



**Healthier
Scotland**
Scottish
Government

Balancing the risks of daily activities during coronavirus



**Advice for people
at highest risk**

December 2020

Making decisions about daily activities

This booklet is for people who are at highest risk of serious illness from coronavirus and who may previously have been shielding. It offers advice on balancing everyday activities with staying safe.

We know there are many factors that might affect your decisions around things like:

- work
- seeing friends and family
- getting exercise
- doing the leisure activities you enjoy
- getting food and other essentials
- how you get around

This booklet looks at how you can do these things while staying safe. We know shielding was hard, and we're not asking you to do it again in the same way.



Making daily activities safer



It's important to keep doing things you enjoy. There are steps you can take to make these things safer.

Getting outdoors and staying active

Getting out of the house and staying active is good for your mental and physical health. Getting outside for fresh air when it feels safe is important, because sunlight is a source of vitamin D which is vital for bone and muscle health. Find quieter times with fewer people around.

If you have a garden, try to get out and do some gardening. Go for a walk, cycle or run in your local area. If your local leisure centre is still open, you could go for a swim, or to an outdoor exercise class.

Meeting others

Try to meet others outdoors rather than inside, and follow the guidance for how many people you can meet. If it's possible in your local Protection Level, you could also sit outside a café, restaurant or pub.

If you can meet others indoors in your local Protection Level, there are ways to make it safer. If you're meeting inside a café, restaurant or pub, choose times and areas that are quiet and sit away from people you don't live with. Use hand sanitiser or wash your hands before and after eating.



Extended households

If you're the only person in your household who's over 18, or if your partner doesn't live with you, you can form an 'extended household'. This means you can choose one household to treat as if they live with you.

Shopping

When you're shopping in person, choose quieter times. You can also:

- do one big shop to reduce trips
- shop online
- register for priority access for online supermarket delivery slots



Using public transport

If you're in a Protection Level where it's OK to use public transport, avoid travelling at busy times. Book your tickets in advance if you can.

At level 3, only take public transport if it's essential. And at level 4, do not take public transport.



Health conditions

Find information on specific conditions at www.mygov.scot/shielding. Your clinical team can give you more personalised advice about considering your health alongside the things you want to do.



Working if you're in a Level 0, 1, 2 or 3 area

There are steps you can take in these levels to keep working. Work from home if you can. If you cannot, your employer must take all reasonable steps to make your workplace safe for you.

Ask your employer to look at this guidance for advice on assessing and reducing your risk at work: www.gov.scot/covid-workplace-risk

Working if you're in a Level 4 area

Work from home if you can

The Chief Medical Officer will send everyone on the shielding list a letter. If your area enters Level 4, or if your workplace is in a Level 4 area, you can use the letter as evidence for your employer that you cannot work if your workplace cannot be made covid-safe. You can also use the letter to serve as a fit note if you cannot travel safely to a workplace in a Level 4 area.

Getting this letter does not automatically mean you should stay off work, even if you live or work in a Level 4 area. Discuss working from home and making your workplace safe with your employer first, so you can keep working.



Support with workplace safety

At any Protection Level, if you feel unsafe at work and have already spoken to your employer, you can get more advice from:

- Occupational Health Services (if your employer offers them)
- the Health and Safety representative in your workplace
- HR (your employer's Human Resources team, if there is one)
- your trade union or professional body

You can also find advice at www.citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland. Or call the free **Citizens Advice Helpline on 0800 028 1456**, (Monday to Friday, office hours).



Schools in levels 0, 1, 2 and 3

Schools have put in place protections so children at higher risk from coronavirus can still go to school at levels 0, 1 and 2.

At level 3, going to school will still be safe for most children, but you should get advice from a clinician about your child's situation.

School, college and regulated childcare services in Protection Level 4 areas

In Level 4 areas, children and young people on the shielding list should stay off school, college and regulated childcare services such as nurseries. But you can ask your child's clinical team about an individual risk assessment. This may allow the young person to keep attending. If you are the parent or guardian of a child or young person who is on the shielding list in a Level 4 area, you will receive a letter from the CMO which will have advice about what to do if you cannot work because of your caring responsibilities.

Staying in contact with people



Follow your Level's guidance about meeting others. Knowing more about what people are doing can help you decide whether to meet them or not. Think about how many others they're in contact with, if they wear a face mask when needed, and if they regularly wash or sanitise their hands.

If there's someone you rely on for care, shopping or getting medication, make a plan in case they have to self-isolate. The National Assistance Helpline can help you access food and essentials. Call on **0800 111 4000** (Monday-Friday, office hours).

Extra protection level advice for people at highest risk from coronavirus (COVID-19)

This is **advice**, consider which level of protection is right for you.



All levels: we will not ask you to distance from people within your own homes or to stop taking outdoor exercise.

	Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Contact with others	Follow the level advice to the general population	Follow the level advice to the general population	Reduce the number of people or households you have face to face contact with Avoid one metre zones	Limit meeting people outside your own household, avoid indoor public spaces	Minimise contact with people outside your own household if you can You should not take public transport
Shopping	Strictly follow the guidelines when shopping	Strictly follow the guidelines when shopping	Strictly follow the guidelines when shopping	Strictly follow the guidelines when shopping and limit the number of times you go to a shop Shop at quieter times	Strictly follow the guidelines when shopping and limit the number of times you go to a shop Shop at quieter times
If you cannot work from home	Following a workplace risk assessment, your employer should make the necessary adjustments to your workplace to protect you The majority of workplaces can be made safe	Following a workplace risk assessment, your employer should make the necessary adjustments to your workplace to protect you The majority of workplaces can be made safe	Following a workplace risk assessment, your employer should make the necessary adjustments to your workplace to protect you The majority of workplaces can be made safe. Where you have a concern you should discuss this with your employer	Speak to your employer to ensure all appropriate protections are in place The majority of workplaces can be made safe. Where you have a concern you should discuss this with your employer	The majority of workplaces can be made safe. If you have any concerns you should discuss these with your employer However, at this level the Chief Medical Officer will issue a letter which is similar to a fit note and which will last for as long as your area is under Level 4 restrictions. This letter can be used in the few cases where it is not possible to make your workplace safe Please note that this does not automatically mean you should not attend work. You should discuss this further with your employer, and if this results in adequate protection, you can continue to work
School/formal Childcare	Follow the level advice to the general population	Follow the level advice to the general population	Follow the level advice to the general population	Parents or guardians should discuss with their GP or clinician whether children should still attend	Children on the shielding list should not attend in person

Everyone in Scotland should follow the guidance for their area, but there are some extra steps you might want to take at each level. Think about what you'll do differently if your Protection Level changes.

In all Protection Levels, you can be in close contact with people living in your household. You can also take outdoor exercise.

Find your Local Protection level at www.gov.scot/coronaviruslevels or call the **National Assistance Helpline on 0800 111 4000**, (Monday–Friday, office hours).

Taking care of your mental health

If you're feeling anxious, low or isolated there's help available. Phone your clinician first if you're already getting help from them. If you cannot talk to them, call:

- **NHS 24 - phone: 111** (Monday–Sunday, 6pm–2am)
- **Breathing Space - phone: 0800 83 85 87** (Monday–Thursday, 6pm–2am, and Friday 6pm–Monday 6am)
- **Samaritans - phone: 116 123** (24 hours a day, 365 days a year)
- **Scottish Association for Mental Health's Information Service: 0344 800 0550** (Monday–Friday, 9am–6pm. Except Bank Holidays)

If it's an emergency, phone 999.

Getting the healthcare you need

Coronavirus isn't the only health concern you may have. It's important you raise any other health issues with your clinician as early as possible too.

Measures have been put in place to make it safe to:

- keep going to check-ups and appointments
- go to the chemist for your medicines
- get personal care at home if needed



Book a test if you have coronavirus symptoms

If you have symptoms which could be coronavirus, self-isolate and book a test straight away.

You can visit www.nhsinform.scot/coronavirus or call **111** to find out more about coronavirus symptoms or to book a test in a covid-safe environment.

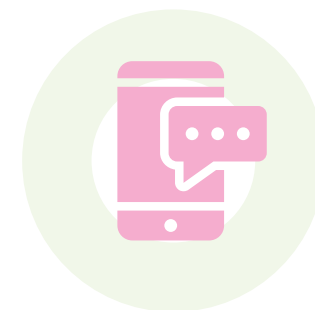
You can also order a home test at www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test If you can't order online, call 0300 303 2713.

National Assistance Helpline

Get support from your local council by calling the **National Assistance Helpline on 0800 111 4000**. (Monday–Friday, office hours).

Support available includes:

- help accessing food and medication
- links to local social work services
- emotional support
- contact with local volunteer groups



Sign up for free text message alerts

We can text important updates to your mobile phone, so you get updates and hear about changes as they happen.

If you'd like to join the Scottish Government's free text messaging service, text your Community Health Index (CHI) number to 07860 064525.

Your CHI number is the 10-digit number at the top of the shielding letters we've sent you. You do not need to text any other information.

Visit mygov.scot for more advice

Visit www.mygov.scot/support-shielding for more advice for people at highest risk if they get coronavirus.

Get the Protect Scotland mobile phone app

The free Protect Scotland mobile phone app can help you stay safe when you meet up, socialise, work or travel. Find out more at: www.protect.scot

Remember FACTS to stay safe

To stay safe, it's important to always remember:

- Face coverings in enclosed spaces
- Avoid crowded places
- Clean your hands and surfaces regularly
- Two metre social distancing
- Self-isolate and book a test if you develop coronavirus symptoms

If you have a health condition that means you are exempt from wearing a face covering, you can request a face covering exemption card. **Visit www.exempt.scot or phone 0800 121 6240** (10am to 3pm, Monday to Friday).

This resource may also be made available on request in the following formats



✉ **PHS.HealthData@phs.scot**

☎ **0800 111 4000**

Use the subject line 'translation request' if you send an email. Include these details about the person who needs the different format:

- name
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