



Briefing Note 05 - COVID-19 Guidance

As at 09:00 Monday 23rd March 2020

1. Headline developments announced on Sunday 22nd March 2020

Item		Source
A	New guidance on vulnerable people and young children	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people
B	New guidance on temporary closure of schools in England	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures/guidance-for-schools-about-temporarily-closing
C	New essential travel guidance	https://www.gov.uk/government/news/covid-19-essential-travel-guidance?utm_source=38508dca-c5ae-4971-9f8b-3ab8619f94c8&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate
D	New guidance and compliance advice for those businesses and other venues asked to close as part of social distancing	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/business-and-other-venues-subject-to-further-social-distancing-measures/businesses-and-other-venues-subject-to-further-social-distancing-measures
E	New rail emergency measures to ensure ticket refunds and protect services for passengers and supporting train operators to make sure railways stay open for key workers	https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-ensures-ticket-refunds-and-protects-services-for-passengers-with-rail-emergency-measures?utm_source=a850c2d3-e691-4406-84b7-6183d5e5de04&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate
F	UK: 281 dead (+48) 5,683 tested positive (+665)	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public

2. Key Sources of Government Advice

Document	
A	Coronavirus: action plan – A guide to what you can expect across the UK https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/869827/Coronavirus_action_plan_-_a_guide_to_what_you_can_expect_across_the_UK.pdf
B	World Health Organisation advice https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019
C	NHS health advice https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/

D	<p>Social distancing and protecting older people and vulnerable adults</p> <p>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</p>
E	<p>Guidance for schools and local authorities on maintaining educational provision</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision</p>
F	<p>Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE): COVID-19 guidance</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/scientific-advisory-group-for-emergencies-sage-coronavirus-covid-19-response</p>
G	<p>Support for businesses and people</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/covid-19-support-for-businesses</p>
H	<p>Measures to protect people at higher risk from Coronavirus</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19</p>
I	<p>Guidance on home care provision</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-residential-care-supported-living-and-home-care-guidance/covid-19-guidance-on-home-care-provision</p>
J	<p>Mental health helplines</p> <p>https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/mental-health-helplines/</p>

3. Commentary

Yesterday, the government announced a wide range of measures designed to protect people and ensure some continuity of essential services. The importance of compliance with social distancing measures was stressed throughout the day.

The Prime Minister explained on live television about the special steps that that are, and need to be, taken to protect those deemed particularly vulnerable, including shielding those with serious medical conditions. He emphasised the need to follow social distancing advice and interaction outdoors, and to stay two metres apart.

Vulnerable people who are shielding are asked to register **from Tuesday 24 March** for support they might need. This includes help with food, medication, shopping deliveries and additional care they might need. This is the page link [gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable).

The frequency of train services across the UK will reduce from Monday 23rd March, and most bus operators will be reducing the frequency of bus services from Wednesday 25th March. Transport operators are working on new timetables and these will be published online. Measures to ensure ticket refunds and protect services for passengers have been introduced. Emergency measures are aimed at supporting train operators to make sure the railways stay open for key workers.

New guidance on vulnerable children and young people up to the age of 25 has been published, with detailed arrangements for supporting those affected by partial closures of schools and specified educational institutions.



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New guidance for schools and other educational settings, staff, parents and carers, pupils and students, explains what they need to do during their temporary closure. A Coronavirus Helpline has been set up for England: **0800 046 8687**.

New essential travel guidance gives advice to avoid non-essential travel in the UK. It is aimed at people planning to visit second homes or holiday premises during the pandemic. In summary, travel to these places is not considered essential.

Guidance for businesses and other venues already subject to social distancing measures have been strengthened and extended with compliance advice. A detailed list of businesses that are not permitted to sell food or drink for consumption on the premises has been published, together with premises that must remain closed.

The government recommends that takeaway and delivery facilities should remain open and operational, although it should be noted that some large food chains have decided to close. For example, all McDonald's restaurants in the UK and Ireland will close at 7pm on Monday 23rd March. This includes their delivery and Drive Thru facilities.

Closures directed by government are now enforceable by law in England and Wales with new regulations issued yesterday. The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Business Closure) (England)(Regulations) 2020 are now in force. Local authorities will be responsible for enforcing these new regulations.

In summary, a significant amount of new and amended guidance, advice and legally enforceable compliance measures have been issued over the weekend. The weblinks provided in this briefing note should take you through to the current information.

The Coronavirus Bill is due to receive its Second Reading in Parliament today. This contains a wide range of emergency powers. It is a very detailed 329-page document containing temporary emergency law and can be accessed here:

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-01/0122/20122.pdf>

A separate 73-page document note called 'Explanatory Notes' has also been published and can be accessed here:

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-01/0122/en/20122en.pdf>

These Explanatory Notes have been produced by the Department for Health and Social Care in order to assist the reader of the Bill. They do not form part of the Bill and have not been endorsed by Parliament. They explain what each part of the Bill will mean in practice; provide background information on the development of policy; and provide additional information on how the Bill will affect existing legislation in this area.