: Why are you making this change now?

We have already announced unprecedented measures to support people and businesses. These include the Coronavirus Interruption Loan Scheme set out at the Budget, and last week we announced £330 billion of loans and guarantees for businesses and a £7 billion boost to our welfare system, among others.

We have been working with the Federation of Small Businesses, the association of Independent Professionals and the Self-Employed, and the Trades Union Congress. Now we will give assurance.

Providing such unprecedented support for self-employed people is operationally very challenging. The self-employed are a very diverse population. They have a wide mix of different levels of income, which even in normal times can vary hugely from month to month.

Q: Support not available until June?

HMRC are working day and night to get this scheme up and running. HMRC are also delivering other key schemes to a similar timescale, including the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and the Statutory Sick Pay rebate for employers. The Self-Employed Income Support Scheme also allows late tax filers a month to get their 2018-19 tax returns in within 4 weeks of the announcement of the scheme, which also creates some delay.

Supporting British nationals abroad to get home

Issue: On 30 March 2020, the Foreign Secretary announced new measures to help British people who are abroad to get home.¹¹

- **As more and more countries around the world impose travel restrictions and bans in an attempt to slow the spread of coronavirus, we know many British people are struggling to get home.**
- **We have reached a new agreement with the airlines, which will see them provide more commercial options and make it easier for people to switch tickets between providers in order to get home. Where commercial options are not available, we will provide £75 million to support special charter flights.**
- **British nationals abroad should know that their Government has not forgotten them, and is doing everything it can to support and bring them home.**

We are doing this by:

- **Reaching a new agreement with the airlines to help get British nationals back home.** The Government has reached an agreement with Virgin, Easyjet, Jet2 and Tital Airways, so that they will offer passengers alternative routes where the original flight has been cancelled, and allow people to change tickets, including between carriers.
- **Providing £75 million to charter special flights to bring British nationals home where commercial options do not exist.** These flights will be operated by the airlines which have reached an agreement with the Government, and will fly to priority countries to bring back UK residents, especially those who are elderly or vulnerable. Special charter flights will be prioritised according to the number of stranded British travellers and their vulnerability, including an assessment of the local health provision.
- **Ensuring British people abroad have the information they need to get home.** When special return flights become available, these will be advertised by the Embassy and British nationals on Travel Advice Pages and Embassy social media and those who have registered for updates will be contacted via email. British nationals will be asked to register their interest through the FCO's booking agents, called CTM.
- **Tripling the capacity of the Foreign Office's call centre, in order to help more British people who are looking for guidance and support abroad.** Demand for the call centre has been unprecedented – with 15,000 calls in a single day, up from an average of 1,000 a day in normal times. By redeploying more staff to the call centre, the FCO can assist more British people abroad.

Advice for British nationals abroad:

- British tourists stranded abroad who want to return to the UK should first check if there are commercial routes available by visiting the airline websites, FCO Travel Advice pages for the country they are in and local British Embassy social media.
- If there are no commercial options, they should visit the Travel Advice pages and sign up to alerts for their location and follow Embassy social media and email updates. When special return flights become available, these will be advertised by the Embassy and British nationals on Travel Advice Pages and Embassy social media and those who have registered for updates will be contacted via email. British nationals will be asked to register their interest through the FCO's booking agents CTM.

¹¹ FCO, *Press Release*, 30 March 2020, [link](#).

Supporting the NHS

- **The over-riding object is to protect life and protect our NHS – we have a plan, based on the expertise of world-leading scientists, and we have already bought valuable time for our NHS to prepare.**
- **We are taking all of the action necessary to ensure the NHS has what it needs to deal with Covid-19. This includes an initial response fund of £5 billion and additional funding for research into test and surveillance around the virus.**
- **The NHS will be at the frontline of our efforts against Covid-19, and we will ensure that whatever it needs, it will get.**

We are doing this by:

- **Providing any extra resource the NHS needs to tackle the virus.** We have created a new £5 billion Initial COVID-19 Response Fund so the NHS can treat coronavirus patients; councils can support vulnerable people; and ensure funding is available for other public services.¹²
 - **Providing £1.3 billion to help the NHS discharge patients who no longer need care more quickly, freeing up vital space.** Of the £5 billion we are providing, £1.3 billion will be used to enhance the NHS discharge process. This will help to free up 15,000 hospital beds across England and ensure more staff have capacity to treat people needing urgent care, including those being cared for with coronavirus.¹³
- **Working with British manufacturers to support the production of essential medical equipment for the NHS, such as ventilators.** To date, there are more than 8,000 ventilators available to NHS patients – more than when the outbreak began – and there are another 8,000 expected from existing international manufacturers in the coming weeks. The first thousands of new ventilators will roll off the production line and be delivered to the NHS next week.¹⁴
 - **As well as increasing capacity for ventilation, which supports the patients worse affected, we're also increasing the capacity to provide oxygen to affected patients at an earlier stage in the process of the disease,** helping to avert the deterioration of their condition. A team led by UCL working with Mercedes Benz will produce 10,000 new CPAP devices to support affected patients.
- **Ensuring the NHS has the support and the people it needs to fight the virus.** We have called for extra NHS staff to help the fight against Covid-19, including retired doctors, nurses and final year students joining frontline services. So far, 20,000 retired NHS professionals have signed up to re-join the NHS in its fight against the coronavirus. 5,500 final-year medics and 18,700 final-year student nurses will also move to the frontline to help our efforts.
- **Increasing our testing capacity to 25,000 hospital patients a day.** The Prime Minister and Health Secretary promised industry leaders that they would be given whatever support they need to help government increase testing capabilities across the country. The increased capacity is expected to be ready within 4 weeks, with highest-priority cases being tested first.¹⁵
- **Ensuring that frontline NHS staff get the tests they need to keep safe and treat patients.** Working with universities, research institutes and businesses, we are rolling out staff testing across the NHS, with plans for a full roll-out for health, social care and other frontline workers. The new service will be free and help to end the uncertainty of whether NHS staff need to stay at home.¹⁶

¹² HMT, *Budget 2020*, 11 March 2020, [link](#).

¹³ DHSC, *News Story*, 19 March 2020, [link](#).

¹⁴ Cabinet Office, *News story*, 28 March 2020, [link](#); Cabinet Office, *Speech*, 31 March 2020, [link](#).

¹⁵ DHSC, *News Story*, 18 March 2020, [link](#).

¹⁶ DHSC, *Press Release*, 27 March 2020, [link](#).

- **Bolstering NHS 111 to provide advice to people who need it.** While people with mild symptoms should not call NHS 111, we need to make sure the service is available for those who need it, with severe symptoms or if they are not getting better after 7 days. Around 500 additional call handlers have already been trained to staff the NHS 111 service, representing an increase of 20 per cent. In addition, the new NHS 111 online service is also available to provide advice and will free up call handlers' time, so they are able to prioritise those experiencing symptoms.¹⁷
- **Opening new temporary NHS Nightingale hospitals, at the ExCel centre in London, the NEC in Birmingham and the Central Convention Complex in Manchester, to provide support for thousands more patients.** The NHS Nightingale Hospital in East London, for example, will comprise two wards, each of 2,000 people. With the help of the military and with NHS clinicians, we will make sure that we have the capacity that we need so that everyone can get the support that they need.
 - NHS Nightingale Birmingham will have an initial 500 beds, but with the capacity to increase beds up to 2,000 if needed.¹⁸
 - NHS Nightingale Manchester will have an initial 500 beds, but with capacity to increase beds up to 1,000 if needed.¹⁹
- **Extending visas for NHS frontline workers and their families for a year – demonstrating how valued overseas NHS staff are to the UK.** Doctors, nurses and paramedics with visas due to expire before 1 October 2020 will have them automatically extended for one year, free of charge. By giving them the peace of mind that they do not need to apply for a visa extension, this will allow those at the frontline to focus fully on combatting coronavirus and saving lives.²⁰
- **Researching the virus to look for cures and better testing methods.** We have provided £40 million of new funding to enable further rapid research in COVID-19, with the aim of increasing the capacity and capability of testing and surveillance.²¹
 - **The first British patient has been put into a randomised trial for a treatment of coronavirus.** Experts are rapidly getting a better understanding of coronavirus, and how to treat it. Trials of a possible vaccine are expected to start within a month.²²
 - **Working to bring forward a brand-new type of antibody test – which can tell people if they've had the virus and are immune.** More testing is critical to stopping this virus and getting life back to normal as soon as possible. We're in negotiations for a brand new type of antibody test – which can tell if a person has had the virus and is immune. We will buy hundreds of thousands.²³
 - **Investing £20 million to discover breakthroughs that will help the UK respond to Coronavirus and future pandemics, and save lives.** We are backing the UK's leading clinicians and scientists to map how the virus spreads and behaves by using whole genome sequencing – which will help guide treatments in the future and see the impact of interventions.²⁴
- **Working with international partners to tackle the virus.** We will provide a contribution of up to £150 million to the International Monetary Fund's Catastrophe Containment and Relief Trust, to help the effort to stop further transmission, including into the UK.²⁵

¹⁷ Hansard, 9 March 2020, WQ25187, [link](#).

¹⁸ NHS England, *Twitter*, 28 March 2020, [link](#).

¹⁹ NHS England, *Twitter*, 28 March 2020, [link](#).

²⁰ Home Office, *News story*, 31 March 2020, [link](#).

²¹ HMT, *Budget 2020*, 11 March 2020, [link](#).

²² PA Media, *Twitter*, 19 March 2020, [link](#).

²³ Matt Hancock, *Twitter*, 19 March 2020, [link](#).

²⁴ DHSC, *Press Release*, 23 March 2020, [link](#).

²⁵ HMT, *Budget 2020*, 11 March 2020, [link](#).

- **Placing up to 20,000 Armed Forces personnel at a higher state of readiness to support our vital public services, if required.** Up to 10,000 personnel are being placed at a higher readiness, so they are able to assist with supporting public services. This is on top of the 10,000 already held at higher readiness.
- **Training 150 military personnel to drive oxygen tankers in order to support the NHS.** These personnel began training on Monday 23 March 2020 - ensuring that the NHS always has the resources it needs to deliver world class care to those most in need.
- **Providing free car parking for our NHS and social care workers.** These workers will be able to park in on street parking bays and council owned carparks without having to worry about cost or time restrictions.²⁶

Conservative record on the NHS:

- **Providing the biggest cash boost in history for the NHS and enshrining that increase in law, to safeguard it for future generations.** We are investing an additional £33.9 billion in frontline NHS services every year by 2023-24, the largest and longest funding settlement in the history of the NHS.²⁷
- **Building 40 new hospitals and upgrading 20 more, ensuring extra funding for the NHS goes straight to the front line.** We are providing £2.7 billion to build 6 new hospitals straight away and seed funding for another 34 more to be built by the end of the decade, as well as £1.8 billion for 20 hospital upgrades and a further £200 million for new MRI and CT scanners across the county.²⁸
- **Delivering on our promises with £5.4 billion more for the NHS and health service – writing the cheque for 50,000 more nurses and 50 million more GP surgery appointments per year.** We have already started the process of enshrining our record cash boost into law, but will now go further by investing £5.4 billion in this Parliament to support the recruitment, retraining and retaining of 50,000 more nurses, including a new nursing maintenance grant for all nursing students.²⁹
- **Delivering more doctors and nurses since last year.** The number of nurses in the NHS has increased by 9,398 compared to last year, while the number of doctors has risen by 5,188. In addition to this, 15,266 former professionals have so far come forward to help the NHS tackle Covid-19, along with 5,750 final year medics and 17,000 final year nursing students who will be asked to move to frontline placements. This means in total over 38,000 more people will join the NHS in the coming weeks.³⁰

²⁶ Robert Jenrick, *Twitter*, 25 March 2020, [link](#).

²⁷ HMT, *Spending Round 2019*, 4 September 2019, [link](#); *Hansard*, 7 January 2019, Vol.652 Col.62, [link](#).

²⁸ DHSC, *News Story*, 30 October 2019, [link](#); DHSC, *Press Release*, 29 September 2019, [link](#); DHSC, *Press Release*, 5 August 2019, [link](#).

²⁹ HMT, *Budget 2020*, 11 March 2020, [link](#).

³⁰ DHSC, *Press Release*, 26 March 2020, [link](#).

