

Hospitality Sector Coronavirus Regulations 2020

Committee name	Licensing Committee
Officer reporting	Stephanie Waterford, Residents Services
Papers with report	None
Ward	All

HEADLINES

To update the Committee on the statutory obligations for the hospitality sector under the Coronavirus Regulations and to provide Members on recent interventions and Officer activity in this area.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Committee notes the report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Since pubs and hospitality premises were allowed to open on 4th July, Officers of the Licensing and Food Health & Safety Teams have been carrying out visits during the evenings and weekends to monitor compliance with the Government social distancing and Covid Secure operating models.

Prior to these visits, great efforts were made by Officers to ensure that pubs were well prepared and had received the Government guidance for the pub sector.

Most of the Borough's pubs have had at least one visit with many receiving 3-4 visits. Where issues have been found, enforcement letters have started to be sent out warning of the serious implications of failures to make pub premises Covid Secure.

In September 2020, a range of new powers came into force which enabled the Council to take on a more robust approach to enforcement to ensure that premises were doing everything within their scope to prevent the transmission of Covid-19.

The new rules govern the following;

Rule of 6

On Monday 14th September 2020, the 'Rule of 6' came into force meaning that people could no longer socialise or gather in groups of more than 6. There are a number of exemptions which have been explained in full detail in a separate note.

Hospitality and event premises now cannot accept bookings for groups of more than 6 and can only permit 'significant life events' for a maximum of 15 people i.e. weddings.

Track & Trace

On Friday 18th September 2020 business and service premises i.e. restaurants, pubs, beauticians, libraries etc. must obtain the contact details of every person entering the business premises. This can be done through a variety of methods but from 24th September, must be via the NHS Track & Trace QR code. These records must then be stored securely for 21 days. Individuals must provide the following details:

- Full name
- Telephone number
- Where a telephone number cannot be provided an email or postal address must be provided instead.
- Date and time of entry and exit
- The number of people in their group
- Records must be kept for 21 days.
- Records must be destroyed after the 21 day period
- Entry should be refused to persons who do not provide their details (in hospitality premises only).

Additional requirements for hospitality premises

The Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (Obligations of Hospitality Undertakings) (England) Regulations 2020 applies to all public houses, cafes, restaurants and any other business providing food or drink for consumption on the premises and states;

- Businesses must not take bookings for parties of more than 6, unless an exemption on gatherings applies;
- Businesses must not admit groups of more than 6 to the premises
- Businesses must ensure that no person in a grouping of 6 mingles with any other group of 6
- Businesses must ensure that an appropriate distance of 2 metres is maintained between tables, or 1 metre where there are barriers, screens or back to back arrangements

Table Service

Pubs, Bars, Cafes and Restaurants must operate on a table service only basis and premises managers will be expected to take all reasonable steps to ensure that they remain seated whilst consuming their food and/or drink. This will effectively stop vertical, close contact drinking environments where Covid would be more likely to spread.

Face Coverings

Coming into force on Thursday 24th September 2020 are new rules which require staff in shops and hospitality premises to wear face coverings. It will also require customers to wear face coverings at all times unless they are seated.

10pm Curfew

The Prime Minister announced that certain businesses would face further restrictions in order to curb the spread of Coronavirus. These restrictions include a 10pm curfew where hospitality premises must close between the hours of 22.00 and 05.00. Exemptions to these closures include takeaways who are allowed to operate during these times and also cinemas and theatres where performances conclude after 22.00.

Enforcement activities

Officers have been carrying out compliance visits during the day and at weekends and evenings to ensure that businesses who are not following the rules are dealt with effectively.

As of 5th October, a total of 418 visits had been carried out across 17 Wards resulting in 105 written warnings. Premises may also face Fixed Penalty Notices of £1,000 per breach if they do not comply with the regulations.

Impacts on Licensing

Where serious issues are found and/or severe penalties have been imposed, Premises Licence Reviews could be brought by the Licensing Authority and/or the Police. This would only be likely in the most serious scenarios.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL