

# Bolton Council

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## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION – PLEASE READ**

**Dear business owner / licensee**

We are writing to licensed hospitality businesses in Bolton, to help you understand what is expected of you, as we move into the next phase of easing the restrictions and to help you achieve compliance.

Thank you for your hard work to date in complying with the requirements and efforts in making your premises Covid secure. We are pleased to have seen that there has generally been good compliance across the town since outdoor hospitality has reopened. We understand the severe impact the restrictions have had on the hospitality sector and it is our sincere hope that we are now approaching the end of the Covid restrictions.

### **Planned key dates for the re-opening of the hospitality sector:**

*Dates to be confirmed by Government no later than one week before each planned stage*

**17 May 2021 - Indoor hospitality** will be allowed to open. Most rules on social contact outdoors will be lifted, but the 'rule of 6' and maximum mixing of two households will apply indoors.

**21 June 2021** - Government is hoping to lift all social restrictions. This includes restrictions on nightclubs - a sector that is not included within the above easing of restrictions.

### **1. SERVICE OF FOOD AND DRINK ON PREMISES**

From 17 May 2021, hospitality venues will be able to open for indoor and outdoor service (with no requirement for a substantial meal). Where alcohol is served on premises:

- **Food or drink must be ordered and served whilst customers are seated.** This means **customers cannot order at a bar or counter.** Businesses must take steps to ensure that customers remain seated whilst consuming their food or drink.

### **2. NUMBER OF PERSONS PERMITTED**

Groups in indoor setting (including substantially enclosed structures outside - see point 3 below):

- Customers will be able to meet in groups up to 6 people (the Rule of 6) or as two households.

Groups in outdoor setting:

- Customers will be able to meet in groups up to 30 people.

- Calculate your customer capacity limits for indoor and outdoor settings in line with Covid / health and safety / fire safety risk assessments and ensure that these numbers are not breached. People from different households should be socially distanced (2 metre or 1 metre with mitigation).

### **3. OUTDOOR STRUCTURES AND COVERED AREAS**

A structure or covered area (e.g. green house, shed, pod or similar structure) is considered indoors if it is substantially enclosed (as per smoke free legislation). At least 50% of the total wall area needs to be open, to allow it to be used as an outdoor space; this is known as the 50% rule. Open sides must not be close to walls, fences or other obstructions that will impede ventilation. Any structures / covered areas must comply with health & safety and fire risk assessments.

From 17 May 2021, substantially enclosed structures can be used as an indoor setting to accommodate up to 6 people, or two households, as per point 2 above.

### **4. TEST AND TRACE INFORMATION**

If customers are eating and drinking on your premises, you are legally obliged to:

- display and make available the NHS QR Code for customers with a smartphone to scan upon entry. You can use this link to obtain one for your business – [www.gov.uk/create-coronavirus-qr-poster](https://www.gov.uk/create-coronavirus-qr-poster)
- record contact details for all customers, staff, and visitors over the age of 16. Details must be stored for 21 days and shared with NHS Test & Trace and the local authority if requested.
- you must ensure that customers use the QR code, or you can use your own test and trace system, in addition to displaying the NHS QR code.
- you must refuse entry to customers who refuse to provide these details, or where you have reason to believe the details provided are inaccurate.

### **5. FACE COVERINGS**

You are legally obliged to display a notice, reminding customers to wear a face covering before entering indoor premises, unless they are exempt from doing so.

Customers must wear face coverings in hospitality venues when indoors (unless exempt). Customers are permitted to remove their face covering when seated to eat or drink but are required to put their face covering back on once they have finished eating or drinking and when accessing toilets for example. Customers using outdoor settings will be required to wear a face covering if accessing indoor facilities including toilets. It is also compulsory for staff in hospitality venues to wear face coverings, in indoor areas that are open to the public. Where possible we ask you remind your customers when travelling in 'taxis' face covers must be worn.

### **6. RISK ASSESSMENT**

Implement Covid safe practises; update your risk assessment, in relation to the information set out above, including signage, capacity and customer management, table spacing for social distancing purposes, hand sanitiser stations, ensuring a comprehensive cleaning regime is in place in customer and staff areas. Ensure staff receive refresher training and understand the procedures that are in place, before reopening.

- You can find further information on risk assessments here: [www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/assets/docs/risk-assessment](https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/assets/docs/risk-assessment)
- [Guidance has been produced on ventilation within indoor settings. Do not prop fire doors open.](#)  
[COVID-19: ventilation of indoor spaces to stop the spread of coronavirus](#)

- With the reopening of indoor hospitality and suspected higher footfall, re-assess the suitability of your cleaning policy. The link below gives detailed guidance on appropriate cleaning of customer toilets:  
[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): opening public and customer toilets](#)
- The Food Standards Agency have provided a checklist to reopen safely during Covid-19 after a period of closure:  
[www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/reopening-checklist-for-food-businesses-during-covid-19](http://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/reopening-checklist-for-food-businesses-during-covid-19)
- If your business has been closed, consider the water system management and the risk of Legionella; the total or partial closure of businesses raises the need for effective controls to maintain the safety of water systems. The link below will assist you in managing risks from legionella:  
[www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/legionella-risks-during-coronavirus-outbreak](http://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/legionella-risks-during-coronavirus-outbreak)

### **Staff Covid testing**

To help your business stay open, we strongly advise that you encourage your employees to take rapid lateral flow coronavirus tests twice a week. These tests will pick up any positive cases and any employee that tests positive can self-isolate straightaway, and not pass the virus on to the rest of your workforce or your customers, risking closure. You can encourage your employees to visit a rapid test centre twice a week. Further information can be found on our website:

<https://www.bolton.gov.uk/testing>

Alternatively, you can order free home test kits: [Order coronavirus \(COVID-19\) rapid lateral flow tests - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

### **Greater Manchester Regulatory Centre of Excellence (GMRCE)**

GMRCE is a partnership between the ten Greater Manchester Local Authorities and Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service to provide a single point of access for advice covering all types of regulatory compliance including food safety, health & safety, trading standards and fire safety. GMRCE has uploaded useful information to support businesses to the GM Business Growth Hub website and YouTube:

Business Growth Hub - [www.businessgrowthhub.com/better-business-for-all](http://www.businessgrowthhub.com/better-business-for-all)

YouTube (advice to support reopening) -

[www.youtube.com/channel/UCMDks3wVVxRiSaqsmuiQUeA](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMDks3wVVxRiSaqsmuiQUeA)

### **Business support**

Bolton Council is keen to engage with you to ensure that you are aware of the full range of business support that may be available to you. You can find further information here:

[www.businessbolton.org](http://www.businessbolton.org)

You may want to consider opportunities to place tables and chairs outside your business or increase existing provision, under a temporary pavement licence. You can find further details via the link below:

<https://www.bolton.gov.uk/street-licenses/street-cafe-licence>

### **Business compliance activity**

Bolton Regulatory Services and Greater Manchester Police will be undertaking regular visits to premises, to support the sector and ensure that activity is being delivered safely and in compliance

with the Regulations. Whilst in most instances we will seek to offer advice and support, any significant or persistent non-compliance will receive appropriate formal action where necessary.

Please re-familiarise yourself with the conditions of your premises licence. With increased provision of outdoor hospitality and increased ventilation to indoor settings, please be mindful of the impacts of noise and be considerate of neighbours, mitigating impacts.

Due to Bolton's current rates we are asking all business and residents to remain extra cautious as we move forward.

We hope you find the information in this letter useful. We aim to support and enable you to prepare for reopening and providing a hospitality offer that ensures the safety of your staff and customers.

Thank you for your efforts and compliance. If you have a query, please contact us by email at [licensing.unit@bolton.gov.uk](mailto:licensing.unit@bolton.gov.uk).

Best wishes as we move forward.

Yours faithfully

Patricia Clyne  
Principal Licensing Officer

**Further information:**

Government guidance - Reopening businesses and venues:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/reopening-businesses-and-venues-in-england/reopening-businesses-and-venues](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reopening-businesses-and-venues-in-england/reopening-businesses-and-venues)

Legislation: [The Health Protection \(Coronavirus, Restrictions\) \(Steps\) \(England\) Regulations 2021](#)