

# Food Alert

## The Hotel Guide to Reopening Safely

What do I need to do?



# The hotel guide to reopening safely

**The countdown is on** for when hotels and guest accommodation can once again open their doors and welcome holiday makers yearning for a long awaited get away.

With bookings coming in thick and fast as Brits look to holiday in the UK, how do you prepare your hotel for a safe reopening? Being COVID-19 compliant is just one part of the compliance jigsaw to consider.

Over the next few weeks, it's important to make sure your venue is clean and safe before you reopen. From ventilation to legionella risks – there is a lot to consider, so our team of experts have pulled together the following guidance to give you a helping hand.

## Key dates for your diary:



### Monday 12 April:

Self-catering holidays (household only) and outdoor hospitality allowed.

Also, wedding ceremonies can take place in venues which are permitted to open for the purposes of providing unrestricted services. This includes holiday accommodation, such as hotels (in a room approved for the solemnisation of marriage and formation of a civil partnership), as well as conference centres and exhibition halls.



### Monday 17 May:

All domestic overnight stays and indoor hospitality can resume, with the rule of six / 2 households in effect. Outdoor hospitality will be extended to 30 persons. Plus, outdoor entertainment, such as performances, can resume.



### Monday 21 June:

Larger events can resume. Nightclubs can reopen. No legal limits on social contact.

\* These are target dates set by the Government and are subject to review



## Cleaning regimes and more

Hygiene has always been core to excellent hospitality, but it's now more important than ever with guests and employees expecting high standards to feel safe. Keeping your site clean is vital to safety. Minimising potential transmission routes by deploying thorough cleaning regimes is essential.

Use our checklist to help make sure you have everything covered:



### CHECKLIST

- Frequent cleaning of work areas, equipment, bathrooms and other high-traffic areas, using your usual sanitiser and adhering to the required contact time.
- Frequent cleaning of objects and surfaces that are touched regularly, including door handles, lift buttons and handrails, and using your usual sanitiser.
- Clear workspaces and remove waste from the work area at the end of a shift.
- Ensure team member's outer clothing and personal belongings are stored in lockers.
- Provide extra waste facilities for staff and guests to dispose of single-use face coverings and PPE.
- Maintain good ventilation by opening windows and doors. We recommend checking whether you need to service or adjust your ventilation systems ahead of reopening.

### CHECKLIST

- Wedge doors open to reduce touchpoints where appropriate. This does not apply to fire doors, which should be kept closed.
- Ensure housekeeping team members are provided with suitable PPE when cleaning rooms and are aware of proper use and disposal.
- Make a checklist of all main touchpoints (such as door handles and surfaces) to be cleaned when guests vacate their room.
- Clean and sanitise keys/key cards between guests.
- Introduce enhanced cleaning schedules of all facilities and make them visible, with particular focus to shared facilities, such as guest toilets.
- Ensure all staff wash their hands regularly and properly as per government guidance.

## Legionella risk points

Similar to COVID-19, Legionella is a potentially fatal respiratory virus. The last thing any operator needs is an outbreak of legionella, so we recommend the following steps:

### ✓ Hot and cold water systems

Hot and cold water outlets, including all taps and shower heads, should be flushed weekly to prevent water stagnation. If this has not been happening, then ensure your systems are cleaned and disinfected before reopening.

### ✓ Cooling towers and evaporative condensers

If these have been non-operational for more than a month, drain down the systems and clean and disinfect them. Clean and disinfect the systems again before refilling and returning to operation.

### ✓ Air conditioning units

Air conditioning units can be a hotbed for legionella, especially if they've been dormant for a period, so you will need to clean them safely before turning on. Small wall or ceiling-mounted units with closed cooling systems should not present a risk.








### ✓ Commercial spa pools and hot tubs

If they've not been used, you should drain, clean and disinfect them. You should also clean and disinfect them before reinstating them.



## Other factors to be **ALERT** of before reopening:

### CHECKLIST

-  **Assess Risk:** Remember that controls may have changed since you first documented your COVID-19 risk assessments – ensure that these are reviewed and accurately reflect your control measures in place.
-  **Limit Suppliers / Allergen Control:** Managing your suppliers is critical, especially as replacement ingredients may be added to your delivery or you may need to use new suppliers as others may no longer be operating. Make sure you have a robust system in place whereby you review and are alerted of any new/replacement products as this may introduce new allergens into your dishes. It is vital you conduct a full review of allergens prior to reopening to ensure that any changes can be communicated to team members and customers.
-  **Employee Bubbles / Covid Testing:**
  -  Once opened, it is recommended that you split your staff into separate team bubbles – Team A and Team B – who work the same shift patterns. This will help to limit the impact if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19.
  -  Rapid flow testing has now been expanded so that all businesses can sign up for the government's free COVID-19 workplace testing programme. To register to order the free lateral flow coronavirus tests for your employees click [here](#). Please note that you must register on or before 31st March 2021.
-  **Recording Contact Details:** In England it is a legal requirement to display the NHS Test & Trace QR Code poster, so that customers with the NHS COVID-19 app can use them to check-in. Please ensure this is displayed in a prominent position and guests are instructed to use it.
-  **Team Training:** Use the next few weeks to make sure your teams are fully trained on all hygiene and health & safety topics. Are they clear on the arrangements in place and what is required of them and others? Are you confident that you can provide your team with courses that can be done remotely?

## Be COVID-19 compliant

There's so much to think about between now and reopening and pulling everything together to be COVID-19 secure is a huge task. But don't worry, we have your back. Our team of safety experts have created the [COVID-19 Standard](#), designed specifically to help hospitality business owners get back on their feet and back to business.

The COVID-19 Standard covers key topics such as:

- Cleaning protocols
- Physical distancing
- Personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Compliance documentation and more

Our Standard verifies that the controls laid down have been successfully applied in your business. And when you've completed the scheme, you'll get a 'COVID-19 Standard' certificate and sticker you can display to prove your compliance and that you are operating the highest hygiene and safety standards. We will also be able to provide feedback using a QR code and any issues are sent straight to you and we'll help resolve them and of course you'll also get their positive feedback too!



## How can Food Alert help?

Throughout the pandemic our team of Hygiene and Health & Safety consultants have helped hundreds of hotel and guest accommodation providers keep on top of their regulatory responsibilities.

If you'd like the support of our expert team, simply give us a call on **020 7244 1900** and we will be happy to discuss your COVID-19 needs and general compliance requirements. Or **get in touch** with us online and we'll call you back at a time that suits you.