

The pandemic is now at Level 5, we are in lockdown and we must stop the spread and stay at home

Q: Why have we moved into another lockdown?

A: A new variant is 50% to 70% more transmissible and led to over 60,000 new cases in a day.

- Healthcare services would be overwhelmed within 21 days without urgent action
- The restrictions will be reviewed on 15th February but are unlikely to be eased until around 13 million people, who are the most vulnerable, have received the vaccine and been given enough time to be protected – a period of about two to three weeks after getting the jab.
- 1 in 50 of the population currently have the virus
- One third of hospital beds are taken by COVID-19 patients

Q: Are all schools closed?

A: Yes. Except vulnerable children and critical workers' children.

Q: Can I go back to University?

A: Only if you are studying a course which is for future critical workers i.e. a medical course. Otherwise HE provision will remain online until mid-February.

Q: Can we still exercise outside?

A: Yes, but only once a day

Q: Can we meet anyone outside of our household, support bubble or childcare bubble?

A: Yes, we can. We can also meet one person for exercise (not socialising) outside and in our local area.

Q: Can you meet different people outside?

A: Yes, you could meet a different person on a different day, but please consider how sensible that would be. Remember, the less people we mix with, the safer we are and the safer our families are.

Always maintain the social distance of 2 metres.

Q: Can we keep the same support bubble and childcare bubble?

A: Yes

Q: Can I still go on holiday?

A: Sadly, if your holiday is due to happen before 15th February then it cannot go ahead. After that it will depend on the outcome of the government review on that date

Q: Can a builder continue to work?

A: Yes, trades people can continue to work

Q: I'm staying away from Milton Keynes, can I come home? Can I use public transport?

A: Yes, you can travel on public transport to get back home

Q: Which shops will be open?

A: Only those which are providing essential items such as food

Q: Do I have to stay in my home all the time?

A: Yes, unless you have a 'reasonable excuse' which are:

- Shopping for necessities or if you are shopping for a disabled, vulnerable or self-isolating person
- For exercise once a day, but we need to stay in our local area: your village or the part of Milton Keynes that you live in
- For medical assistance or to avoid injury, illness or risk of harm
- To escape domestic abuse
- To attend Dr appointments
- To get a COVID-19 test
- To get the COVID-19 vaccine
- To go to work where it is unreasonable to work at home
- To visit others when you are in support or childcare bubble
- To accompany someone who is giving birth
- To carry out volunteering or charitable activities
- To visit someone who is dying or someone in a care home (if permitted under care home guidance), hospice, or hospital, or to accompany them to a medical appointment
- For animal welfare reasons, such as to attend veterinary services for advice or treatment
- To education, registered childcare, and supervised activities for children where they are eligible to attend. Schools are closed except for vulnerable children and the children of 'critical' workers
- To fulfil legal obligations or to carry out activities related to buying, selling, letting or renting a residential property
- Weddings and civil ceremonies may only take place in exceptional circumstances. (such as imminent death) with up to six people. (The figure does not include those conducting the wedding.)
- Up to 30 people can attend or visit a place of worship for communal worship, a funeral or event related to a death, a burial ground or a remembrance garden. (This figure doesn't include those conducting the ceremony.) We must not mingle with anyone

outside of our household or support bubble when attending a place of worship. The number permitted for a wake is no more than six.

Q: What does 'stay local' mean?

A: We should always stay local in the village, town, or part of the city where you live. We can only leave our local area for a legally permitted reason, such as for work.

Q: Where can we exercise?

A: Parks, countryside accessible to the public, forests, public gardens (whether or not you pay to enter them), the grounds of a heritage site and playgrounds

Q: Can I still go swimming or play golf?

A: Sadly no, outdoor sports venues, including tennis courts, golf courses and swimming pools must close.

Q: If you are critically vulnerable should you go to work?

A: No, if you are clinically extremely vulnerable you should only go out for medical appointments, exercise or if it is essential. You should not attend work

Q: What if parents do not live together?

A: People can continue existing arrangements for contact between parents and children where they live apart.

Q: What if I break the rules?

A: The rules are now law and the Police can issue a Fixed Penalty Fine of £200 for the first offence, which doubles at each offence (with a maximum fine of £6,400.)

Q: Can I still sell or buy a house?

A: Yes, you can.

Q: Can I take my pet to the vet if I need to?

A: Yes, you can.

Q: Will there be an MOT extension?

A: There is an MOT extension to the summer, however garages are open so it's safer to have your car MOT'd.

Q: What financial support is available?

A: There is a range of financial support from the government and from Milton Keynes Council.

Government support:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/worker-support?priority-taxon=774cee22-d896-44c1-a611-e3109cce8eae>

Milton Keynes Council support:

<https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/your-council-and-elections/covid-19-in-milton-keynes/help-and-support>

The full guidance is here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-lockdown-stay-at-home>

This advice is for people who are fit and well. There is additional advice for people who are clinically extremely vulnerable to coronavirus and households with a possible or confirmed coronavirus infection. If you are clinically extremely vulnerable you should not attend work, school, college or university, and limit the time you spend outside the home. You should only go out for medical appointments, exercise or if it is essential. Please see your specific advice here: <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>

Here is further Stay at Home guidance if you think you, or someone in your household may have COVID-19 or have tested positive:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/guidance-for-households-with-grandparents-parents-and-children-living-together-where-someone-is-at-increased-risk-or-has-symptoms-of-coronavirus-cov>