Delivering more personal protective equipment for NHS staff

Issue: On 23 March 2020, we announced that we were ramping up delivery of personal protective equipment for NHS staff fighting coronavirus.³¹

- **In the face of this unprecedented global emergency, never has the need to bolster our workforce and arm them with the vital tools they need to save lives been more crucial.**
- **That is why we are taking urgent action to ensure our dedicated frontline NHS and social care staff – who are working tirelessly to tackle this outbreak – feel supported by delivering millions more PPE kits to them.**
- **We are working round the clock to make all NHS who need protective equipment have access to it, so they are well-equipped to continue to fight this disease, protect themselves and save lives.**

We are doing this by:

- **Distributing millions more pieces of equipment to NHS staff, so that everyone who needs personal protective equipment can get it.** We have established the national supply distribution response team, supported by the Armed Forces, to deliver equipment to people who need it the most. We have delivered 170 million FFP3 masks, surgical masks and other PPE equipment:
 - 23 million surgical face masks
 - 42.8 million gloves
 - 13.7 million aprons
 - 182,000 gowns
 - Almost 10 million items of cleaning equipment
 - 2.3 million pairs of eye protectors.³²
- **Every single GP practice, dental practice, and community pharmacy has had a PPE delivery.** All care homes, hospices, and home care providers have, or will shortly have, a delivery.³³
- **Ensuring that frontline NHS staff get the tests they need to keep safe and treat patients.** Working with universities, research institutes and businesses, we are rolling out staff testing across the NHS, with plans for a full roll-out for health, social care and other frontline workers. The new service will be free and help to end the uncertainty of whether NHS staff need to stay at home.³⁴
- **Working with British manufacturers to support the production of essential medical equipment for the NHS.** The Prime Minister has spoken with manufacturers, including Unipart Group, and called on them to support the nationwide effort to fight the virus. We are asking businesses to support with the production of equipment such as ventilators for the NHS.
- **Setting up a 24-hour NHS-run hotline, so NHS staff can always have access to the equipment they need.** The new dedicated PPE supply hotline allows organisations to order more PPE 24 hours a day.³⁵
- **Issuing new guidance on the supply and use of PPE, meeting the needs of NHS staff.** As part of the new guidance, trusts will also be asked to ensure that all relevant staff have received the necessary fit-test training – with new courses put on for staff using PPE.³⁶

³¹ NHS, *News Story*, 23 March 2020, [link](#).

³² Robert Jenrick, *Daily No 10 Press Conference*, 29 March 2020, [archived](#).

³³ Robert Jenrick, *Daily No 10 Press Conference*, 29 March 2020, [archived](#).

³⁴ DHSC, *Press Release*, 27 March 2020, [link](#).

³⁵ NHS, *Letter*, 20 March 2020, [link](#).

³⁶ NHS, *Guidance on supply and use of Personal Protective Equipment*, 24 March 2020, [link](#).

- **Increasing the number of coronavirus tests to 25,000 a day, helping to get NHS and other critical public sector staff back to work.** We have also called on companies to work with the government to rapidly develop a test to establish whether people have developed immunity. This will help get NHS and other critical public sector staff back to work as fast as they can.³⁷
- **Making it easier for businesses to supply more personal protective equipment to the NHS and frontline health workers.** We are also removing administrative barriers to the manufacturing of hand sanitizer, by reducing the amount of red tape to help firms bring their products to market in a matter of days.³⁸

³⁷ DHSC, *News Story*, 18 March 2020, [link](#).

³⁸ Alok Sharma, *Daily No 10 Press Conference*, 28 March 2020, [archived](#).

Launching NHS Volunteers Responders

Issue: On 24 March 2020, the Health Secretary launched NHS Volunteers Responders, seeking volunteers to help the NHS for shopping, delivery of medicines and to support those who are shielded.³⁹

- **In these extraordinary times, it's essential that we all pull together as part of the national effort to protect the most vulnerable, reduce pressures on our NHS and care system and save lives.**
- **That is why we are seeking volunteers to help up to 1.5 million people who have been asked to shield themselves from coronavirus because of underlying health conditions. Help from volunteers has the potential to make a real difference to some of those most affected by this outbreak – from delivering essential prescriptions to calling to check on the wellbeing of those self-isolating.**
- **The whole country is coming together to help one another – and, through this national effort, we can truly make a difference.**

We are doing this by:

- **Launching a new scheme to recruit 250,000 volunteers who can help the NHS support vulnerable people during the coronavirus pandemic.** These volunteers will be to help up to 1.5 million people who have been asked to shield themselves from coronavirus because of underlying health conditions. They will be asked to do simple but vital tasks, including:
 - Delivering medicines from pharmacies;
 - Driving patients to appointments;
 - Bringing them home from hospital;
 - Or making regular phone calls to check on people isolating at home.
- **750,000 people have answered the call to be an NHS volunteer.** The target of 250,000 volunteers has long been surpassed – showing just how much the British public want to help and are pulling together in the national effort.⁴⁰
- **People can become an NHS Volunteer Responder and join the NHS's trusted list of volunteers by visiting goodsamapp.org/NHS and adding their details to the NHS section.** GoodSam is a great way to connect volunteers with people in need quickly and safely and the Government is urging people who can to register today, support our NHS and help vulnerable people shielding at home.

Q: What is the criteria for volunteers?

Volunteers must be 18 or over, and fit and well with no symptoms. Those in higher-risk groups (including those over 70, those who are pregnant or with underlying medical conditions) will be able to offer support by telephone. Patient transport drivers will require an enhanced DBS check and will receive guidance to do this role safely.

Q: Will volunteers be social distancing?

Safety of volunteers is a priority. The majority of tasks can be undertaken while social distancing and volunteers will receive guidance.

³⁹ MHCLG, *Press Release*, 21 March 2020, [link](#).

⁴⁰ Matt Hancock, *Twitter*, 25 March 2020, [link](#).

Boosting the number of Covid-19 tests

Issue: On 27 March 2020, the Government launched a new drive on coronavirus tests for frontline NHS staff.⁴¹

- **Public safety is our top priority, and radically ramping up testing for coronavirus is a key part of our plan to protect lives and stopping this disease.**
- **That is why we are increasing the number of tests that can be conducted by Public Health England and the NHS to 25,000 a day – with those most of risk of severe illness rightly being our priority. NHS staff will also be first in line for a new testing programme we are developing with industry.**
- **This will help us to protect life, protect the most vulnerable, and relieve pressure on our NHS. We will always do the right thing at the right time, based on the best scientific advice, and will do whatever it takes to protect life.**

We are doing this by:

- **Increasing our testing capacity to 25,000 hospital patients a day.** The Prime Minister and Health Secretary promised industry leaders that they would be given whatever support they need to help government increase testing capabilities across the country. The increased capacity is expected to be ready within 4 weeks, with highest-priority cases being tested first.⁴²
 - By Sunday 29 March, we have reached 10,000 tests a day – ahead of schedule and on track to reach 25,000 a day.⁴³
- **Ensuring that frontline NHS staff get the tests they need to keep safe and treat patients.** Working with universities, research institutes and businesses, we are rolling out staff testing across the NHS, with plans for a full roll-out for health, social care and other frontline workers. The new service will be free and help to end the uncertainty of whether NHS staff need to stay at home.
- **Calling on the private sector to assist in our national effort, so that as many people as possible can get tested.** The Prime Minister has called on companies to work with the government to rapidly develop a test to establish whether people have developed immunity. This will help get NHS and other critical public sector staff back to work as fast as they can.
- **Researching the virus to look for cures and better testing methods.** We have provided £40 million of new funding to enable further rapid research in COVID-19, with the aim of increasing the capacity and capability of testing and surveillance.⁴⁴
 - **The first British patient has been put into a randomised trial for a treatment of coronavirus.** Experts are rapidly getting a better understanding of coronavirus, and how to treat it. Trials of a possible vaccine are expected to start within a month.⁴⁵
 - **Working to bring forward a brand-new type of antibody test – which can tell people if they've had the virus and are immune.** More testing is critical to stopping this virus and getting life back to normal as soon as possible. We're in negotiations for a brand new type of antibody test – which can tell if a person has had the virus and is immune. We will buy hundreds of thousands.⁴⁶

⁴¹ DHSC, *Press Release*, 27 March 2020, [link](#).

⁴² DHSC, *News Story*, 18 March 2020, [link](#).

⁴³ Matt Hancock, *Twitter*, 29 March 2020, [link](#).

⁴⁴ HMT, *Budget 2020*, 11 March 2020, [link](#).

⁴⁵ PA Media, *Twitter*, 19 March 2020, [link](#).

⁴⁶ Matt Hancock, *Twitter*, 19 March 2020, [link](#).

- **Investing £20 million to discover breakthroughs that will help the UK respond to Coronavirus and future pandemics, and save lives.** We are backing the UK's leading clinicians and scientists to map how the virus spreads and behaves by using whole genome sequencing – which will help guide treatments in the future and see the impact of interventions.⁴⁷

Q: Why are you not testing like Germany, as the WHO says?

The UK has carried out a significant number of tests and we have done very well in the containment phase. We have had a clear plan to move from containment to delay. When the WHO talks about testing, it is addressing the global system. Not all countries have the same infrastructure as the UK and there are countries that the WHO needs to press on testing. We are united in wanting to push forward and do more.

⁴⁷ DHSC, *Press Release*, 23 March 2020, [link](#).

Protecting the most vulnerable

Issue: On 21 March, the Government announced measures to protect England’s most vulnerable.⁴⁸

- **Our top priority is public safety and making sure that those most at risk from the virus continue to get the support they need throughout this period.**
- **That is why we have urged up to 1.5 million people who are considered to be extremely vulnerable to stay at home for at least 12 weeks – and have introduced a range of measures to ensure they have the support they need. This will significantly reduce the risk of them ending up in hospital with complications – helping us protect our NHS and save lives.**
- **We will ensure that vulnerable and older people in our society are left in no doubt of their importance to us and our determination to protect them as best we can. More people will be required to be by themselves at home. While they are on their own, let’s guarantee that they are never alone.**

We are doing this by:

- **Urging up to 1.5 million of England’s most vulnerable people to stay at home for at least 12 weeks.** The people who are at the highest risk of being hospitalised should they contract the virus – such as those with specific underlying health conditions – will be contacted by their GP practice or specialist shortly with detailed advice. In the first instance they will receive a letter and, where mobile number is known, the NHS will also send frequent text messages shortly to those in this group.
- **Delivering the first food parcels to those people unable to leave their homes because of Covid-19.** The first 2,000 food parcels have already been delivered to those who cannot leave their homes because severe health conditions leave them most vulnerable to the virus. Depending on demand, hundreds of thousands of boxes could be delivered each week.⁴⁹
- **Introducing a new Local Support System to make sure those individuals self-isolating at home and who are without a support network of friends and family will receive basic groceries and medicine.** The Government is working with a partnership of the groceries industry, local government, local resilience and emergency partners, and voluntary groups, to ensure that essential items can start to be delivered as soon as possible to those who need it. The people identified as the most vulnerable in their communities will be contacted directly – including in person where necessary – as a priority.
- **Setting up a helpline for the most in need of support.** This will help to ensure people know exactly how to care for themselves and others in the coming months.
- **Full guidance is available online from Public Health England.** This includes the full list of conditions considered to be in the extremely vulnerable category, and advice for family members, friends and carers. A link to the guidance can be found [here](#).
- **Launching a ‘TechForce 19’ challenge, providing £500,000 of funding for technology companies who come up with digital solutions to support those who need to stay at home.** Funding of up to £25,000 per company is available. The programme is looking for digital solutions that can be launched in the next few weeks, and could include providing remote social care and improving mental health support.⁵⁰
- **Launching a new scheme to recruit volunteers who can help the NHS support vulnerable people during the coronavirus pandemic.** These volunteers will be to help up to 1.5 million people who have

⁴⁸ MHCLG, *Press Release*, 21 March 2020, [link](#).

⁴⁹ MHCLG, *Press Release*, 29 March 2020, [link](#).

⁵⁰ DHSC, *News Story*, 23 March 2020, [link](#).

been asked to shield themselves from coronavirus because of underlying health conditions. They will be asked to do simple but vital tasks, including:

- Delivering medicines from pharmacies;
- Driving patients to appointments;
- Bringing them home from hospital;
- Or making regular phone calls to check on people isolating at home.

