

Letter to Hertfordshire hospitality businesses:

Dear local business,

Are you concerned about continuing to trade with Covid and what you should now be doing?

Despite heading in the right direction with cases continuing to fall in number the virus is still circulating and is a risk to all of us, and businesses like yours. Hertfordshire is currently in lockdown but expected to follow the Government's roadmap of changes over the coming months, the information in this letter is correct at time of writing but could change. If Hertfordshire's response 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, it does stop the spread.

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.

What will the rules be when it's time to re-open?

- When your business is allowed to re-open it should do so in a covid secure way.
- You must have carried out a risk assessment for Covid, identified and implement suitable controls.
- Outdoor hospitality is expected to re-open no earlier than 12th April.
- 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) and you must ensure you let customers know that this is the law. If the 6 are from different households (maximum of 2 households) social distancing must be adhered to.
- Hospitality venues will no longer have to adhere to curfew rules
- It remains 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 remains 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 and initially service will only be allowed outdoors. Indoor service is expected to be allowed from 17th May, at this time social distancing guidelines are also likely to be reviewed but table service only will continue. 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. Social distancing remains important. Space out tables 2m apart, or 1m plus mitigations, such as screens or barriers, and manage the number of customers in the venue
- 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)

Other things to consider: establishing a testing regime for staff, review your contingency plans (to prepare for change, for example can you rapidly 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*

Help keep Hertfordshire trading safely by running both a popular, good quality but also customer and staff safe hospitality venue. 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:
- 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 continue to carry out spot checks to ensure everyone's safety.

Yours faithfully,

Hertfordshire's Better Business for All (BBfA) Partnership