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SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT HOSPITALITY
AND TOURISM SECTOR GUIDANCE

WHAT THE TRADE NEEDS TO KNOW

Real People. Real Specialists

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CONTACT

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The Scottish Government has published Coronavirus “Tourism and hospitality sector guidance” accessible on its website at <https://bit.ly/3eq3bfx>. While the guidance demands close attention, it’s important to understand that the contents are not set in stone. We now have indicative dates for licensing trade re-opening* and expect further guidance as these dates approach. For example, the current guidance indicates that:

“The safe use of toilet facilities is still subject to further scientific advice on impacts and risks. Further advice will be issued on this subject in due course.”

Please also bear in mind that certain requirements – risk assessments and social distancing, for example, go beyond guidance and are fortified by legislation.

These are the key elements of the guidance as it presently stands;

RISK ASSESSMENTS

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 requires you to secure the health, safety and welfare of workers, as well as members of the public and other persons who may be on the premises.

Risk assessments are a legal requirement. If you have fewer than five employees, the assessment need not be set down on writing, but we recommend that you do so. A Licensing Board may ask to see an assessment before considering an occasional licence application for an outside area. It’s also possible that licensing standards and environmental health officers will want to see your assessment.

A basic risk assessment will address the following issues:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be harmed and how?
- What are you already doing to control the risks?
- What further action do you need to control the risks?
- Who needs to carry out the action?
- When is the action needed by?

Where action is required, the assessment should record the date on which it was carried out, together with:

1. The date the assessment was prepared.
2. The person who carried out the assessment.
3. A forward review date.

Public toilet provision should be addressed (although we currently await further advice). The guidance also advises that, “Risk assessments must also be completed for safe goods processes for food, alcohol, laundry etc.”

Do not copy an assessment that has been produced for another business. It must be specific to your own operation and it also needs to be kept open to re-evaluation.

You should involve your staff in the process as well as contractors, security staff, cleaners and any other persons using the premises who are exposed to risk. When the assessment has been formulated, make sure it’s communicated to them.

The Health and Safety Executive has produced a guide to safe working during the pandemic, available at: <https://bit.ly/2B4dnf0>

SOCIAL DISTANCING

As a matter of law – not simply best practice – Regulations provide that a business owner must take all reasonable measures to ensure that:

- a distance of at least two-metres is maintained between any persons on the premises (except between two members of the same household, or a carer and the person assisted by the carer);
- they only admit people on the premises in sufficiently small numbers to make it possible to maintain that distance; and
- a distance of at least two metres is maintained between any person waiting to enter the premises (with an exception for members of the same household and carers/assistance persons as above)

Properly spaced markings should be set up both inside and outside premises.

These steps are presently required where businesses have been allowed to remain open. *A decision is presently awaited on the possible reduction of the two-metre minimum distance.*

Business should bear in mind that those with sight loss or impairment, autism, learning disabilities, dementia or other communication or mobility needs may find physical distancing rules more difficult to follow than others.

PRE-OPENING CHECKS

According to the guidance:

“Safety checks should be conducted on gas and electrical installations, water cooler and ventilation checks, particularly regarding Legionella risks and pest control checks should be conducted to avoid infestation problems.”

The risk of water supplies being infected with Legionella – a potentially fatal form of pneumonia – is greater after a period of closure since the bacteria will have time to multiply within the unused system. One local authority suggests that where water systems have been offline for a prolonged period, advice should be taken from a competent heating/ventilation engineer. Complex systems may require a cleaning and disinfection process before being brought back into use.

HYGIENE MEASURES

The guidance gives the following basic examples:

“One-way systems, 2 metre zones, staff room, PPE provision (if required or advised), hand sanitisers etc.”

Currently, face coverings are only mandatory on public transport but separate Scottish Government guidance recommends that “you wear a face covering in other enclosed environments, such as shops, as a precautionary measure to stop the spread of the virus.” Where a risk-based approach indicates the use of PPE (personal protective equipment) “an adequate supply of the correct materials and items must be maintained and provided free of charge to workers who need it.” Coverings must fit properly.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of the measures businesses may wish to put in place, based on advice from various sources:

- Staff should wash their hands thoroughly on arrival at work and again at the start of a shift.
- As well as rigorous kitchen and food preparation hygiene, disinfect frequently touched areas such as tables, chairs, counters, tills, card terminals, door handles, light switches, telephones and computer keyboards/mice.
- Use disposable menus.

- Cutlery and condiments should be brought to customers with their orders and not left on tables.
- Do not provide buffet food.
- Assess the flow of staff and customers and introduce one-way systems where possible.
- Provide hand sanitisers for customers entering the premises.
- Carry out enhanced staff hygiene training.
- Stagger staff arrival and departure times.
- Where dining facilities are offered, operate a booking system with guests arriving and departing at intervals designed to reduce crowding.
- Encourage customers to use contactless payment methods where possible.
- If you provide paper hand-drying towels in toilets, ensure that supplies are not allowed to run out and make sure that paper bins are regularly emptied.
- Provide signage in public and staff areas to communicate hygiene and social-distancing messages.