Protecting people in social care

Issue: On 13 March 2020, we offered updated guidance to people working and living in social care.⁵¹

- **Elderly people and those with underlying health conditions are much more likely to develop serious complications from Covid-19.**
- **The Government has published guidance which sets out that anyone with symptoms should not visit care homes or vulnerable people, while those receiving care should be isolated in their rooms if they have symptoms of Covid-19.**
- **This will be a challenging time for people living and working in care, but we are working closely with industry experts to do everything we can to limit the impact of Covid-19 has on the most vulnerable.**

We are doing this by:

- **Providing £1.6 billion to local authorities to bolster their response to Covid-19, including social care.** Of the £5 billion we announced for the NHS and public services, £1.6 billion will go to local authorities to help them respond to other Covid-19 pressures across all the services they deliver. This includes increasing support for the adult social care workforce and for services helping the most vulnerable, including homeless people.⁵²
- **Publishing new guidance for adult social care in relation to Covid-19.** The guidance covers a variety of scenarios relating to care homes, staff, and providers who care for people in their own homes to ensure older people and those with pre-existing conditions and care needs who receive support are best protected.
- **Working with the NHS and care providers to make sure people can stay in their communities wherever possible.** Building on existing strong local relationships, the NHS will work with care providers where necessary to make sure people have the best possible care and remain in the community.
- **Ensuring older and more vulnerable people receive the best care available.** Changes to councils' duties under the Care Act will enable them to prioritise people with the greatest care needs and make the best use of the adult social care workforce.
- **Working with local councils to prioritise people who are at the highest risk.** Councils have been told to map out all care and support plans to prioritise people who are at the highest risk and contact all registered providers in their local area to facilitate plans for mutual aid.
- **Increasing the available social care workforce, easing the burden on vital workers.** Our emergency coronavirus legislation has removed barriers to allow recently retired NHS staff and social workers to return to work and reduced the number of administrative tasks they have to perform.

⁵¹ DHSC, *News Story*, 13 March 2020, [link](#).

⁵² DHSC, *News Story*, 19 March 2020, [link](#).

Closing schools

Issue: On 18 March 2020, the Education Secretary announced schools would be closed for the vast majority of pupils until further notice.⁵³

- **We will now close schools for the vast majority of pupils until further notice.**
- **In order to allow health and other critical workers to continue working, their children, and those who are vulnerable, will continue to attend school.**
- **Closing schools for the vast majority will help in our efforts slow the spread of the virus.**

We are doing this by:

- **Closing schools for the vast majority of children until further notice.** This will mean there will be far fewer children in schools and that will help us to slow the spread of the disease.
- **Continuing to provide school places for the children of key workers to ensure our NHS and vital services continue to have the workforces they need.** We need health workers and other critical workers – from police officers to supermarket delivery drivers– to keep going to work. So schools are being asked to make provision for the children of these people. These measures are crucial to make sure the critical parts of the economy keep functioning and public services keep functioning.
- **Looking after the most vulnerable children.** Schools will also be asked to make provision for vulnerable children. For those children who rely on free school meals we will ensure that meals and vouchers are available.
- **Asking private providers to follow the Government’s actions.** We are asking nurseries and private schools to follow the Government’s lead in closing except for the children of key workers.

Children should not be looked after by older grandparents or relatives who may be particularly vulnerable to the virus.

A list of key workers, whose children will continue to attend school, can be found [here](#).

Supporting children on free school meals:

- **Launching a national voucher scheme to make sure children who usually benefit from free school meals still have access to healthy and nutritious meals while they are not attending school.** Schools can continue to provide meals for collection or delivery themselves, but where this is not possible, the scheme will allow schools to provide vouchers worth £15 to families to spend at supermarkets while schools are closed due to coronavirus.⁵⁴
- **Helping families with increased costs.** The total value of vouchers offered to each eligible child exceeds the rate the Government pays to schools for free school meals, recognising that families will not be buying food in bulk and may therefore incur higher costs.
- **Making the process of providing meals to pupils eligible for free school meals as easy as possible for schools.** Effective immediately, schools will be able to order vouchers directly from supermarkets or shops in their communities to be emailed or printed and posted to families, and they will have their costs covered by the Department for Education.

⁵³ DfE, *News Story*, 18 March 2020, [link](#).

⁵⁴ DfE, *Press Release*, 31 March 2020, [link](#).

- **Giving headteachers the power to decide what’s best and most appropriate for their local area.** Government guidance states that schools can choose to support eligible children however they believe is most appropriate and headteachers can decide which of the available options will be best for families in their area.

Working with teachers, universities and pupils on the issue of exams:

- **Working with the exam regulator, exam boards and teachers to provide grades to students whose exams have been cancelled.** Ofqual will develop and set out a process that will provide a calculated grade to each student which reflects their performance as fairly as possible, and will work with the exam boards to ensure this is consistently applied for all students. The exam boards will be asking teachers, who know their students well, to submit their judgement about the grade that they believe the student would have received if exams had gone ahead.⁵⁵
- **Ensuring this year’s cohort of students aren’t disadvantaged by not sitting exams in the summer.** The aim is to provide these calculated grades to students before the end of July. In terms of a permanent record, the grades will be indistinguishable from those provided in other years.
- **Giving students the chance to an exam in the autumn if they want to.** If students don’t feel that correct process has been followed in their case, they will be able to appeal. In addition, if they do not feel their calculated grade reflects their performance, they will have the opportunity to sit an exam at the earliest reasonable opportunity.
- **Asking higher education providers not to change their offers to students for two weeks to maintain stability.** We are asking providers to refrain from changing their offers made to undergraduate students for the next two weeks, such as converting conditional offers to unconditional offers or changing entry requirements. This is because a small number of universities have changed a significant proportion of their offers to undergraduate students from ‘conditional’ to ‘unconditional’ to secure their attendance for the academic year.⁵⁶

Q: Will teachers still get paid?

Yes. Schools will continue to receive their budgets for the coming year – regardless of any periods of partial or complete closure. This means they can continue to pay their staff.

Q: What will happen with exams?

We will not go ahead with primary assessments or GCSEs, AS Levels or A Levels this summer and we will not be publishing performance tables for 2020. The aim is to make sure pupils receive their grades in August as normal, with a thorough appeals process. Grades will be calculated based on a range of data including mock exams and teacher assessment.

⁵⁵ DfE, *Press Release*, 20 March 2020, [link](#).

⁵⁶ DfE, *Press Release*, 23 March 2020, [link](#).

Passing emergency legislation

Issue: On 25 March 2020, our emergency legislation to strengthen the Government's coronavirus response plans received Royal Assent.⁵⁷

- **We are doing everything we can to protect lives and support the NHS, guided by the best scientists and clinicians in the world.**
- **The new Emergency Coronavirus Act will help the Government to protect life and the nation's public health, and ensure NHS and social care staff are supported as they deal with significant extra pressure.**
- **The measures in the Bill are temporary, proportionate to the threat, will only be used when strictly necessary and will be in place for as long as required to respond to the situation. By planning for the worst and working for the best, we will get through this.**

The emergency law deals with five elements:

- **Containing and slowing the virus.**
- **Easing legislative and regulatory requirements.**
- **Enhancing capacity and the flexible deployment of staff across essential services.**
- **Managing the deceased in a dignified way.**
- **Supporting and protecting the public to do the right thing and follow public health advice.**

We are doing this by:

- **Allowing retired NHS staff to return to work.** Powers within the Act will allow recently retired NHS staff and social workers to return to work without any negative repercussions to their pensions. NHS staff will also be covered by a state-backed insurance scheme to ensure they can care for patients if, for example, they are moving outside their day-to-day duties.
- **Reducing administrative burdens to help doctors discharge patients more quickly.** Paperwork and administrative requirements will be reduced to help doctors discharge patients more quickly when clinically appropriate, to free up hospital space for those who are very ill.
- **Making it easier to volunteers and help the NHS respond to this virus.** Volunteers will have extra employment safeguards, allowing them to pause their main jobs for up to 4 weeks while they help care for patients in the health and care system, and will receive a flat rate of compensation to mitigate lost earnings and expenses.
- **Ensuring older and more vulnerable people receive the best care available.** Changes to councils' duties under the Care Act will enable them to prioritise people with the greatest care needs and make the best use of the adult social care workforce.
- **Allowing police and immigration officers to support and enforce public health measures.** This will include powers to detain people and put them in appropriate isolation facilities if necessary to protect public health.

⁵⁷ DHSC, *News Story*, 17 March 2020, [link](#).

- **Making arrangements for statutory sick pay for those self-isolating without symptoms from day one.** SSP will be made available from day one for both people off work with Covid-19 symptoms, and also for those who are unable to work because they are self-isolating on PHE advice.
- **Allowing small businesses to reclaim Statutory Sick Pay payments from HMRC.** SMEs will be able to reclaim the costs of providing SSP. The refund will be limited to two weeks per employees who has claimed SSP as a result of Covid-19.
- **Allowing more phone or video hearings for court cases.** This will help stop the spread of the virus in courts. All court trials underway should proceed as planned, unless those involved are showing symptoms consistent with Covid-19 or are self-isolating. The minority of Crown Court cases that have been listed for trial but which have not yet commenced, and which are also expected to last for more than three days, will be postponed.
- **Working as one United Kingdom to fight the spread of this virus.** The Bill allows the four UK governments to switch on these new powers when they are needed and, crucially, to switch them off again once they are no longer necessary, based on the advice of the four Chief Medical Officers.

Q: Will these measures be in place for two years?

We recognise the importance of parliamentary scrutiny and have heard concerns about the need for period reviews of the Act, which is why we have also included a provision to require the House of Commons to renew the legislation every six months.

Giving the police new powers and support

Issue: On 26 March 2020, we announced new enforcement powers for the police to ensure people stay at home.⁵⁸

- **The Prime Minister has been clear on what we need to do, stay at home to protect our NHS and save lives – and we are committed to ensuring that people only leave their home for very limited purposes.**
- **That is why we are giving the police the powers they need to enforce these rules, including the ability to issue fines and disperse gatherings – and announcing that we have recruited 1,500 more officers and are relaxing tax and pension rules so we can boost police capacity further.**
- **By giving the police the powers and resources they need – we are protecting the public and keeping as many people as possible safe from this terrible disease.**

We are doing this by:

- **Giving our police the powers they need to ensure everyone stays at home, so we can protect the NHS and save lives.** If members of the public are not staying at home – except under specific circumstances, the police now have the powers to instruct them to go home, leave an area or disperse.
- **Issuing fixed penalty notices to deter people from breaking the rules.** Officers can issue a fixed penalty notice of £60, which will be lowered to £30 if paid within 14 days, and a further fixed penalty notice of £120 for second time offenders, doubling on each further repeat offence.
- **Recruiting more police officers to keep our streets safe and enforce these powers.** Around 1,500 police officers have already joined forces across England and Wales since September 2019 – as part of our drive to recruit 20,000 more officers by 2023.
- **Boosting police capacity so that excessive work pressures are not placed on officers.** We will ensure that existing Civil Servants who are already volunteering as Special Constables are able to assist in the national effort to the greatest extent possible.
- **Committing to relaxing tax and pensions rules for officers, so that more people can return or stay in the force during this challenging time.** In recognition of their value and expertise and to increase capacity and resilience, we have committed to relaxing tax and pensions rules which could deter officers nearing retirement and those recently retired from returning to serve.
- **Encouraging the private security sector to support our response to coronavirus, easing pressure on frontline police officers.** We are in contact with the Security Industry Authority about what more they can do to encourage the private security sector to support the national response to coronavirus.

Q: Some police forces more heavy handed than others?

Having asked the police to do this job we would expect them to exercise their own discretion over how they use their powers. We police by consent in this country – and that is not changing. We are confident that the majority of people will stay at home to protect the NHS and save lives. However, there will be a small number who do not, and the police will engage with them, explain to them and encourage them to go home. If they still refuse to do the right thing, the police are fully prepared to use these new powers if they need to enforce these rules.

⁵⁸ Home Office, *Press Release*, 26 March 2020, [link](#).

