

Issued by Dilton Marsh Parish Council 25.3.20 Relating to Government instructions issued 23.3.20

GUIDANCE ON SOCIAL DISTANCING

Central government has issued the following:

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 are effective immediately. The Government will look again at these measures in three weeks, and relax them if the evidence shows this is possible.

1. 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. If you work in a critical sector outlined in this guidance, or your child has been identified as vulnerable, you can continue to take your children to school. Where parents do not live in the same household, children under 18 can be moved between their parents' homes

2. CLOSING NON-ESSENTIAL SHOPS AND PUBLIC SPACES

Last week, the Government ordered certain businesses - including pubs, cinemas and theatres - to close. The Government is now extending this requirement to a further set of businesses and other venues, including:

- all non-essential retail stores - this will include 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 and key workers).

Businesses and other venues not on this list may remain open.

3. 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.

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.

Further guidance from central government on social distancing can be found here:

<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>

CORONAVIRUS BILL – SUMMARY OF IMPACTS

Please see below for the government's summary of the impacts of the Coronavirus bill:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-bill-summary-of-impacts/coronavirus-bill-summary-of-impacts>

FURTHER BUSINESSES TO CLOSE

Information from central government on the closure of further businesses can be found here:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/874732/230320 - Revised guidance note - finalVF.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/874732/230320_-_Revised_guidance_note_-_finalVF.pdf)

GUIDANCE FOR BUSINESSES AND EMPLOYEES

Businesses and workplaces should encourage their employees to work at home, wherever possible. If someone becomes unwell in the workplace with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, they should be sent home and advised to follow the advice to stay at home. Employees should be reminded to wash their hands for 20 seconds more frequently and catch coughs and sneezes in tissues. Frequently clean and disinfect objects and surfaces that are touched regularly, using your standard cleaning products. Employees will need your support to adhere to the recommendation to stay at home to reduce the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) to others. Those who follow advice to stay at home will be eligible for statutory sick pay (SSP) from the first day of their absence from work. Employers should use their discretion concerning the need for medical evidence for certification for employees who are unwell. This will allow GPs to focus on their patients. 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. Employees from defined vulnerable groups should be strongly advised and supported to stay at home and work from there if possible

GUIDANCE ON MAINTAINING FURTHER EDUCATION

Information relating to the provision of further education can be found below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-further-education-provision/maintaining-education-and-skills-training-provision-further-education-providers>

Information on university place offers can be found below:

https://www.gov.uk/government/news/universities-told-not-to-alter-applicants-offers?utm_source=bf12f571-852e-4a5f-94cd-905146b55497&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

GUIDANCE ON SCHOOLS

Information relating to schools can be found below:

https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-schools-and-other-educational-settings?utm_source=033c6c26-a7a4-4baf-b6c4-e590395476e2&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

CORONAVIRUS VACCINE

Trials of new coronavirus vaccine among 6 projects are to receive a share of £20 million funding. Other projects to combat coronavirus include immediately repurposing existing treatments to treat patients already diagnosed with coronavirus.

COMMERCIAL TENANTS RENT

Commercial tenants who cannot pay their rent due to Coronavirus will be protected from eviction.

BUSINESS SUPPORT

Guidance providing details of support available to businesses can be found via the below link, including:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19?utm_source=53d07303-9ec1-4665-baf7-c3ae81a79b17&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

- a Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme
- deferring VAT and Income Tax payments
- statutory sick pay relief package for small and medium-sized enterprises (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 to support long-term viable businesses who may need to respond to cash-flow pressures by seeking additional finance
- 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 to help with tax

INCREASE TO WORKING TAX CREDITS

As part of a number of measures to support the country during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, Working Tax Credits payments will be increased by £1,045 to £3,040 per year from 6 April 2020 until 5 April 2021. The amount a claimant or household will benefit from will depend on their circumstances, including their level of household income. But the increase could mean up to an extra £20 each week.

If you claim Working Tax Credits, you don't have to take any action or contact HMRC - the increase in your payments will start from 6 April 2020.