Other measures are set out in the appended checklist.

CORONAVIRUS ON THE PREMISES

The commonly-reported symptoms of Coronavirus are:

- a temperature or fever;
- a new continuous cough;
- a loss of, or change in the sense of, smell or taste.

Where a member of staff or a customer has tested positive or is symptomatic, follow the advice given by NHS Inform at <https://bit.ly/3esNxzM>

The guidance says:

“There may be a number of issues that need to be considered, such as whether the member of staff or customer needs to use public transport to return home and whether there has been close contact with other staff who then may have concerns. You should seek medical advice on these matters. There is also the issue of ensuring all potential affected areas are contained and subjected to the appropriate level of deep cleaning to eliminate any risk of transmission.”

Consider the potentially catastrophic business implications if your entire workforce is required to self-isolate for 14 days.

A USEFUL SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT CHECKLIST FOLLOWS AT THE END OF THIS GUIDE.

* 3 July: Self-catering accommodation (without shared facilities).

6 July: Outdoor hospitality, subject to physical distancing rules and public health advice.

15 July: (1) All holiday accommodation, following relevant guidance; (2) Indoor hospitality, subject to physical distancing rules and public health advice.

Please note:

This guide is not intended as a definitive statement of your legal obligations and you must, where in any doubt, seek appropriate professional advice. It represents our views on the information available to us on the date stated below. Guidance and legislation are subject to change. No responsibility is accepted for any person acting, or refraining from acting, on the basis of this document's contents.

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SECTOR GUIDANCE FOR TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY - CHECKLIST

OPERATIONAL GUIDE FOR TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY BUSINESSES (COVID-19)			
ACTION FOR TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY BUSINESSES	SMALL/MICRO NO PREMISES OR MOBILE ASSET, OR FIXED UNIT PREMISES - LESS THAN 250 M ² (I. E. GIFT SHOP/SMALL BAR/SMALL RESTAURANT/TOUR OPERATORS/BOATS/ EXPERIENCE-ADVENTURE TOURISM/ACCOMMODATION PROVIDERS)	MEDIUM OUTDOOR ATTRACTIONS/INDOOR FACILITIES OR MIXED PREMISES OF 250 TO 2500 M ² (I. E. BAR/ RESTAURANT/VISITOR ATTRACTION/EXPERIENCE /ADVENTURE TOURISM/ ACCOMMODATION PROVIDERS)	LARGE OUTDOOR ATTRACTIONS/OUTDOOR FACILITIES OR MIXED PREMISES OF GREATER THAN 2500 M ² (I. E. HOTELS/ VISITOR ATTRACTION/EXPERIENCE/ ADVENTURE TOURISM)
Must complete and implement full risk assessment in consultation with employees where there are staff (to be written down where 5 or more employees).			
PHYSICAL DISTANCING: SIGNAGE AND MARKINGS			
Use tape or paint to mark 2m distances on floors to help people comply with physical distancing regulations, bearing in mind that some people may find these measures more difficult to adhere to than others e.g. those with sight loss, autism, learning disabilities, dementia, or other communication or mobility needs.			
Signage should be used to communicate key health and safety points, such as hygiene, physical distancing and that there is no unintended impacts on people with disabilities or caring responsibilities. Messages should be clear and easy to understand.			
Consider using physical distance 2m floor markings for other common areas such as reception desks, waiting areas, toilets, kitchens, showers, lockers, changing rooms and smoking shelters - and in any other areas where queues may typically form.			
PHYSICAL DISTANCING: CAPACITY			
Limit the number of customers at one time so this can maintain physical distancing for the setting.			


























SECTOR GUIDANCE FOR TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY - CHECKLIST

Decide upon the number of customers that can reasonably follow 2m physical distancing within the premises. Take into account likely pinch-points and busy areas and then implement relevant measures, such as spacing of tables and chairs, and sufficient safe passing places.			
Lifts should only be used by disabled people, for essential purposes, or on a one person per lift basis where possible.			
PHYSICAL DISTANCING: STAFF AND CUSTOMER			
If your premises has more than one access point, introduce a one-way system at entry and exit points if possible.			
Stagger arrival and departure times of staff to reduce crowding into and out of the workplace, if this is an issue.			
Where possible, take measures to reduce the potential crowding of people, for example by having more entry points for employees/customers into the workplace or change opening hours.			
Review layouts to let employees/customers to work/stand further apart from each other where possible.			
Consider staggered arrival times or appointment slots for customers with a queuing system in place to ensure a safe distance of 2m.			
Identify high risk areas such as pinch-points like bar areas, entrances or stairs where close physical contact is likely and/or obstructions force close physical contact. Take measures to reduce risk, including order points or collection zones.			
Consider appropriate measures to ensure noncounter based services are conducted safely within physical distance guidance, such as room service, bar and table service.			






