Supporting homeowners and renters

Issue: On 17 and 18 March 2020, we announced support to homeowners, renters and landlords who may be impacted by coronavirus.⁵⁹

- **No one who has been impacted by coronavirus should have to worry about getting back on their feet – including homeowners, renters and landlords.**
- **We have announced a package of measures to help these people. No homeowner in difficulty due to coronavirus will have to worry about their mortgage. No renter who has lost income due to coronavirus will be forced out of their home, nor will any landlord face unmanageable debts.**
- **These changes will protect all renters and private landlords ensuring everyone gets the support they need at this very difficult time.**

We are doing this by:

- **Introducing emergency legislation to protect renters, so that no one gets evicted if they cannot pay their rent.** Emergency legislation will be taken forward as an urgent priority so that landlords will not be able to start proceedings to evict tenants for at least a three-month period. As a result of these measures, no renters in private or social accommodation needs to be concerned about the threat of eviction.⁶⁰
- **Introducing a complete moratorium on evictions for the next three months, meaning people do not need to worry about losing their home during this difficult time.** The provisions in our emergency legislation mean that landlords must give people three months' notice if they plan to evict them, and cover most tenants in the private and social rented sectors. However, to give people more certainty, we have now introduced a complete moratorium on evictions, meaning that cases already in the system, or about to go through the system, can progress to the stage where somebody could be evicted.⁶¹
 - **Housing charity Shelter said this action means ‘people can now stay safe in their homes’.** They tweeted: ‘the government has changed its approach and is now introducing a FULL ban on evictions, giving much-needed protection for renters at this critical time during the #coronavirus crisis. @RobertJenrick should take a lot of credit for having listened and taken further action – as a result many thousands of people can now stay safe in their homes’⁶²
- **Announcing nearly £1 billion of support for renters, by increasing the generosity of housing benefit and Universal Credit,** so that the Local Housing Allowance will cover at least 30 per cent of market rents in local areas.
- **Introducing a three month mortgage holiday for those in difficulty due to coronavirus – so that people will not have to pay a penny towards their mortgage while they get back on their feet.** And in the coming days, we will go much further to support people's financial security. We will work with trade unions and businesses to develop new forms of employment support to help protect people's jobs and incomes through this period.
- **Extending the three month mortgage holiday to landlords whose tenants are experiencing financial difficulty due to coronavirus.** This will alleviate the pressure on landlords, who will be concerned about meeting mortgage payments themselves, and will mean no unnecessary pressure is put on their tenants as

⁵⁹ MHCLG, *Press Release*, 18 March 2020, [link](#).

⁶⁰ MHCLG, *Press Release*, 18 March 2020, [link](#).

⁶¹ MHCLG, *Guidance*, 26 March 2020, [link](#).

⁶² Shelter, *Twitter*, 26 March 2020, [link](#).

a result. At the end of this period, landlords and tenants will be expected to work together to establish an affordable repayment plan, taking into account tenants' individual circumstances.

Moving home during the coronavirus outbreak

- **Encouraging people to delay moving house where possible.** Home buyers and renters should, where possible, delay moving to a new house while measures are in place to fight coronavirus. If your home is on the market, you should not let perspective buyers visit your home.⁶³
 - The Government's advice is that if you have already exchanged contracts and the property is currently occupied then all parties should work together to agree a delay or another way to resolve this matter. If moving is unavoidable for contractual reasons and the parties are unable to reach an agreement to delay, people must follow advice on staying away from others to minimise the spread of the virus.

⁶³ MHCLG, *Guidance*, 26 March 2020, [link](#).

Protecting rail services for passengers

Issue: On 23 March 2020, we announced emergency measures to support and sustain necessary rail services for frontline workers.⁶⁴

- **In these uncertain times, the railway has an important role to play in ensuring Britain’s critical workers can travel and that vital supplies can get to where they are needed.**
- **That is why train operators are moving onto Emergency Measures Agreements, enabling greater flexibility and transferring revenue and cost risk to the Government so we can guarantee our railways stay open. We have also agreed with the rail industry to reduce train services across the country to reflect lower passenger demand, while keeping vital rail services running, so that people who need to can still get to work.**
- **Tackling this virus will require a concerted national effort and will mean changes in all of our lives, but we will ensure that people who need it still have access to the public transport they need.**

We are doing this by:

- **Introducing Emergency Measures Agreements, so we can make sure our railways stay open.** These agreements will suspend the normal franchise agreements and transfer all revenue and cost risk to the Government. This will last for an initial period of 6 months, with options for further extension or earlier cancellation as agreed.
- **Providing greater flexibility to the train operators and the Government, making sure the railway can continue to react quickly to changing circumstances.** By suspending the normal franchise arrangements, we will ensure vital services continue to operate for critical workers who are keeping the nation running and that we are able to reinstate a normal service quickly when the situation improves.
- **Minimising disruption to the rail sector in the long term, guaranteeing that services and staff can be sustained over this difficult period.** Suspending the usual financial mechanisms will not only guarantee that services can be sustained over this difficult period, it will also provide certainty for staff working on the railways, many of whom are working hard every day in difficult conditions to make sure we keep the railway running.
- **Ensuring that hardworking commuters - who have radically altered their lives to combat the spread of coronavirus, are not left out of pocket.** Anyone holding an Advance ticket bought before today will be able to refund it free of charge, while the Government advises against non-essential travel. All season ticket holders can claim a refund for time unused on their tickets in the usual way. Ticket holders should contact their retailer or train operator for details.
- **Reducing rail services to reflect lower demand and protect railway workers, while ensuring that people in the NHS and key industries can still get to work.** Rail services will be gradually reduced from Monday 23 March and kept under review, with operators providing clear communications to ensure passengers who need to travel are well-informed of the changes.

Q: Isn’t this renationalisation?

No – this is a short-term measure, which has only been implemented because of the unprecedented economic challenges we face. The Emergency Measures Agreement will keep the railway running for frontline workers, plus fee-free refunds for all advance tickets passengers.

⁶⁴ DfT, *News Story*, 23 March 2020, [link](#).

Managing pressures on the food supply chain

- **We know people are concerned about pressures on the food supply chain during this difficult time. People are allowed to leave their homes to shop for essentials, such as food and medicine, but this should be as infrequently as possible.**
- **We are working closely with representatives across the food supply chain, together with local authorities and charities, to ensure that people will have continued access to food, and we have made changes so that supermarkets can replenish their shelves more quickly.**
- **Together with the food industry, we will do everything we can to rise to the challenge ahead and ensure food stocks keep flowing.**

We are doing this by:

- **Working closely with the retail industry to establish any additional support they may need.** The Environment Secretary is speaking regularly with industry, including the British Retail Consortium, to determine what additional support the Government can provide. Under discussion are additional measures to support the continued flow of groceries into our shops and steps to ensure people staying at home can get the food and groceries they need.
- **Closely monitoring the resilience of food retailers' supply chains.** UK retailers already have highly-resilient supply chains, and they are working around the clock to ensure people can access the products they need. Food supply into the UK has continued, and we are monitoring the situation very closely to ensure this continues and will provide an update if anything changes.
- **Relaxing competition rules to enable supermarkets to work together on their Coronavirus response.** We have temporarily relaxed elements of competition law to enable supermarkets to work more closely together to ensure people can access the products they need. Food retailers will now be able to share data on their stock levels, cooperate to keep stores open and share staff, distribution depots and delivery vehicles. This will help keep shops open and staffed and better able to meet high demand.⁶⁵
- **Announcing measures to support supermarkets and keep the supply of food flowing.** We have issued guidance to local authorities advising them to extend the hours that deliveries can be made to supermarkets and other food retailers, making it easier for shelves to be replenished. The Transport Secretary has also authorised a temporary relaxation of the rules on drivers' hours, so they can continue to deliver vital goods to shops across the country and meet the increased demand for home deliveries.

Conservative record in this area:

- **Listening to concerns raised by industry and taking action to support their preparations.** Measures that we have announced, enabling food retailers to pool resources, increase the frequency of deliveries to their stores and move stocks more quickly from warehouses across the country to replenish their shelves, were introduced after discussions between the Environment Secretary and leading supermarkets, and will ensure retailers can respond to increased consumer demand for certain products, such as hygiene products.

Q: Should people stockpile basic goods?

No. The UK's major supermarkets last weekend issued a rallying call for everyone to play their part in the national effort to this response by looking out for their friends, family and neighbours. They are asking everyone to shop as they normally would and to pull together to support those staying at home.

⁶⁵ DEFRA, *Press Release*, 19 March 2020, [link](#).

Supporting rough sleepers

Issue: On 17 March 2020, we announced £3.2 million in emergency support for rough sleepers during the coronavirus outbreak.⁶⁶

- **Public safety and protecting the most vulnerable people in society from coronavirus is our top priority.**
- **We have announced an initial £3.2 million to ensure councils are able to put emergency measures in place to help rough sleepers to successfully self-isolate. It is a first step to ensure local authorities and frontline services are fully prepared with emergency measures in place.**
- **Combating this virus will require a huge national effort. We must do all we can to save lives, protect the NHS and keep the most vulnerable people in our society safe.**

We are doing this by:

- **Providing £3.2 million to help rough sleepers, or those at risk of rough sleeping, to successful self-isolate.** The funding will be available to all local authorities in England and will reimburse them for the cost of providing accommodation and services to those sleeping on the streets to help them successfully self-isolate.
- **Working with councils to ensure all those people who are sleeping rough are housed in safe accommodation as soon as possible.** The Government wrote to local authorities to set out that it was imperative that rough sleeping and other vulnerable homeless are supported into appropriate accommodation. Local authorities should use government support to urgent procure accommodation for people on the streets.⁶⁷
- **Supporting local authorities to put emergency measures in place to deal with the spread of coronavirus.** The funding is an initial step and the Government will continue to work closely with local authorities to keep this under review and ensure people have access to the support they need.
- **Helping shelters and hostels with the latest advice on tackling coronavirus.** Public Health England has released guidance for providers of hostels and day centres on how to handle suspected cases of coronavirus to assist staff and visitors in dealing with the impact of the virus.

Conservative record on ending rough sleeping:

- **Providing £643 million over the next four years to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping.** The funding committed as part of the coronavirus response is in addition to the £492 million committed in 2020 to 2021 to support the government's ambition to end rough sleeping in this Parliament, a £124 million increase in funding from the previous year. This forms part of £643 million in funding to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping over the next four years.

⁶⁶ MHCLG, *Press Release*, 17 March 2020, [link](#).

⁶⁷ MHCLG, *Correspondence*, 27 March 2020, [link](#).

Keeping the public informed

Issue: On 15 March 2020, the Government announced new daily press conference would be held to keep the public informed on how to protect themselves.⁶⁸

- **We are committed to keeping the public informed every step of the way about what we're doing to fight the spread of coronavirus, when we're doing it and why we're doing it.**
- **The Prime Minister and other senior ministers will hold daily press conferences on coronavirus pandemic, supported by scientific and medical experts including the Chief Medical Officer and Chief Scientific Adviser.**
- **At all times we will be led by the science to bring forward the right responses at the right time to this global pandemic.**

We are doing this by:

- **Writing to every household in the UK to urge them to stay at home, protect the NHS and save lives.** The Prime Minister has written to all 30 million households across the UK, to outline the guidance everyone should follow and the measures the Government has put in place to fight coronavirus and to support businesses and workers.⁶⁹
- **Cracking down on the spread of false coronavirus information online through the Government's Rapid Response Unit.** The unit is working with departments across Whitehall and social media companies to combat the spread of false information about coronavirus – tackling a range of harmful narratives online, from purported 'experts' issuing dangerous misinformation to criminal fraudsters running phishing scams.⁷⁰
- **Launching a GOV.UK Coronavirus Information service on WhatsApp – giving people official and timely information and reducing the burden on NHS services.** An automated 'chatbot' service will allow people to get answers to the most common questions about coronavirus direct from government. The service provides information on topics such as coronavirus prevention and symptoms, the latest number of cases in the UK, advice on staying at home, travel advice and myth busting.⁷¹
 - To use the free GOV.UK Coronavirus Information Service on WhatsApp, simply add 07860 064422 in your phone contacts and then message the word 'hi' in a WhatsApp message to get started.
- **Holding daily press conferences to keep the public informed on Covid-19.** The conferences will be hosted by the Prime Minister and senior Minister, supported by scientific and medical experts including the Chief Medical Office and Chief Scientific Adviser and form part of the Government's commitment to clarity and transparency in order to ensure British people are fully informed about the steps they can take to protect themselves and others.
- **Launching new TV adverts to keep the public informed about the steps they need to take to tackle the spread of Covid-19.** The adverts will feature the Chief Medical Officer and actor Mark Strong, who will explain that individuals will still be asked to self-isolate for seven days from the onset of symptoms, but any individuals in the household will now be asked to self-isolate for 14 days from that moment as well.
- **Publishing the scientific evidence underpinning the Government's response and advice to the coronavirus outbreak.** Transparency is key during times like this, which is why the Government has

⁶⁸ Prime Minister's Office, *Press Release*, 15 March 2020, [link](#).

⁶⁹ Prime Minister's Office, *Correspondence*, 28 March 2020, [link](#).

⁷⁰ DCMS, *Press Release*, 30 March 2020, [link](#).

⁷¹ Cabinet Office, *News story*, 25 March 2020, [link](#).

published the evidence behind its approach, provided by the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE). The evidence can be viewed online [here](#).⁷²

The Prime Minister is coordinating action across the Government:

- **Setting up four new implementation committees to feed into a new daily C-19 meeting, which will be chaired by the Prime Minister.** The C-19 meeting of key ministers and officials will monitor progress and refine the measures agreed by COBR. The four implementation committees are:
 - **Healthcare.** Chaired by the Health Secretary to focus on the preparedness of the NHS, notably ensuring capacity in the critical care system for those worst affected.
 - **General Public Sector.** Chaired by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster to look at preparedness across the rest of the public and critical national infrastructure.
 - **Economic and business.** Chaired by the Chancellor, with the Business Secretary as deputy chair, to consider the economic and business impact and response, including supply chain resilience. It will also coordinate roundtables with key sectors.
 - **International.** Chaired by the Foreign Secretary, to consider our international response to the crisis through the G7, G20 and other mechanisms, and the UK five-point plan.⁷³

⁷² Government Office for Science, *News Story*, 20 March 2020, [link](#).

⁷³ Prime Minister's Office, *Press Release*, 17 March 2020, [link](#).

Supporting people's mental health

Issue: On 29 March 2020, the Government and Public Health England launched new guidance to support people with their mental health during the Covid-19 outbreak.⁷⁴

- **The actions we need to take to tackle coronavirus are hugely disruptive to people's lives and routines, and we know that much of the news at the minute is worrying, and at times overwhelming, for a lot of people.**
- **That's why Public Health England has launched new guidance on how to look after mental wellbeing, and we are providing £5 million to leading mental health charities to expand their support services.**
- **It's imperative that we stay home to protect our NHS and save lives. But people should not be left to suffer on their own and we will make sure everyone has the support they need.**

We are doing this by:

- **Making more support available to help people with their mental health during the Covid-19 crisis.** Public Health England has published new online guidance setting out principles to follow to help people to manage their mental health during this difficult time, such as:
 - Maintaining contact with friends and family via phone and video calls, or social media.
 - Keeping a regular routine and sleeping pattern.
 - Focusing on a hobby or learning something new.
 - How people already living with mental health problems can better cope
- **Providing tailored advice to parents and carers on how best to support children and young people with stress during the Covid-19 outbreak.** This will include providing parents with clear information, asking them to be aware of their own reactions around children and encouraging them to create a new routine for our changed circumstances.
- **Providing £5 million to leading mental health charities, to fund additional services for people struggling with their mental wellbeing during this time.** The grant will be administered by Mind, and could be used to improve telephone and online services for the most isolated and vulnerable in our communities.
- **Updating Public Health England's Every Mind Matters platform with specific advice for dealing with the Covid-19 outbreak.** Public Health England has updated its world-leading Every Mind Matters platform with specific advice on maintaining good mental wellbeing during the outbreak. People can also complete a 'Mind Plan', a quick and free tool that has already been completed over 1.8 million times.

Conservative record on mental health:

- **Boosting mental health funding by at least £2.3 billion over the next five years, transforming mental health services and supporting more people.** At least £2.3 billion of the £33.9 billion funding boost we are giving to the NHS will go towards mental health, with funding growing as a share of the overall NHS budget over the next five years.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ DHSC, *Press Release*, 29 March 2020, [link](#).

⁷⁵ NHS England, *Mental Health Five Year Forward View Dashboard*, 8 August 2019, [link](#).

Leading international efforts

Issue: On 16 March 2020, all G7 leaders including the Prime Minister participated in a call to discuss international efforts.⁷⁶

- **The United Kingdom is playing a crucial role in leading the international response to Covid-19 – ensuring we can make a very real difference to countries which are most vulnerable to the disease.**
- **We are in close contact with our counterparts, around the world, in the G7 and the G20 – and the Prime Minister will continue this engagement to ensure a coordinated global response to the outbreak. In total, the UK has committed £544 million to help fight coronavirus alongside our international partners.**
- **We want fellow leaders to support the WHO response, provide funding and expertise for research to help develop a vaccine and drive forward support to mitigate the economic impacts of the crisis.**

We are doing this by:

- **Donating more than any other country in the world to the international coalition trying to find a coronavirus vaccine.** We have donated more than £210 million to the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations, which is supporting the development of vaccines that will be available throughout the world, including to the NHS at the lowest possible price.⁷⁷
- **Engaging with world leaders to ensure a coordinated global response to the outbreak.** The Prime Minister is continuing to speak to world leaders, joining a call with the G20 nations, which also discussed international efforts to protect the global economy from the long-term effects of the virus.
- **Providing up to £150 million to the IMF’s Catastrophe Containment and Relief Fund to support developing countries affected by Covid-19.** Up to £150 million of new UK Aid will go towards helping developing countries deal with the short term economic disruption caused by coronavirus, allowing them to focus their spending on tackling the outbreak.⁷⁸
- **Providing £40 million to develop affordable treatments for coronavirus patients.** This will support the Therapeutic Accelerator, a fund for the rapid development of anti-retrovirals or immunotherapies against coronavirus which is already backed by the UK-based Wellcome Trust, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Mastercard. It aims to make 10 million treatments available in the coming months globally, including in the UK. This funding is for all stages of the development process – the development, manufacture, trialling and approval of the new medicines.
- **Launching a £50 million joint campaign with Unilever to tell up to a billion people about the importance of handwashing in developing countries.** The programme will also distribute over 20 million hygiene and cleaning products.

⁷⁶ Prime Minister’s Office, *Press Release*, 15 March 2020, [link](#).

⁷⁷ Prime Minister’s Office, *Press Release*, 26 March 2020, [archived](#).

⁷⁸ DfID, *Press Release*, 11 March 2020, [link](#).

Good news: How our country is coming together

- **There are 9,398 more nurses and 5,188 more doctors in the NHS than last year, and more people will join the NHS in the coming weeks to support our response to coronavirus.** In addition to the 20,000 former NHS professionals who are returning to the frontline, from this week 5,750 final year medics and 17,000 final year nursing students in England will also be asked to consider moving into frontline placements, with appropriate support.⁷⁹
- **750,000 people have answered the call to be an NHS volunteer.** The target of 250,000 volunteers has been surpassed – showing just how much the British public want to help and are pulling together in the national effort.⁸⁰
- **The UK has donated more than any other country in the world to the international coalition trying to find a coronavirus vaccine.** We have donated more than £210 million to the international coalition to find a coronavirus campaign.⁸¹
- **A new hospital is to be established at the Excel centre – the Nightingale Hospital – with capacity for 4,000 people.** Nightingale hospitals will also be established in Birmingham and Manchester.⁸²
- **The Government is distributing millions more pieces of equipment to NHS staff, so that everyone who needs personal protective equipment can get it.** We have established the national supply distribution response team, supported by the Armed Forces, to deliver equipment to people who need it the most. We have delivered 170 million FFP3 masks, surgical masks and other PPE equipment.⁸³
- **We have more than 8,000 ventilators deployed in NHS hospitals - more than when the outbreak began.** But we need more - buying from abroad and developing new ones at home. The first thousands of new ventilators will roll off the production line and be delivered to the NHS next week.⁸⁴
- **As well as increasing capacity for ventilation, which supports the patients worse affected, we're also increasing the capacity to provide oxygen to affected patients at an earlier stage in the process of the disease,** helping to avert the deterioration of their condition. A team led by UCL working with Mercedes Benz will produce 10,000 new CPAP devices to support affected patients.⁸⁵

⁷⁹ DHSC, 26 March 2020, [link](#).

⁸⁰ Matt Hancock, *Twitter*, 25 March 2020, [link](#).

⁸¹ LBC, *Twitter*, 26 March 2020, [link](#).

⁸² Matt Hancock, *Press Conference*, 24 March 2020, [archived](#).

⁸³ Robert Jenrick, *Daily No 10 Press Conference*, 29 March 2020, [archived](#).

⁸⁴ Cabinet Office, *Speech*, 31 March 2020, [link](#).

⁸⁵ Cabinet Office, *Speech*, 31 March 2020, [link](#).

Party campaign issues

Issue: On 13 March 2020, the Government announced it was postponing all elections due to be held in May 2020 for one year.⁸⁶

- **In the weeks ahead, it's right that local authorities can focus on their vital role in delivering public services.**
- **That's why the Government took the decision to reschedule local, mayoral, and Police and Crime Commissioner elections until May next year.**
- **We will continue to work with councils across the country to ensure they have the support they need at this difficult time.**

We are doing this by:

- **Postponing elections until May 2021, to ensure local authorities can focus on delivering vital local services in the months ahead.** By postponing the elections for a year, we can respect the annual cycle of local government.⁸⁷
- **Acting on the advice of the Electoral Commission to postpone May's elections.** It said: 'We've written to the UK government to recommend that the May polls be postponed ... This is due to growing risks to the delivery of the polls and to mitigate the impact on voters, campaigners & electoral administrators'⁸⁸
- **Other political parties have backed our decision to postpone local elections:**
 - **Labour's Shadow Communities Secretary Andrew Gwynne said:** '[Postponing] is the right answer... I'm pleased common sense has prevailed and we can get on with tackling the virus'⁸⁹
 - **Acting Liberal Democrat Leader Sir Ed Davey said:** 'It is the right decision to delay local elections'⁹⁰

Issue: The Conservative Party has advised that Associations should cancel their AGMs.⁹¹

- Following earlier advice that AGMs may be delayed, the Party is now advising that all AGMs should be cancelled for the time being.
- Our current advice is that AGMs must take place by the end of June. If there are further updates to this, they will be communicated via email.

Issue: The Conservative Party has formally suspended all face to face campaign, including literature delivery.⁹²

- Public safety has and will always remain our top priority. Following announcements from the Government, we are formally suspending face to face campaigning, including literature delivery.
- You may wish to direct your volunteers and activists towards digital communication methods that will keep people safe.

⁸⁶ Robert Jenrick, *Twitter*, 13 March 2020, [link](#).

⁸⁷ *BBC News*, 13 March 2020, [link](#).

⁸⁸ *The Independent*, 13 March 2020, [link](#).

⁸⁹ Andrew Gwynne, *Twitter*, 13 March 2020, [link](#).

⁹⁰ Liberal Democrats, *Twitter*, 13 March 2020, [link](#).

⁹¹ Alan Mabbutt, *Update from the Organisation Department*, 19 March 2020, [archived](#).

⁹² Darren Mott, *Campaigning*, 17 March 2020, [archived](#).

- This is a time for looking out for each other, for our neighbours, friends and family. Please encourage able supporters to ring around vulnerable or elderly members and check on their health and wellbeing.

Advice for MPs

Issue: On 16 March 2020, Parliament issued updated guidance for MPs.⁹³

- **Parliament has stopped all non-essential visitor access to both Houses and introduced overseas travel restrictions in order to preserve the operation of Parliament.**
- **With the nation currently facing extremely challenging circumstances due to coronavirus, steps have been taken to allow Parliament to continue to fulfil its important constitutional duties.**

Steps taken to preserve the operation of Parliament

- MPs, Peers, Parliamentary staff and other members of the Parliamentary community will continue to be able to work on the Estate where necessary, but are being strongly encouraged to work from home where possible.
- All visitor access to the Parliamentary Estate has now stopped. Access will be restricted to passholders and those on essential Parliamentary business.

Westminster Hall debates

- Following a motion approved in the House of Commons Chamber on 19 March 2020, there will be no further debates held in Westminster Hall – with effect from Friday 20 March.
- The Leader of the House of Commons had earlier referred to the suspension of sittings in Westminster Hall during the Business Questions. These restrictions will remain in place until the House otherwise orders.

Access to the Parliamentary Estate

The access measures include:

- All non-essential access to both Houses will stop from Tuesday 17 March.
- There will be no access to the public gallery.
- The Education Centre is closed and school visits have ceased.
- Members tours for constituents have been stopped.
- No new banqueting bookings will be accepted. Existing bookings are to be cancelled but deposits will be refunded.
- No new commercial tour bookings will be accepted. Existing bookings are to be cancelled but tickets will be refunded.
- Mass lobbies (which usually take place in Westminster Hall or in the larger committee rooms) will not be facilitated during the period.
- Members of the public will not be admitted to committee meetings.

Holding surgeries

⁹³ UK Parliament, *Update on Coronavirus*, 25 March 2020, [link](#).

- The Conservative Party is advising that all surgeries (both MP and council) should now take place over the phone.

Parliamentary travel

The Parliamentary authorities strongly discourage Parliamentary travel to other countries, and ask Members, committees, APPGs, and partner organisations to assess the risk of visits on a case-by-case basis, taking into account whether any delegates fall within vulnerable groups.

Constituents who can support the national effort

- If MPs have businesses in their constituencies who may be able to support our national effort for ventilator production, they should ask them to contact 0300 456 3565 or ventilator.support@beis.gov.uk.
- If MPs have businesses in their constituencies who may be able to help with other aspects, whether it be with property, logistics, food supply or other equipment, they should ask them to contact gcfccovid19enquiries@cabinetoffice.gov.uk.

