

## Coronavirus (COVID-19) Businesses and Employers Bulletin – 8 April 2021

This bulletin is issued by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and provides the latest information for employers and businesses on coronavirus (COVID-19). All coronavirus business support information can be found at [gov.uk/business-support](https://www.gov.uk/business-support)

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- [Easing of covid restrictions in England: How the rules will change on 12 April](#)
- [Financial Support](#)
- [Open Consultation- Commercial rents and COVID-19: call for evidence](#)
- [New and Updated Guidance](#)
- [Workplace Guidance](#)
- [Travel](#)

### Easing of covid restrictions in England: How the rules will change on 12 April

From Monday 12th April England will move to Step Two of the roadmap.

From 12 April:

- non-essential retail will be able to reopen
- personal care premises such as hairdressers and nail salons will be able to reopen
- public buildings such as libraries and community centres will be able to reopen
- outdoor hospitality venues will be able to reopen, with table service only
- most outdoor attractions including zoos, theme parks, and drive-in performances (such as cinemas and concerts) will be able to reopen
- some smaller outdoor events such as fetes, literary fairs, and fairgrounds will be able to take place
- indoor leisure and sports facilities will be able to reopen for individual exercise, or exercise with your household or support bubble
- all childcare and supervised activities will be allowed indoors (as well as outdoors) for all children. Parent and child groups can take place indoors (as well as outdoors) for up to 15 people (children under 5 will not be counted in this number)
- weddings, civil partnership ceremonies, wakes and other commemorative events will be able to take place for up to 15 people (anyone working is not included in this limit), including in indoor venues that are permitted to open or where an exemption applies. Wedding receptions can also take place for up to 15 people, but must take place outdoors, not including private gardens
- self-contained accommodation will be able to open for overnight stays in England with your household or support bubble
- you should continue to minimise the amount that you travel where possible
- care home residents will be able to nominate two named individuals for regular indoor visits (following a rapid lateral flow test)

Some of the [rules on what you can and cannot do](#) will change on 12 April. You can read the '[COVID-19 Response - Spring 2021](#)' (the roadmap out of lockdown) for more information on how COVID-19 restrictions will be eased in England.

**From the week commencing 12th April this bulletin will become the BEIS Bulletin, covering the whole breadth of BEIS policy and communications activity including coronavirus business information. If you would like to opt out of the new look bulletin you can [unsubscribe](#) at any time.**

## Financial Support

### Recovery Loan Scheme Launches

A new government-backed loan scheme was launched on Tuesday 6 April by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to provide additional finance to those businesses that need it.

- Loans will include 80% government guarantee and interest rate cap.
- The [Recovery Loan Scheme](#) will ensure businesses continue to benefit from Government-guaranteed finance throughout 2021-opened until 31 December 2021.
- The Recovery Loan Scheme can be used as an additional loan on top of support received from the emergency schemes – such as the Bounce Back Loan Scheme and Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme – put into place last year.
- From 6 April, businesses – ranging from coffee shops, and restaurants, to hairdressers and gyms – can access loans varying in size from £25,000, up to a maximum of £10 million. Invoice and asset finance is available from £1,000.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer's statement is [here](#). For more information on what other financial support you can get for your business, click [here](#).

### Open Consultation- Commercial rents and COVID-19: call for evidence

This call for evidence supports the government's decision to review measures on commercial lease evictions established by section 82 of the Coronavirus Act 2020. This consultation closes at 11:45pm on 4 May 2021. For more on the call of evidence, and the consultation link, click [here](#).

### New and Updated Guidance

**[Twice weekly rapid testing](#) to be available to everyone in England:** From 9 April, everyone in England will be able to access free, regular, rapid COVID-19 testing.

### Updated Information for farmers, landowners, and rural businesses

[Guidance](#) updated with information about deadlines for CS applications, Basic Payment scheme (BPS) applications, and CS and ES revenue claims.

- The deadline for submitting applications, without penalty, for BPS 2021 is **midnight on 17 May 2021**.
- The deadline for supporting documents is **midnight on 11 June 2021**. No late penalties will be applied to supporting documents that are received between 17 May and 11 June.
- You should apply online using the [Rural Payments service](#) as this is the quickest and safest method to use. However, you will need to [post](#) any supporting documents to Rural Payments Agency, such as the Young and new farmer form or BP5 continuation form.

### Advice for seasonal agricultural workers coming to England to pick fruit and vegetables on farms, and their employers

[Guidance](#) updated with new requirements on testing. From 6 April, you must take tests on days 2, 5 and 8 after your arrival in England even if tests on days 2 and 5 from a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test or rapid lateral flow test return negative results.

## Guidance for Companies House customers

[Guidance](#) updated with information that the automatic extensions granted by the Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act have come to an end. Some companies can still [apply for a 3-month extension](#) but Companies that have already had their accounts deadline extended may not be eligible, as the law only allows a maximum filing period of 12 months. [Check your filing deadlines on Companies House service \(CHS\)](#)

## Driver and rider trainer Guidance

- [Updated guidance](#) confirms the restart of **driving lessons** in England and Wales from 12 April 2021, and the restart of **driving tests** in England and Wales from 22 April 2021.
- **Rules for using driving test centre waiting rooms:** [Guidance updated](#) with information on the list of driving test centre waiting rooms with details of 28 waiting rooms that will reopen on 22 April 2021 and temporary rules for using waiting rooms which are open.
- **DVSA Chief Executive letter to driving instructors about lessons and tests:** The [letter](#) was sent to all approved ADIs on 7 April, if you are an ADI and did not get this letter by email, you are advised to check your junk or spam.

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## Workplace Guidance

- [Guidance on NHS Test and Trace in the workplace updated](#) with rules for businesses reopening, and for entering a venue. You must ask every customer or visitor to scan the NHS QR code using their NHS COVID-19 app, or provide their name and contact details, not just a lead member of the group.
- **Working safely in care homes:** [Guidance updated](#) to introduce recommendations to change PPE after each episode of personal care, and new recommendations around use of eye protection when delivering personal care within 2 metres.

## Travel

**Test for an HGV or van driver: New COVID-19 testing rules for hauliers in England come into force.**

From 6 April, Hauliers arriving in England from abroad:

- You must take a COVID-19 test if they are staying for more than 2 days.
- You will need to take a further test every 3 days after that if you are still in England.
- This applies to drivers and crews of HGVs and drivers of vans and other light goods vehicles. It applies to both UK-based and non-UK hauliers.
- You do not need to take a test if you will be in England for 2 days or less.
- You do not need to take a test if you arrive in England from the Common Travel Area (CTA). The CTA is the UK, Ireland, the Channel Islands, or the Isle of Man.

For more information, click [here](#).

**Red list travel ban countries:** [Guidance](#) has been updated to reflect that from 4am Friday 9 April, Bangladesh, Kenya, Pakistan, and Philippines will be added to the list.

If you arrive in the UK from these places before 4am Friday 9 April, you must [self-isolate for 10 days in the place you're staying](#) and [take a COVID-19 test on day 2 and day 8](#). You are eligible for the [Test to Release scheme](#).

If you arrive in the UK from these places after 4am Friday 9 April, you must [stay in your quarantine hotel](#) for your 10-day quarantine period and [take a COVID-19 test on day 2 and day 8](#).

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## Other useful links

Some aspects of business support are devolved. Specific information for businesses and employers in [Northern Ireland](#), [Scotland](#) and [Wales](#) is available. In England, [Growth Hubs](#) can advise on local and UK Government business support. You can also find helpful business case studies and other useful information on the [Coronavirus Business Support Blog](#).

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