

Covid-19 Bulletin

2 November 2020



National rules to replace local restrictions across England

The Prime Minister [made a statement](#) on Saturday 31 October to announce that [new national restrictions](#) will apply across England from Thursday 5 November until Wednesday 2 December, replacing any local restrictions currently in place.

Senior Cabinet ministers took the decision to impose tighter restrictions after reviewing scenario [modelling presented](#) by the Chief Medical Officer and Chief Scientific Advisor.

The new measures will:

- Require people to stay at home, except for specific purposes.
- Prevent gathering with people you do not live with, except for specific purposes.
- Close certain businesses and venues.

BVRLA Chief Executive Gerry Keaney has [today written to Transport Secretary Grant Shapps](#), urging the Government to reconfirm that vehicle rental outlets will be able to stay open due to their status as providers of essential transport services.

Support for self-employed doubled in November

The Prime Minister has this afternoon [announced](#) that the [Self-Employment Income Support Scheme Grant](#), which has recently been extended to cover the period from 1 November 2020 until 30 April 2021 will cover 80% of trading profits during November, double the normal amount.

As SEISS grants are calculated over three months, the uplift for November to 80%, along with the 40% level of trading profits for December and January, increases the total level of the third grant to 55% of trading profits. The maximum grant will increase to £5,160.

The online claim system, which was due to open on 14 December, has been brought forward to 30 November. In September, the Chancellor announced an extension of the SEISS to provide support via two grants covering the period until April.

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Furlough extended and payment increased to 80%

The [Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme](#), known as the [Furlough scheme, is being extended](#) until December and the level of the grant will mirror levels available under the scheme in August, with the government paying 80% of wages up to a cap of £2,500.

Employers will pay employer National Insurance Contributions (NICs) and pension contributions only for the hours the employee does not work, and businesses will have flexibility to bring furloughed employees back to work on a part time basis or furlough them full-time.

To be eligible to be claimed for under this extension, employees must be on an employer's PAYE payroll by 23:59 30th October 2020. This means a Real Time Information (RTI) submission notifying payment for that employee to HMRC must have been made on or before 30th October 2020.

Further details, including [how to claim](#) this extended support through an updated claims service, will be provided shortly. There will be a short period when the HMRC need to change the legal terms of the scheme and update the system and businesses will be paid in arrears for that period.

Job Support Scheme suspended

The [Job Support Scheme](#), which was due to start on 1 November 2020, has been postponed and will be introduced following the end of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

Further support for businesses forced to close

Businesses required to close their premises in England due to local or national restrictions will be eligible for the following:

- For properties with a rateable value of £15k or under, grants to be £1,334 per month, or £667 per two weeks;
- For properties with a rateable value of between £15k-£51k grants to be £2,000 per month, or £1,000 per two weeks;

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- For properties with a rateable value of £51k or over grants to be £3,000 per month, or £1,500 per two weeks.

Guidance for these Local Restriction Support Grants will be published in the coming week.

Going to work: New national restrictions

As of 5 November, everyone who can work effectively from home must do so. Where people cannot do so, for instance people who work in critical national infrastructure, construction or manufacturing, they should continue to travel to work and attend their workplace, which must adhere to [Covid secure guidelines](#).

Public sector employees working in essential services, including education settings, should continue to go into work. Extra consideration should be given to those who are clinically vulnerable, or over the age of 60. These groups should be especially careful and minimise contacts with others.

Travelling: New national restrictions

The Government is advising that you should avoid travelling in or out of your local area, and you should look to reduce the number of journeys you make only travelling for the following reasons:

- travelling to work where this cannot be done from home
- travelling to education and for caring responsibilities
- hospital GP and other medical appointments or visits where you have had an accident or are concerned about your health
- visiting venues that are open, including essential retail
- exercise, if you need to make a short journey to do so

There is no exemption for staying away from home on holiday. This means people cannot travel internationally or within the UK, unless for work, education or other legally permitted exemptions. Overnight stays away from primary residences will not be allowed, except for specific exceptions including for work.

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BVRLA Chief writes to NFDA and NAMA

Chief Executive Gerry Keaney has written to his counterparts in the National Franchised Dealers Association (NFDA) and the National Association of Motor Auctions (NAMA) to offer the BVRLA's full support for their efforts in keeping the wider automotive supply chain functioning as normally as possible.

Acknowledging that vehicle dealerships, auction houses and their logistics functions provide a vital service to BVRLA members, Keaney says in the letter:

“The UK economy is in a precarious position as businesses approach the busy pre-Christmas period while trying to prepare for a variety of EU-Exit scenarios. It is vital that our members and their customers can continue to rely on the services your members provide in delivering, collecting, maintaining and servicing their vehicles.

“Building on the successful collaboration that we have already achieved, the BVRLA is ready to work with the NFDA, NAMA and their members in maintaining this very successful working relationship.”

Clean growth at the heart of recovery

‘Building back greener’ was a theme running through Business Secretary Alok Sharma’s [keynote address earlier today](#) at the Confederation of British Industry's (CBI) 2020 Annual Conference.

Mr Sharma addressed business leaders saying: “Many of you already see Net Zero as an opportunity to grow... I hope you take advantage of the immediate opportunities this green agenda brings, as we recover from the Covid pandemic.”

Driving tests across the UK

The [DVLA has confirmed](#) that driving tests will be suspended in England from Thursday 5 November until Tuesday 2 December 2020. Driving tests are also suspended in Wales and are due to resume on 9 November 2020.

Driving tests are taking place in Scotland and there is separate guidance for Northern Ireland.