Other useful numbers

- The Government has created a new landing page for all coronavirus queries, covering: businesses; health; employees; travel; workers; staying safe. The first port of call for queries on these matters is: www.gov.uk/coronavirus.
- **Business support/ventilators:** 0300 456 3565
- **HMRC:** 0800 015 9559
- **Universal Credit:** 0800 328 5644
- **School closures:** 0800 046 8687
- **NHS:** Only call 111 if you cannot get help online at 111.nhs.uk

Annex 1: How to access government financial support

This information has been provided by Gov.uk, and is available online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19>

INFORMATION FOR BUSINESSES

The Chancellor has set out a package of temporary, timely and targeted measures to support public services, people and businesses through this period of disruption caused by COVID-19.

This includes a package of measures to support businesses including:

- a Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme
- deferring VAT and Self-Assessment payments
- a Self-employment Income Support Scheme
- a Statutory Sick Pay relief package for small and medium sized businesses (SMEs)
- a 12-month business rates holiday for all retail, hospitality, leisure and nursery businesses in England
- small business grant funding of £10,000 for all business in receipt of small business rate relief or rural rate relief
- grant funding of £25,000 for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses with property with a rateable value between £15,000 and £51,000
- the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme offering loans of up to £5 million for SMEs through the British Business Bank
- a new lending facility from the Bank of England to help support liquidity among larger firms, helping them bridge coronavirus disruption to their cash flows through loans
- the HMRC Time To Pay Scheme

[Check the business support website for answers to frequently asked questions.](#)

Support for businesses through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme is a temporary scheme open to all UK employers for at least 3 months starting from 1 March 2020. It is designed to support employers whose operations have been severely affected by coronavirus (COVID-19).

Employers can claim for 80% of furloughed employees' (employees on a leave of absence) usual monthly wage costs, up to £2,500 a month, plus the associated Employer National Insurance contributions and minimum automatic enrolment employer pension contributions on that wage. Employers can use this scheme anytime during this period.

The scheme is open to all UK employers that had created and started a [PAYE](#) payroll scheme on 28 February 2020.

[Claim for wage costs through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.](#)

If your business needs short term cash flow support, you may be eligible for a [Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan](#).

Support for businesses through deferring VAT payments

We will support businesses by deferring Valued Added Tax (VAT) payments for 3 months.

If you're a UK VAT registered business and have a VAT payment due between 20 March 2020 and 30 June 2020, you have the option to:

- defer the payment until a later date
- pay the VAT due as normal

[Find out how to defer your VAT payment.](#)

If you're in temporary financial distress because of COVID-19 more help is available from HMRC's [Time to Pay scheme](#).

Support for businesses through deferring Self-Assessment payments on account

If you're due to pay a self-assessment payment on account by 31 July 2020 but the impact of the coronavirus causes you difficulty in making payment by that date, then you may defer payment until January 2021.

Eligibility

You are eligible if you are due to pay your second self-assessment [payment on account](#) on 31 July. You do not need to be self-employed to be eligible for the deferment.

The deferment is optional. If you are still able to pay your second payment on account on 31 July you should do so.

How to access the scheme

This is an automatic offer with no applications required. No penalties or interest for late payment will be charged if you defer payment until 31 January 2021.

During the deferral period you can set up a [budget payment plan](#) to help you pay the deferred payment on account when it comes due.

If you're in temporary financial distress because of COVID-19 more help is available from HMRC's [Time to Pay](#) scheme.

Support for self-employed through the Self-employment Income Support Scheme

The Self-employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) will support self-employed individuals (including members of partnerships) who have lost income due to coronavirus (COVID-19).

This scheme will allow you to claim a taxable grant worth 80% of your trading profits up to a maximum of £2,500 per month for the next 3 months. This may be extended if needed.

[Claim a grant through the Self-employment Income Support Scheme.](#)

Support for businesses who are paying sick pay to employees

We will bring forward legislation to allow small-and medium-sized businesses and employers to reclaim Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) paid for sickness absence due to COVID-19. The eligibility criteria for the scheme will be as follows:

- this refund will cover up to 2 weeks' SSP per eligible employee who has been off work because of COVID-19
- employers with fewer than 250 employees will be eligible - the size of an employer will be determined by the number of people they employed as of 28 February 2020
- employers will be able to reclaim expenditure for any employee who has claimed SSP (according to the new eligibility criteria) as a result of COVID-19
- employers should maintain records of staff absences and payments of SSP, but employees will not need to provide a GP fit note. If evidence is required by an employer, those with symptoms of coronavirus can

get an isolation note from [NHS 111 online](#) and those who live with someone that has symptoms can get a note from the [NHS website](#)

- eligible period for the scheme will commence the day after the regulations on the extension of SSP to those staying at home comes into force
- the government will work with employers over the coming months to set up the repayment mechanism for employers as soon as possible

Eligibility

You are eligible for the scheme if:

- your business is UK based
- your business is a small or medium-sized and employs fewer than 250 employees as of 28 February 2020

How to access the scheme

A rebate scheme is being developed. Further details will be provided in due course once the legalisation has passed.

Business rates holiday for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses

We will introduce a business rates holiday for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses in England for the 2020 to 2021 tax year.

Eligibility

You are eligible for the business rates holiday if:

- your business is based in England
- your business is in the retail, hospitality and/or leisure sector

Properties that will benefit from the relief will be occupied properties that are wholly or mainly being used:

- as shops, restaurants, cafes, drinking establishments, cinemas and live music venues
- for assembly and leisure
- for hospitality, as hotels, guest & boarding premises or self-catering accommodation

More information on eligibility is set out in the [expanded retail discount guidance](#).

How to access the scheme

There is no action for you. However, local authorities may have to reissue your bill to provide this support. They will do this as soon as possible.

You can estimate the business rate charge using the [business rates calculator](#).

Guidance for local authorities

Guidance for local authorities is available in the [expanded retail discount guidance](#).

Cash grants for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses

The Retail and Hospitality Grant Scheme provides businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors with a cash grant of up to £25,000 per property.

Businesses in these sectors with a property that has a rateable value of up to £15,000 may be eligible for a grant of £10,000.

Businesses in these sectors with a property that has a rateable value of over £15,000 and less than £51,000 may be eligible for a grant of £25,000.

Eligibility

You are eligible for the grant if:

- your business is based in England
- your business is in the retail, hospitality or leisure sector
- your business has a rateable value of under £51,000

Properties that will benefit from the relief will be occupied properties that are wholly or mainly being used:

- as shops, restaurants, cafes, drinking establishments, cinemas and live music venues
- for assembly and leisure
- as hotels, guest and boarding premises and self-catering accommodation

How to access the scheme

You do not need to do anything. Your local authority will write to you if you are eligible for this grant. Any enquiries on eligibility for, or provision of, the reliefs and grants should be directed to the relevant local authority.

[Find your local authority.](#)

Guidance for local authorities

Guidance for local authorities is available on [administering the business grant schemes.](#)

Support for businesses that pay little or no business rates

The government will provide additional Small Business Grant Scheme funding for local authorities to support small businesses that already pay little or no business rates because of small business rate relief (SBRR), rural rate relief (RRR) and tapered relief. This will provide a one-off grant of £10,000 to eligible businesses to help meet their ongoing business costs.

Eligibility

You are eligible if:

- your business is based in England
- you are a business that occupies property
- you are receiving small business rate relief or rural rate relief as of 11 March

How to access the scheme

You do not need to do anything. Your local authority will write to you if you are eligible for this grant. Any enquiries on eligibility for, or provision of, the reliefs and grants should be directed to the relevant local authority.

[Find your local authority.](#)

Guidance for local authorities

Further guidance for local authorities is available on [administering the business grant schemes](#).

Support for businesses through the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme

The temporary Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme supports SMEs with access to loans, overdrafts, invoice finance and asset finance of up to £5 million and for up to 6 years.

The government will also make a Business Interruption Payment to cover the first 12 months of interest payments and any lender-levied fees, so smaller businesses will benefit from no upfront costs and lower initial repayments.

The government will provide lenders with a guarantee of 80% on each loan (subject to pre-lender cap on claims) to give lenders further confidence in continuing to provide finance to SMEs. The scheme will be delivered through commercial lenders, backed by the government-owned British Business Bank.

There are 40 accredited lenders able to offer the scheme, including all the major banks.

Eligibility

You are eligible for the scheme if:

- your business is UK based, with turnover of no more than £45 million per year
- your business meets the other [British Business Bank eligibility criteria](#)

How to access the scheme

The scheme is now open for applications. All major banks are offering this scheme.

To apply, you should talk to your bank or one of the [40 accredited finance providers](#) (not the British Business Bank) as soon as possible, to discuss your business plan. You can find out the latest on the best ways to contact them via their websites. Please note that branches may currently be shut down to enable social distancing.

The full rules of the scheme and the list of accredited lenders are available on the [British Business Bank website](#).

If you have an existing loan with monthly repayments you may want to ask for a repayment holiday to help with cash flow.

Support for larger firms through the COVID-19 Corporate Financing Facility

Under the new Covid-19 Corporate Financing Facility, the Bank of England will buy short term debt from larger companies.

This will support your company if it has been affected by a short-term funding squeeze, and allow you to finance your short-term liabilities.

It will also support corporate finance markets overall and ease the supply of credit to all firms.

Eligibility

All non-financial companies that meet the criteria set out on the [Bank of England's website](#) are eligible.

How to access the scheme

The scheme is now available for applications.

More information is available from the [Bank of England](#).

Support for businesses paying tax: Time to Pay service

All businesses and self-employed people in financial distress, and with outstanding tax liabilities, may be eligible to receive support with their tax affairs through HMRC's Time To Pay service.

These arrangements are agreed on a case-by-case basis and are tailored to individual circumstances and liabilities.

Eligibility

You are eligible if your business:

- pays tax to the UK government
- has outstanding tax liabilities

How to access the scheme

If you have missed a tax payment or you might miss your next payment due to COVID-19, please call HMRC's dedicated helpline: 0800 024 1222.

If you're worried about a future payment, please call us nearer the time.

Protection from eviction for commercial tenants

Commercial tenants who cannot pay their rent because of COVID-19 will be protected from eviction.

These measures will mean no business will automatically forfeit their lease and be forced out of their premises if they miss a payment up until 30 June.

There is the option for the government to extend this period if needed.

This is not a rental holiday. All commercial tenants will still be liable for the rent. Commercial tenants are protected from eviction if they are unable to pay rent.

Eligibility

All commercial tenants in England, Wales and Northern Ireland are eligible.

How to access the scheme

The change will come into force when the Coronavirus Bill receives Royal Assent. No action is required.

INFORMATION FOR INDIVIDUALS

Going to work

You should work from home unless it is impossible for you to do so.

Sometimes this will not be possible, as not everyone can work from home. Certain jobs require people to travel to their place of work – for instance if you operate machinery, work in construction or manufacturing, or are delivering front line services.

[See the full guidance on going to work.](#)

Staying at home

If you have symptoms of coronavirus infection (COVID-19), however mild, stay at home and do not leave your house for 7 days from when your symptoms started.

If you live with others and you are the first in the household to have symptoms of coronavirus, then you must stay at home for 7 days, but all other household members who remain well must stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days. The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the house became ill.

[See the stay at home guidance for more information.](#)

Sick pay

You can get £94.25 per week Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) if you're too ill to work. It's paid by your employer for up to 28 weeks.

If you are staying at home because of COVID-19 you can now claim SSP. This includes individuals who are caring for people in the same household and therefore have been advised to do a household quarantine.

To check your sick pay entitlement, you should talk to your employer, and visit the [Statutory Sick Pay \(SSP\)](#) page for more information.

SSP Start Date

We are legislating for SSP to be paid from day 1, rather than day 4, of your absence from work if you are absent from work due to sickness or need to stay at home due to COVID-19. Once the legislation has been passed, this will apply retrospectively from 13 March. You should talk to your employer if you are eligible for SSP and need to claim.

Proof of sickness

If you have COVID-19 or are advised to stay at home, you can get an 'isolation note' by visiting [NHS 111 online](#), rather than visiting a doctor. For COVID-19 cases this replaces the usual need to provide a 'fit note' (sometimes called a 'sick note') after 7 days of sickness absence.

If you're self-employed or not eligible for SSP

If you are not eligible for SSP – for example if you are self-employed or earning below the Lower Earnings Limit of £118 per week – and you have COVID-19 or are advised to stay at home, you can now more easily make a claim for [Universal Credit](#) or new style [Employment and Support Allowance](#).

If you are eligible for new style Employment and Support Allowance, it will now be payable from day 1 of sickness, rather than day 8, if you have COVID-19 or are advised to stay at home.

Furloughed workers

If you and your employer both agree, your employer might be able to keep you on the payroll if they're unable to operate or have no work for you to do because of coronavirus (COVID-19). This is known as being 'on furlough'.

You could get paid 80% of your wages, up to a monthly cap of £2,500.

If your salary is reduced as a result of these changes, you may be [eligible for support through the welfare system](#), including Universal Credit.

[Check if you could be covered by the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.](#)

Claiming Benefits

Whether you are currently in or out of work, if you are on a low income and affected by the economic impacts of COVID-19, you will be able to access the full range of the welfare system, including Universal Credit.

From 6 April we are increasing the standard allowance in Universal Credit and the basic element in Working Tax Credit for 1 year. Both will increase by £20 per week on top of planned annual uprating. This will apply to all new and existing Universal Credit claimants and to existing Working Tax Credit claimants.

If you have COVID-19 or are staying at home

You are now able to [claim Universal Credit](#), and if required can access advance payments upfront without needing to attend a jobcentre.

If you are self-employed

You are able to [claim Universal Credit](#), providing you meet the usual eligibility criteria.

To support you with the economic impact of the outbreak, and allow you to follow government guidance on self-isolation and social distancing, from 6 April the requirements of the Minimum Income Floor will be temporarily relaxed. This change will apply to all Universal Credit claimants and will last for the duration of the outbreak.

New claimants will not need to attend the jobcentre to demonstrate gainful self-employment.

Support for rent costs

You should [check your eligibility for Universal Credit](#), which is available for people in and out of work. Support for rental costs will be paid through Universal Credit.

From April, we are increasing Local Housing Allowance rates to the 30th percentile of market rents. This applies to all private renters who are new or existing Universal Credit housing element claimants and to existing Housing Benefit claimants.

Annex 2: Government and NHS guidance

Coronavirus homepage

- The Government has created a new landing page for all coronavirus queries, covering: businesses; health; employees; travel; workers; staying safe. The first port of call for queries on these matters is: www.gov.uk/coronavirus.

Guidance on staying at home and away from others

New rules on staying at home and away from others

The single most important action we can all take, in fighting coronavirus, is to stay at home in order to protect the NHS and save lives.

When we reduce our day-to-day contact with other people, we will reduce the spread of the infection. That is why the government is now (23 March 2020) introducing three new measures:

1. Requiring people to stay at home, except for very limited purposes.
2. Closing non-essential shops and community spaces.
3. Stopping all gatherings of more than two people in public.

Every citizen must comply with these new measures. The relevant authorities, including the police, will be given the powers to enforce them – including through fines and dispersing gatherings.

These measures came into effect on Monday 23 March. The Government will look again at these measures after three weeks, and relax them if the evidence shows this is possible.

Staying at home

You should only leave the house for one of four reasons.

- **Shopping for basic necessities**, for example food and medicine, which must be as infrequent as possible.
- **One form of exercise a day**, for example a run, walk, or cycle - alone or with members of your household.
- **Any medical need**, or to provide care or to help a vulnerable person.
- **Travelling to and from work**, but only where this absolutely cannot be done from home.

These four reasons are exceptions - even when doing these activities, you should be minimising time spent outside of the home and ensuring you are 2 metres apart from anyone outside of your household.

These measures must be followed by everyone. Separate advice is available for individuals or households who are isolating, and for the most vulnerable who need to be shielded. Where parents do not live in the same household, children under 18 can be moved between their parents' homes.

The Government has also identified a number of critical workers whose children can still go to school or their childcare provider. This critical worker definition does not affect whether or not you can travel to work - if you are not a critical worker, you may still travel to work provided you cannot work from home.

Critical workers and parents of vulnerable children may leave the house to take children to and from school or their childcare provider.

Closing non-essential shops and public spaces

To reduce social contact, the Government has ordered certain businesses and venues to close. These include:

- **pubs, cinemas and theatres.**
- **all retail stores selling non-essential goods** - this includes clothing and electronics stores; hair, beauty and nail salons; and outdoor and indoor markets, excluding food markets.
- **libraries, community centres, and youth centres.**
- **indoor and outdoor leisure facilities** such as bowling alleys, arcades and soft play facilities.
- **communal places within parks**, such as playgrounds, sports courts and outdoor gyms.
- **places of worship**, except for funerals attended by immediate families.
- **hotels, hostels, bed and breakfasts, campsites, caravan parks, and boarding houses for commercial/leisure use**, excluding permanent residents, key workers and those providing emergency accommodation, for example for the homeless.

Other businesses can remain open and their employees can travel to work, provided they cannot work from home.

Stopping public gatherings

To make sure people are staying at home and apart from each other, the Government is also **stopping all public gatherings of more than two people.**

There are only two exceptions to this rule:

- **where the gathering is of a group of people who live together** - this means that a parent can, for example, take their children to the shops if there is no option to leave them at home.
- **where the gathering is essential for work purposes** - but workers should be trying to minimise all meetings and other gatherings in the workplace.

In addition, the Government is stopping social events, including weddings, baptisms and other religious ceremonies. This will exclude funerals, which can be attended by immediate family.

Going to work

As set out in the section on staying at home, people can travel to and from work, but only where the work they do absolutely cannot be done from home.

With the exception of the organisations covered above in the section on closing non-essential shops and public spaces, the Government has not required any other businesses to close – indeed it is important for business to carry on.

Employers and employees should discuss their working arrangements, and employers should take every possible step to facilitate their employees working from home, including providing suitable IT and equipment to enable remote working.

Sometimes this will not be possible, as not everyone can work from home. Certain jobs require people to travel to their place of work – for instance if they operate machinery, work in construction or manufacturing, or are delivering front line services.

If you cannot work from home then you can still travel to work, provided you are well and neither you nor any of your household are self-isolating. This is consistent with advice from the Chief Medical Officer.

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).

Work carried out in people’s homes, for example by tradespeople carrying out repairs and maintenance, can continue, provided that the tradesperson is well and has no symptoms. Again, it will be important to ensure that Public Health England guidelines, including maintaining a 2 metre distance from any household occupants, are followed to ensure everyone’s safety.

No work should be carried out in any household which is isolating or where an individual is being shielded, unless it is to remedy a direct risk to the safety of the household, such as emergency plumbing or repairs, and where the tradesperson is willing to do so. In such cases, Public Health England can provide advice to tradespeople and households.

No work should be carried out by a tradesperson who has coronavirus symptoms, however mild.

As set out in the section on closing non-essential shops and public spaces, the Government has ordered certain businesses and venues to close. The Government has set out guidance on which organisations this requirement covers. Advice for employees of these organisations on employment and financial support is available at gov.uk/coronavirus.

At all times, workers should follow the guidance on self-isolation if they or anyone in their household shows symptoms.

Delivering these new measures

These measures will reduce our day to day contact with other people. They are a vital part of our efforts to reduce the rate of transmission of coronavirus.

EVERY CITIZEN IS INSTRUCTED TO COMPLY WITH THESE NEW MEASURES.

The Government will therefore be ensuring the police and other relevant authorities have the powers to enforce them, including through fines and dispersing gatherings where people do not comply.

They will initially last for the three weeks from 23 March, at which point the Government will look at them again and relax them if the evidence shows this is possible.

Annex 3: Frequently asked questions

For the latest guidance and information, visit [gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus).

Q: When am I allowed to leave the house?

You should only leave the house for very limited purposes:

- shopping for basic necessities, for example food and medicine, which must be as infrequent as possible
- one form of exercise a day, for example a run, walk, or cycle - alone or with members of your household
- any medical need, including to donate blood, avoid or escape risk of injury or harm, or to provide care or to help a vulnerable person
- travelling for work purposes, but only where you cannot work from home.

Q: Can I go to the dentist, my GP or another medical appointment?

You can leave home for medical appointments. GP practices may postpone non-urgent health checks or routine appointments.

You should go to the doctor if there is an essential medical need.

Q: Can I walk my dog?

Yes – provided it is alone or with members of your household.

People must stay at home as much as possible to reduce the spread of the virus. But you can also still go outside once a day for a walk, run, cycle. When doing this you must minimise the time you are out of your home and stay at least two metres away from anyone else that isn't from your household.

Q: Should I stay at home or go to work?

You may travel for work purposes, but only where you cannot work from home.

Certain jobs require people to travel to their place of work – for instance if they operate machinery, work in construction or manufacturing, or are delivering front line services such as train and bus drivers.

Employers and employees should discuss their working arrangements, and employers should take every possible step to facilitate their employees working from home, including providing suitable IT and equipment to enable remote working.

Q: I'm not a critical worker and I can't work from home. What should I do?

If you cannot work from home then you can still travel to work. This is consistent with the Chief Medical Officer's advice.

Critical workers are those who can still take their children to school or childcare. This critical worker definition does not affect whether or not you can travel to work – if you are not a critical worker, you may still travel to work provided you cannot work from home.

Anyone who has symptoms or is in a household where someone has symptoms should not go to work and should self-isolate.

Q: How can I find out if my work is essential or not?

The Government is not saying only people doing “essential” work can go to work. Anyone who cannot work from home can still go to work.

Separately, there is a list of critical workers who can still take their children to school or childcare. Provision has been prioritised for these workers.

Every worker – whether critical or not – should work from home if they can but may otherwise travel to work.

The Government has also asked certain businesses where people gather, such as pubs and most shops, to close. Separate guidance has been published on this.

Q: Can I see my friends?

We must all stay away from each other to stop spreading the virus, and that means you should not be meeting friends unless you live in the same household.

Instead, you could keep in touch with your friends using phone or video calls.

Q: Can I visit elderly relatives?

No, you should not be visiting family members who do not live in your home.

You should keep in touch with them using phone or video calls.

Where your relatives are elderly or vulnerable, you may leave your house to help them, for example by dropping shopping or medication at their door. You can also help them to order online.

Q: Can I go out to help a vulnerable person?

You can only provide support to vulnerable people if you fulfil all of the conditions below:

- you are well and have no symptoms like a cough or high temperature and nobody in your household does
- you are under 70
- you are not pregnant
- you do not have any long-term health conditions that make you vulnerable to coronavirus

If the answer is yes to everything above, you may leave your house to provide care or to help a vulnerable person, following the advice set out [here](#).

When outside the home, you should stay at least two metres away from others wherever possible.

We have seen an incredible effort across the country already, and the Government is hugely grateful to those who support the vulnerable in their communities by volunteering day-to-day.

Q: My boss is forcing me to go to work but I'm scared of coronavirus. What should I do?

Employers must make all efforts to help people to work from home where possible, as this will help limit the spread of the virus by reducing the amount of contact between people.

In some circumstances this may be impossible – this would apply to those working for a business or organisation that we have not asked to close and requires them to travel and be at work, such as train or bus drivers, construction workers, restaurant workers handling deliveries or those on the frontline like NHS workers.

For these workers who need to be at work, do not have symptoms or live with anyone who has symptoms, and are not vulnerable people, the Government has outlined clear guidance for employers to help protect workers.

Q: I can't go to work because I need to look after my child, but my boss is threatening to sack me if I don't. What should I do?

The Government is urging employers to take socially responsible decisions and listen to the concerns of their workforce – particularly when they have childcare responsibilities.

Employers and employees should come to an agreement about these arrangements.

If individuals need advice they should approach ACAS where they can get impartial advice about in-work disputes.

Q: Can I move house?

Homebuyers and renters should, where possible, delay moving to a new house while measures are in place to fight coronavirus.

If moving is unavoidable for contractual reasons and the parties are unable to reach an agreement to delay, people must follow advice on staying away from others to minimise the spread of the virus.

Q: Can I go to the park?

You can still go to the park for outdoor exercise once a day but only alone or with members of your household, not in groups.

Communal places within parks such as sports courts, playgrounds and outdoor gyms have been closed to protect everyone's health.

The Government asks that households use parks responsibly and keep 2 metres apart from others at all times.

Unless you are with members of your household, gatherings of more than two people in parks and other public spaces have been banned. The police have the powers to disperse gatherings and issue fines if necessary.

Q: Can I drive to a national park or other green space to walk?

The Government advises you to stay local and use open spaces near to your home where possible – do not travel unnecessarily.

You can still go to the park for outdoor exercise once a day but only by yourself or within your household, not in groups.

The Government asks you to keep 2 metres apart from others outside your household at all times when outdoors.

Q: What will happen to me if I break the rules?

The Government appreciates all the effort people are putting into containing the spread of coronavirus which will help protect our NHS and save lives.