SECTOR GUIDANCE FOR TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY - CHECKLIST

If your business involves non-assisted activities, such as boat or equipment hire, consider appropriate measures to ensure customers are able to use the service safely and in accordance with physical distancing and hygiene rules			
PHYSICAL DISTANCING: QUEUE MANAGEMENT			
Check for new traffic and street management plans from local authorities, and consider adjustments that might be required to your own queue management system. Businesses will need to think outside the normal trading environment to implement innovative measures such as numbering systems, and changed opening hours to manage queues. Businesses must take all reasonable measures to ensure that there is physical distancing within queuing systems.			
Communicate with nearby businesses to manage shared queueing areas where outside space is limited or not available. If assistance in this matter is required contact your local authority for advice.			
Use outside premises for queuing where available, such as car parks, and consider implications for traffic management where necessary.			
PHYSICAL DISTANCING: ADAPTING SERVICES			
Plan layouts accordingly within the physical distancing requirements.			
Face to face/physical contact services which currently cannot maintain 2m physical distancing cannot be offered while restrictions remain in place. Where physical proximity or contact is necessary and cannot be avoided appropriate measures should be considered as part of the risk assessment i. e. use of screens. This does not prohibit goods being sold but relates to the nature of the customer interaction.			

SECTOR GUIDANCE FOR TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY - CHECKLIST

If variations to operating plans are necessary consider whether changes to licenses are required i. e. occasional or major changes – and contact your local licensing board.			
HYGIENE			
Customers should be encouraged to use contactless or cashless payment where possible.			
Consider other ways to reduce communal hand contact surfaces.			
Use signage, tannoy announcements and any other relevant communication tools to remind customers to maintain hygiene standards. i. e. hand washing and coughing etiquette.			
Encourage customers to observe high standards of hand hygiene by providing hand sanitiser at entry and exit points and in any common areas.			
Self-service/buffet type services for food and drink carry a high risk where serving equipment would be handled and used by multiple people. It is not possible to offer such services at this time. Consider options for prepacked goods for overcounter sale.			
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CLEANING			
Work areas, staff rooms, canteens and equipment should be cleaned frequently between uses. A cleaning schedule should be designed and staff trained to implement the schedule.			
Frequent touch points should be identified and disinfected regularly including all objects and surfaces that are touched regularly such as door handles or staff handheld devices. Adequate disposal arrangements should be made available for any additional waste created.			

SECTOR GUIDANCE FOR TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY - CHECKLIST

Workspaces should be kept clear and all waste should be removed. All personal belongings must be removed from work areas at the end of a shift, i. e. water bottles, mugs, stationery etc.			
Set clear use and cleaning guidance for toilets to ensure they are kept clean.			
Consider whether you can provide additional waste facilities and more frequent rubbish collection.			
OTHER METHODS OF REDUCING TRANSMISSION			
Use screens to create a physical barrier between people, for example at till points/reception and service desks.			
Provide a nearby supply of hand sanitiser for employees to use when boarding vehicles or handling deliveries when handwashing is not practical and ensure staff have access to and are able to regularly wash their hands. Provide hand sanitiser if hand washing is not practical.			
Increase ventilation where possible and where it is safe to do so, i. e. do not keep fire safety doors open.			
COMMUNICATION - CUSTOMER AND STAFF SUPPORT			
Make your risk assessment available to staff and customers and keep under regular review (for businesses with 5 or more staff)			
Provide written or verbal communication of the latest guidelines to both staff and customers inside and outside the premises.			
You should take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled people are informed about new procedures, and are able to access facilities, i. e. handwashing facilities at wheelchair height, verbal direction for those unable to see floor markings or signage etc.			
Provide active travel facilities, to encourage staff and customers to walk or cycle to premises, such as bike-racks where possible. Building arrangements will determine whether this is appropriate.			

SECTOR GUIDANCE FOR TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY - CHECKLIST

STAFF SAFETY: ADDITIONAL MEASURES			
Use remote working tools to avoid in-person meetings.			
Stagger break times and make use of outdoor space for breaks where possible.			
Be clear on what actions you must take if you encounter an incidence, or suspected incidence, of COVID-19 in your premises, whether in staff or customers.			
Use a consistent pairing or grouping system where employees work on shifts together.			
Consider contingency and risk plans for future events i. e. if circumstances require the re-imposition of lockdown measures or customer behaviour results in breakdown of physical distancing requirements.			