

Appendix B

Step 4 – from 19 July

This guidance reflects the measures you should follow at [Step 4 of the roadmap](#).

Summary of changes from 19 July

From 19 July, the rules for wedding and civil partnership ceremonies; and wedding receptions and civil partnership celebrations changed. At Step 4:

1. There are no legal restrictions on the number of people that can attend a wedding, civil partnership, reception or celebration.
2. Legal requirements for social distancing no longer apply and you do not need to stay 2 metres apart from people you do not live with.
3. Face coverings are no longer required by law in any setting. However, the government expects and recommends that people wear face coverings in crowded areas such as public transport.
4. COVID-secure rules, including table service requirements and restrictions on singing and dancing, no longer apply. However, there are steps everyone should continue to consider to reduce the risk of transmission, which are explained in this guidance. All businesses should follow the principles set out in the [working safely guidance](#).
5. If someone has been instructed by [NHS Test and Trace](#) to self-isolate because they have tested positive for COVID-19, or they're the close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, they must still self-isolate and not attend.

Introduction

This guidance is designed to assist people planning to get married or form a civil partnership in England, and venues that host ceremonies and receptions, to enable them to conduct them in a manner that reduces the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

This guidance applies to all weddings and civil partnership ceremonies and formations taking place in England as well as wedding and civil partnership receptions and celebrations.

Alternative wedding ceremonies that are not binding under the law, whether religious, belief based, blessings, or other forms of non-statutory ceremony, are also covered by this guidance.

Those wishing to conduct a religious ceremony should refer to the [places of worship guidance](#).

Keeping yourself and others safe

As COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, it's important that we all use personal judgement to manage our own risk. All of us can play our part by exercising common sense and considering the risks. There are steps everyone can take to reduce the risk of transmission:

1. Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19, even if they're mild, should not attend. This includes the couple, attendees, anyone working or involved in the ceremony or reception. They should self-isolate immediately and [get a PCR test](#).
2. If someone has been instructed by NHS Test and Trace to self-isolate because they have tested positive for COVID-19, or they're the close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, they must self-isolate and not attend. Please refer to [guidance for households with possible or confirmed COVID-19 infection](#).
3. Social distancing and wearing a face covering are now a personal choice. People are encouraged to respect other attendees and those working at events who may wish to adopt a more cautious approach. The government expects and recommends that people wear face coverings in crowded areas such as public transport. Please refer to the guidance on [how to stay safe and stop the spread of coronavirus](#) for further information and the actions to take to reduce the chance of spreading COVID-19.
4. The NHS COVID-19 app is a vital part of NHS Test and Trace in England and Wales. Using the app helps stop the spread of the virus by informing you that you have been in close contact with someone who has since tested positive for coronavirus, even if you don't know each other.

Social distancing and capacity

From 19 July social distancing restrictions no longer apply. This means that you do not need to implement social distancing (2 metres or 1 metre plus with mitigations) at a wedding, civil partnership ceremony, reception or celebration, and attendees do not need to socially distance.

You may choose to limit the close contact you have with people you do not usually live with. You may also choose to take a free test before being in close contact to help manage periods of risk. These are personal choices which can help reduce your risk of catching or spreading COVID-19.

It's important to consider that others may wish to take a more cautious approach as we open up. We should all be considerate of this, and provide the opportunity and space for others to reduce close contacts if they wish.

Please refer to the guidance on [how to stay safe and prevent the spread of COVID-19](#) for further information and the actions to take to reduce the chance of spreading COVID-19.

Let fresh air in

When events take place inside or in other enclosed spaces, consider how the space can be continually well ventilated, before, during and after the event.

Letting fresh air into indoor spaces is important because when a person infected with COVID-19 coughs, talks or breathes, they release droplets and aerosols which can be inhaled by other people. The more fresh air there is to breathe, the less likely other people are to inhale infectious particles. [Read the guidance on ventilation of indoor spaces to stop the spread of COVID-19.](#)

Testing

Around 1 in 3 people with COVID-19 do not have any symptoms. This means they could be spreading the virus without knowing it. Testing twice a week increases the chances of detecting COVID-19 when a person is infectious - helping to make sure you don't spread COVID-19.

