

Letter to Hertfordshire hospitality businesses:

Dear local business

Are you concerned about what the future looks like for your business?

The virus is still circulating and is a risk to all of us, and businesses like yours. Hertfordshire is currently in tier 1 (medium) and the information on this letter is correct at time of writing but could change if we move to the high tier. If Hertfordshire's tier level changes, you should consider how your business may still be able to trade safely and in line with any restrictions imposed.

If we all play our part now, it could help stop this happening.

To help your business, reassure your customers by making sure you are following all government guidance for food businesses. This should help to increase your footfall, return custom and minimise the risk of having to close again.

Did you know legislation has changed a number of times since the restrictions have been lifted?

- Rule of six – by law customers can only visit in groups of up to 6 people (unless they are visiting as a household or support bubble which is larger than 6) in the medium tier and you must ensure you let customers know that this is the law. If we move to the high tier then only households/bubbles can visit together.
- Hospitality & leisure industry must be closed between 10pm and 5am
- It is now mandatory for you to collect contact details for track and trace and display the NHS app QR Code poster. Hospitality venues must also refuse entry to those who refuse to participate and should check the phone screens of customers who choose to check-in using the NHS app
- It is now mandatory for customer-facing staff and customers (unless exempt) to wear face coverings, other than when seated to eat/drink
- Customers must eat and drink at a table in any premises selling food and drink to consume indoors/ on site. In licensed premises, food and drink must also be ordered from, and served at a table.
- Keep groups apart and ensure they do not mingle. Space out tables 2m apart, or 1m plus mitigations, such as screens or barriers, and manage the number of customers in the venue
- Prevent singing and dancing and ensure no loud music is played
- It is your responsibility to ensure any staff that are self-isolating or have Coronavirus symptoms do not come to workplace (they should not work outside of their designated place of self-isolation)

You need to be especially mindful of these changes coming up to the festive period. A good Covid Secure risk assessment can help you to identify issues and reviewing your risk assessment will make sure you keep up to date with changes.

Other things to consider: updating your contingency plans (to prepare for if the county tier changes, for example can you offer a takeaway service?), liaising with your suppliers, considering the amount of stock you should hold, how the business can continue if a number of staff contract the virus

We need safe local hospitality businesses – *Play Your Part*

Imagine how good it would be to be known as the best local pub/restaurant/cafe for both service **and** safety. This will also help you stay ahead of your competitors and protect your reputation. Hospitality businesses play an important role in the health of our community - a place where people can enjoy eating and drinking out, talk and make connections, as well as enjoy a change of scenery, which is great for people's well-being.

If you need advice, we're here to help - let's work together to control the virus and protect businesses. There is no current charge for advice from Environmental Health teams, and we want you to have a safe and successful business.

Where you can get more help:

- For the latest government guidance: www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/close-contact-services
- For practical advice for Hertfordshire businesses, the BBfA Trading Safely toolkit has a wide range of guides, checklists and templates at: www.hertfordshirelep.com/what-we-do/priorities/business-support/better-business-for-all/covid-19-advice-and-support/
- Local councils' websites
- Contact us at (local email) or (local phone number).

If you're already confident you are COVID-secure, there's no need to contact us as we'll be carrying out spot checks to ensure everyone's safety.

Yours faithfully,

Hertfordshire's Better Business for All (BBfA) Partnership