However, if you leave your home or gather in public for any reason other than those specified, the police may:

- instruct you to go home, leave an area or disperse
- instruct you to take steps to stop your children breaking these rules if they have already done so
- take you home – or arrest you – if you do not follow their instructions or where they deem it necessary
- issue a fine (fixed penalty notice) of £60, which will be lowered to £30 if paid within 14 days.
- issue a fine (fixed penalty notice) of £120 for second time offenders, doubling on each further repeat offence

Individuals who do not pay their fine could be taken to court, with magistrates able to impose unlimited fines.

Annex 4: Useful links

Coronavirus – homepage	www.nhs.uk/coronavirus www.gov.uk/coronavirus
Guidance for Members of Parliament	https://www.parliament.uk/business/news/2020/march/uk-parliament-coronavirus-update/
Guidance for staying at home	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection
Guidance for social distancing and for vulnerable people	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
Guidance for educational settings	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19
Guidance for staff in the transport sector	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-staff-in-the-transport-sector/covid-19-guidance-for-staff-in-the-transport-sector
Guidance for freight transport industry	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-freight-transport
Guidance for residential care	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-residential-care-supported-living-and-home-care-guidance/covid-19-guidance-on-residential-care-provision
Ethical framework for adult social care	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-ethical-framework-for-adult-social-care
Guidance for supported living provision	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-residential-care-supported-living-and-home-care-guidance/covid-19-guidance-for-supported-living-provision
Guidance on home care provision	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-residential-care-supported-living-and-home-care-guidance/covid-19-guidance-for-supported-living-provision
Guidance for households with a possible infection	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance
Guidance for cleaning of non-healthcare settings	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings
Guidance for hostel or day centres for people rough sleeping	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-services-for-people-experiencing-rough-sleeping
Guidance for mass gatherings	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-guidance-for-mass-gatherings
Guidance for prisons and other places of detention	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-prisons-and-other-prescribed-places-of-detention-guidance
Guidance on prison visits	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-and-prisons-visits

Guidance to visits to immigration removal centres	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-and-immigration-removal-centres
Guidance of shipping and sea ports	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-shipping-and-sea-ports-guidance
Guidance for health professionals	https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance
Guidance for health care professionals – Primary care	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wn-cov-guidance-for-primary-care
Guidance for health care professionals - Infection and prevention and control	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control
Guidance for health care professionals – First responders	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-interim-guidance-for-first-responders
Guidance for health care professionals – Investigation and initial management of possible cases	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-initial-investigation-of-possible-cases
Guidance for health care professionals – Ambulance trusts	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-ambulance-trusts
Guidance for health care professionals – Clinical diagnostic laboratories	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-guidance-for-clinical-diagnostic-laboratories
Guidance for health care professionals – Healthcare providers with a case in their family	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-healthcare-providers-who-have-diagnosed-a-case-within-their-facility
Guidance for adult social care	https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-adult-social-care-guidance-to-protect-the-most-vulnerable-against-covid-19
Guidance for employees, employers and businesses	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19
Guidance on Immigration	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-immigration-guidance-if-youre-unable-to-return-to-china-from-the-uk
Guidance for Courts and Tribunals	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-courts-and-tribunals-planning-and-preparation
Guidance for use of rapid tests in community pharmacies or at home	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-rapid-tests-for-use-in-community-pharmacies-or-at-home
NHS England advice for Clinicians	https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/

Guidance on hospital discharge service requirements	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-hospital-discharge-service-requirements
Guidance for UK Businesses	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-uk-businesses
Guidance on impact on UK seafarer services	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/min-611-mf-guidance-and-information-to-follow-in-the-event-of-covid-19-outbreak-impacting-uk-seafarer-services
Guidance for Local Government	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-local-government
Guidance to Planning Inspectorate	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-planning-inspectorate-guidance
Guidance on Radioactive waste management	https://www.gov.uk/government/news/radioactive-waste-management-and-covid-19
Contingency and emergency planning for Traffic Commissioners	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/traffic-commissioners-contingency-and-emergency-planning-covid-19
Guidance for Cruise ship travel	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/cruise-ship-travel
Maritime and Coastguard Agency: Approach to survey and certification of vessels	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/min-612-mf-coronavirus-covid-19-mca-approach-to-survey-and-certification-of-uk-vessels
Maritime and Coastguard Agency: Approach to Ship Registration	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/min-614-mf-coronavirus-covid-19-uk-ship-register-approach-to-registration-services-for-uk-vessels
Guidance for Individuals and Businesses in Wales	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-individuals-and-businesses-in-wales
Guidance for Businesses in Scotland	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-individuals-and-businesses-in-scotland
Guidance on Driving Tests	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-driving-tests-and-theory-tests
Guidance for Companies House customers, employees and suppliers	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-guidance-for-companies-house-customers-employees-and-suppliers
Failure to File Company accounts due to virus	https://www.gov.uk/government/news/coronavirus-if-your-company-cannot-file-accounts-with-companies-house-on-time
Healthcare for UK nationals visiting EU	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/uk-residents-visiting-the-eueea-and-switzerland-healthcare

Healthcare for UK nationals visiting Ireland	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/healthcare-for-uk-nationals-visiting-ireland
NHS entitlements for migrants (updated with Coronavirus)	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-entitlements-migrant-health-guide
Guidance on Reporting Notifiable diseases	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/notifiable-diseases-and-causative-organisms-how-to-report
Position Statement of the Groceries Code Adjudicator	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gca-position-statement-on-current-supply-arrangements
FCO Travel Advice	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus
Guidance for British people travelling and living overseas during the coronavirus pandemic	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus#when-youre-abroad
Guidance for those visiting the UK from China who cannot travel home	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-immigration-guidance-if-youre-unable-to-return-to-china-from-the-uk
Statutory Sick Pay (updated with Coronavirus)	https://www.gov.uk/statutory-sick-pay https://www.gov.uk/employers-sick-pay
ESA (updated with Coronavirus)	https://www.gov.uk/employment-support-allowance/your-esa-claim
PIP (updated with Coronavirus)	https://www.gov.uk/pip/how-to-claim
Universal Credit (updated with Coronavirus)	https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit/how-to-claim
Support for those affected: 2020 Budget	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/support-for-those-affected-by-covid-19
Guidance if you cannot pay your tax bill on time	https://www.gov.uk/difficulties-paying-hmrc
Guidance on school closures	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures
Guidance to Parents and Carers on School Closures	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers
Guidance on providing education and childcare for the children of key workers	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision
Guidance for schools and other educational settings	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19

Free School meals guidance	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance
Guidance of GCSE and A-Level cancellations	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-cancellation-of-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-2020
Guidance on travel advice for educational settings	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-bill-what-it-will-do
Ofsted Guidance	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofsted-coronavirus-covid-19-rolling-update
Guidance for maintaining further education provision	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-further-education-provision
Guidance on attendance recording for educational settings	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings
Guidance on procurement policy	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/procurement-policy-note-0120-responding-to-covid-19
Guidance on procurement policy (supplier relief)	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/procurement-policy-note-0220-supplier-relief-due-to-covid-19
Relaxation of driver's hours rules for these delivering essential items	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/temporary-relaxation-of-the-enforcement-of-the-drivers-hours-rules-delivery-of-essential-items-to-consumers
Guidance on clinical trials concerning Covid-19	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/clinical-trials-applications-for-coronavirus-covid-19
Guidance on managing clinical trials	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/managing-clinical-trials-during-coronavirus-covid-19
Guidance on Business Rates – expanded retail discount	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/business-rates-retail-discount-guidance
Guidance on the Coronavirus bill – what will it do?	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-bill-what-it-will-do
Guidance for mass gatherings	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-guidance-for-mass-gatherings
Guidance on MOTs on cars/vans/motorcycles from 30 March 2020	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-mots-for-cars-vans-and-motorcycles-due-from-30-march-2020
Guidance on MOTs on lorries/buses/trailers	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-mots-for-lorries-buses-and-trailers
Guidance for MOT testers and test centres	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-mot-centre-and-tester-guidance
Guidance on vehicle approval tests	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-vehicle-approval-tests
Guidance on Vulnerable children and young people	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people

Guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19
Guidance on Apprenticeship programmes	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-apprenticeship-programme-response
Guidance on early years and childcare closures	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures
Guidance on ventilator supply specifications	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-ventilator-supply-specification https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/specification-for-ventilators-to-be-used-in-uk-hospitals-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak
Guidance of self-employed income support scheme	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-a-grant-through-the-coronavirus-covid-19-self-employment-income-support-scheme
Guidance Business Support Grant Funding	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-business-support-grant-funding
UK Transport travel advice	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-transport-and-travel-advice
Guidance for visa applicants and temporary residents	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-uk-visa-applicants-and-temporary-uk-residents
Guidance on government support for landlords and renters	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/government-support-available-for-landlords-and-renters-reflecting-the-current-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak
Guidance on packaging and transport for patient samples	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/packaging-and-transport-requirements-for-patient-samples-un3373
Guidance on coverage of the Coronavirus job retention scheme	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-if-you-could-be-covered-by-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme
Guidance on deferral of VAT payments	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/deferral-of-vat-payments-due-to-coronavirus-covid-19
Guidance on Home Moving	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/government-advice-on-home-moving-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak
Guidance on the regulatory status of Personal Protective Equipment PPE	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/regulatory-status-of-equipment-being-used-to-help-prevent-coronavirus-covid-19
Guidance on taxable expenses for employees working from home	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-which-expenses-are-taxable-if-your-employee-works-from-home-due-to-coronavirus-covid-19
Guidance on Legal aid contingency response	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-legal-aid-agency-contingency-response

Guidance for hotels and other accommodation providers	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-advice-for-accommodation-providers
Guidance for the NHS commissioning board	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-exercise-of-commissioning-functions-by-the-nhs-commissioning-board-coronavirus-directions-2020
Guidance for the production of hand sanitiser	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/producing-hand-sanitiser-and-gel-for-coronavirus-covid-19
Guidance on the fast track of approval for medical devices during the outbreak	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/exemptions-from-devices-regulations-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak
Guidance for pharmacies wishing to 'pack down' larger amounts of medical products	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-for-manufacturers-specials-licence-holders-on-packing-down-medicines-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak
Guidance for food businesses	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-food-businesses
Guidance for claiming wage costs through the job retention scheme	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-for-wage-costs-through-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme
Guidance for provision of domestic abuse safe accommodation	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-domestic-abuse-safe-accommodation-provision
Guidance for Heavy Goods (HGV) and Public Service Vehicle (PSV) Operators	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-heavy-goods-and-public-service-vehicle-operators-covid-19
Guidance on the response of European Structural and Investment Funds to the outbreak	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/european-structural-and-investment-funds-coronavirus-covid-19-response
Guidance on accessing victim and witness services	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-victim-and-witness-services
Guidance on adjourning civil and family hearings	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/applications-to-adjourn-civil-and-family-hearings-because-of-coronavirus-covid-19
Guidance on HMCTS priorities	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/hmcts-priorities-during-coronavirus-outbreak
Guidance on HMCTS use of telephone and video hearings	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/hmcts-telephone-and-video-hearings-during-coronavirus-outbreak
HMCTS daily operational summary	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/hmcts-daily-operational-summary-on-courts-and-tribunals-during-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak
Guidance from DVLA	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/dvla-coronavirus-covid-19-update

Guidance on completing Stock Transfer Forms (STF) – Coronavirus Update	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/stamp-duty-on-shares
Guidance on paying stamp duty – Coronavirus Update	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pay-stamp-duty
Guidance on Infection Prevention and Control	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control
Guidance on the response form the office of the public guardian	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-office-of-the-public-guardian-response
Guidance on Government actuarial department on Coronavirus and 2020 budget	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/budget-2020-a-gad-technical-bulletin
Guidance on storing or treating coronavirus cleansing waste	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/storing-or-treating-covid-19-cleansing-waste-at-a-healthcare-waste-management-facility-rps
Guidance for employees at Sellafield Ltd	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-guidance-for-employees-sellafield-ltd
Guidance on export license handling	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/notice-to-exporters-202008-coronavirus-covid-19-export-licence-handling
Guidance to Fraud Control in emergency management	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fraud-control-in-emergency-management-covid-19-uk-government-guide
Guidance on ‘how to help safely’	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-how-to-help-safely--2
Guidance on getting an isolation note	https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-advice/
Guidance on the closure of certain businesses and venues	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-businesses-and-premises-to-close
Guidance on essential travel (avoid second homes, campsites and caravan parks)	https://www.gov.uk/government/news/covid-19-essential-travel-guidance
Guidance to offering support from your business	https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-support-from-business
Offering to help produce ventilators	https://ventilator.herokuapp.com/
Tracking Cases in the UK	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-track-coronavirus-cases https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public