Rapid lateral flow testing is available for free to anybody, but is particularly focused on those who are not fully vaccinated, those in education, and those in higher-risk settings such as the NHS, social care and prisons. People may also wish to use regular rapid testing to help manage periods of risk such as returning to the workplace, close contact in a higher risk environment or when spending prolonged time with a more vulnerable individual. You can get tests from pharmacies or online. [Find out more about how to get rapid lateral flow tests.](#)

The NHS COVID Pass allows you to check your COVID status and demonstrate that you're at lower risk of transmitting to others, through full vaccination, a recent negative test, or proof of natural immunity. The government will publish more guidance on using the NHS COVID Pass shortly.

If you develop COVID-19 symptoms, self-isolate immediately and [get a PCR test](#).

Protecting the vulnerable

Clinically extremely vulnerable people are advised to follow the same guidance as everyone else.

However, as someone who is at a higher risk of becoming seriously ill if you were to catch COVID-19, you should think particularly carefully about precautions you can continue to take. These precautions are included in the [guidance for the clinically extremely vulnerable](#).

Handling objects and communal resources

Surfaces can become contaminated with viruses like COVID-19. Once contaminated, touching them can transfer viruses to people's eyes, nose or mouth. From there, viruses can enter someone's body and

infect them. This means that, touching or kissing objects that are handled communally including consumables, carries a risk of catching or spreading a virus.

The use of shared communal objects, including consumables, is now a personal choice. However, you're advised to follow the [advice on personal hygiene](#).

Singing, music, and performances

There are no limits on the number of people who can sing or perform indoors or outdoors. However, some activities can also increase the risk of catching or passing on COVID-19. This happens where people are doing activities which generate more particles as they breathe heavily, such as singing, dancing, exercising or raising their voices.

The risk is greatest where these activities take place when people are in close contact with others, for example in crowded indoor spaces where people are raising their voices.

In situations where there is a higher risk of catching or passing on COVID-19, you should be particularly careful to follow the [guidance on keeping yourself and others safe](#) as we return to normality.

Businesses and venues

All businesses should follow the principles set out in the [working safely guidance](#).

Employers still have a legal duty to manage risks to those affected by their business. The way to do this is to carry out a health and safety risk assessment, including the risk of COVID-19, and to take reasonable steps to mitigate the risks you identify. Working Safely guidance sets out a range of mitigations employers should consider including:

- cleaning surfaces that people touch regularly
- identifying poorly-ventilated areas in the venue and taking steps to improve air flow

- ensuring that staff and customers who are unwell do not attend the workplace or venue
- communicating to staff and customers the measures you have put in place

Food and drink

Where food and drinks are consumed, staff and attendees should follow the [guidance for restaurants, pubs, bars, nightclubs and takeaway services](#).

There is no requirement for guests to be placed on socially distanced tables though they should consider the risks of not maintaining social distancing, as set out in the [guidance on how to stay safe and prevent the spread](#).

Using the NHS COVID-19 app

Using the NHS COVID-19 app helps stop the spread of the virus by informing you that you have been in close contact with someone who has since tested positive for coronavirus, even if you don't know each other. The app is free and easy to use.

The app also allows people to report symptoms, order a coronavirus test and check in to venues using a QR code. To help protect yourself and others, [download and use the latest version of the NHS COVID-19 app](#).

Collection of contact details

You're no longer required by law to collect customer contact details, or keep a record of your staff and visitors.

However, you're encouraged to continue to display an [NHS QR code](#) for customers wishing to check in using the app, as this will help to reduce the spread of the virus and protect your customers, visitors and staff. You do not have to ask customers to check in, or turn them away if they refuse.

If you display an NHS QR code, you should also have a system to collect (and securely store) names and contact details for those who ask to check-in but do not have access to a smartphone or prefer not to use the app.

[See the guidance on maintaining records of staff, customers and visitors to support NHS Test and Trace.](#)

Travel

People are permitted to travel to attend a marriage or civil partnership ceremony or reception in England. They're also able to leave England and travel to other parts of the UK (or abroad), to attend a marriage or civil partnership ceremony. If someone travels outside England to attend a wedding or civil partnership, they must follow the rules on weddings in place at the destination as well as any relevant restrictions on international travel.

For further information, refer to guidance from the relevant national governments, and [guidance on international travel](#).

Other guidance

This guidance has been published alongside other specific guidance provided by the government (all of which is subject to review and update), which should be used together to ensure public safety. These include:

- [guidance for the safe use of places of worship](#)
- [guidance for restaurants, pubs, bars, nightclubs and takeaway services](#)
- [guidance for hotels and guest accommodation](#)
- [guidance for events and attractions](#)
- [guidance on face coverings](#)
- [guidance on maintaining records to support NHS Test and Trace](#)
- [guidance on protecting vulnerable people](#)

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