



Scottish Government
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COVID-19: THE ASK OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO SUPPORT SUSTAINED, COLLECTIVE ACTION TO REDUCE TRANSMISSION

Current situation

- In every part of Scotland, local leadership and delivery has changed the course of the pandemic over the last 18 months, saving lives, supporting the NHS and helping vulnerable people and communities.
- The current position is very serious and every effort needs to be taken to mitigate the risk of having to re-impose or introduce protective measures. We need to sustain efforts to reduce transmission over the coming period, ahead of further challenges, as we head towards winter.
- All sectors in Scotland are being asked to do all they can to promote safe behaviours and adherence to baseline measures, guidance and regulations. Local Authorities have a key role to support these efforts and it is important that we continue to provide visible leadership, in line with the paper agreed at the COSLA Leaders Group meeting on 27 August.
- Local Authorities have a central and dual role to play: role modelling the baseline measures and good practice as major employers; and engaging and influencing local communities and stakeholders to adhere to the remaining public health measures.

Role Modelling baseline measures

- As part of the collective effort to promote safe behaviours and adherence to baseline measures, Authorities are encouraged to lead by example through:
 - Continuing to support those for whom we are responsible, to follow the rules and guidance in place, in particular:
 - to get fully vaccinated when eligible
 - to self-isolate when required to do so
 - to test regularly and to book a PCR test when symptomatic;
 - Encouraging home working (and virtual meetings) wherever possible, and where there is a critical business need for office working, proactively maintain measures such as physical distancing, wearing of face coverings, signage, one-way systems etc.
 - Maintain these same protective measures in public sector buildings, spaces and service environments, with proactive communications to ensure adherence to requirements on face coverings.

- Supporting and guiding work with partners providing commissioned services to ensure strong adherence.

Supporting local stakeholders

- Local Authorities play a vital trusted role in supporting local communities, organisations and businesses to understand Covid rules and guidance. Authorities are encouraged to maximise engagement with local stakeholders to promote the need for collective effort to suppress the virus by maximising adherence to the baseline measures by:
 - Maintaining visible engagement with local communities and businesses – whether directly or via local champions, ambassadors, EHOs etc. – that makes clear the continued need for adherence with baseline measures.
 - Leverage public, community, business and stakeholder networks to share a clear message that we are in a very serious position and we need continued adherence with baseline measures to continue moving out of the pandemic, and avoid re-imposing or re-introducing protective measures.
 - Where possible, prioritise EHO activity to focus on promoting and supporting adherence to the baseline measures.
- The key messages we need local communities, organisations and businesses to understand and promote are:
 - **Get fully vaccinated** when eligible to do so;
 - **Behave in ways that we know reduce the spread** of the virus, involving:
 - thinking about the number of social contacts we meet each day/week
 - enhanced hygiene measures
 - opening windows and fully ventilating workspaces
 - self-isolation when required
 - regular testing including booking a PCR test when symptomatic
 - as far as reasonable, reducing exposure to high-risk settings and activities, avoiding crowded places and maintaining sensible distances from others
 - **Follow the laws and guidance that remain in place** and that are designed to reduce transmission of the virus and help keep ourselves and others safe, for example:
 - wearing face coverings where required
 - following self-isolation rules
 - for hospitality and entertainment venues, continuing to collect and share customer information for Test and Protect
 - for organisers of large events, following requirements on numbers attending

- having regard to the relevant guidance and having transmission-reducing mitigations (such as ventilation) in place. [Guidance and good practice](#) exists to support businesses and workplaces in this task. This could involve reviewing policies and practices to see if there is more that could be done.
- **Support and influence others, including those for whom we are responsible**, to follow the rules and guidance in place, in particular:
 - to get fully vaccinated when eligible
 - to self-isolate when required to do so
 - to test regularly and to book a PCR test when symptomatic
 - to continue to encourage working from home where possible
- Continuing to promote the baseline measures remains our best way to reduce the need to re-impose restrictions. If we all follow these steps, and think carefully about what more we can do to reduce transmission, then we can change the future course of the epidemic in Scotland.

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