

Food Alert

Reopening guidance

England only

April 2021



A GUIDE FROM FOOD ALERT'S EXPERTS



Reopening Guidance for Pubs, Restaurants and Cafes

Step 2 - April 2021

Introduction

The restaurant and hospitality sector has been hit hard by COVID-19 and this summary guide is here to help you prepare to reopen your business outside from 12th April 2021.

The government has produced the Roadmap out of lockdown and whilst some of the dates are still provisional and based on four tests at each stage, we do at least have some clarity on how we will exit lockdown. The full Government document can be found [here](#).

One key change from the exit strategy from the last lockdown is that there will no longer be a tiered approach to exiting and the whole country will move through the stages together.

The Government will examine the data to assess the impact of the previous step. This assessment will be based on four tests:

1. The vaccine deployment programme continues successfully.
2. Evidence shows vaccines are sufficiently effective in reducing hospitalisations and deaths in those vaccinated.
3. Infection rates do not risk a surge in hospitalisations which would put unsustainable pressure on the NHS.
4. The assessment of the risks is not fundamentally changed by new Variants of Concern.

As lockdown restrictions are lifted there will still be measures in place that will mean that life will not go straight back to normal, including social distancing, the wearing of face coverings, enhanced hygiene measures, socialising restrictions and very importantly increased ventilation. This will be set alongside the continuing vaccination programme; lateral testing, test, trace and isolate; and identification of local outbreaks and new variants known as surge testing.

Food Alert is here to help you and has produced this guidance to support you through re-opening. There are various useful links within the document to Government guidance and checklists that can be used to ensure you re-open safely. You can access the Government general reopening guidance [here](#) and the guidance for restaurants, pubs, bars and takeaway services [here](#).

The first thing you must do is check your business is allowed to reopen. Check the Government COVID-19 website before you re-open your business for details of any trading restrictions, including which tier your business is within.

Please note that this guidance will be kept under constant review, so ensure that you regularly check the Food Alert [website](#) and LinkedIn page as we issue updates as and when guidelines change.

For more details and advice on practical measures that can protect your customers and anyone else who comes into contact with your operation following re-opening, including handy sections on each aspect of the hospitality food chain from purchasing to service to help reiterate and remind staff of these essential controls, please contact Food Alert at **enquiries@foodalert.com** or call **0207 244 1900**.

We also offer COVID-19 certification standard audits which are designed to assess your COVID control measures. Certified sites are able to operate in the confidence that they are indeed COVID safe. For more information, contact **enquiries@foodalert.com** or visit our [website](#).

Summary of reopening

The government has confirmed that the four tests have been met to allow outdoor hospitality to reopen. This table provides a summary of the four steps to easing of lockdown.

Stage	Government message	Social distancing rules	Pubs & restaurants	Accommodations	Outdoor leisure & attractions	Indoor leisure & attractions	Events & conferences	Funerals & weddings	Nightclubs
Stage 2 from 12 th April	Continue to work from home when possible Minimise domestic travel No international travel	Rule of 6 or 2 households outside No social mixing indoors	Outdoor only open: - Table service only - Rule of 6 or 2 households - Social distancing - Face coverings	Self contained accommodation for same household Overnight stays allowed but only within one household	Theme parks, zoos, drive-in cinemas can open	Indoor leisure can open for one household: - Gyms - Spa – no sauna or steam rooms	Closed Event pilots begin	Funeral max 30 people Weddings & receptions max 15 people	Closed
Stage 3 from 17 th May	Continue to work from home when possible	Rule of 6 or 2 households outside 30 max outdoors	Indoor & outdoor open - Table service only - Rule of 6 or 2 households - Social distancing - Face coverings	All other accommodation can open – hotels, B&B, hostels etc. Domestic & international travel allowed	All other outdoor events, including live performances	Indoor leisure and attractions can open	Indoor events – up to 1,000 people or 50% capacity Outdoor events – up to 4,000 people or 50% capacity Outdoor seated events – up to 10,000 people or 25% capacity	Most significant life events max 30 people	Closed
Stage 4 from 21 st June	'Back to normal'	No legal limits on social contact	Open, no restrictions					No limit on all life events	Open

What does this mean for Hospitality in England?

The key dates (subject to the four tests) are:

12th April

- Hospitality opens outside
- Self-contained accommodation only can open

Deregulation for pavement dining still applies, so if you haven't applied and are able to you can apply to your local authority for a 7 day fast tracked service.

As with after the last lockdown, the planning rules remain relaxed for outdoor dining so if you have no special conditions on your license for outdoor dining already in place, such as for beer gardens etc. then your indoor licensing conditions will apply to outside areas. Where outdoor licencing conditions are already in place then these will still apply.

17th May

- Indoor and outdoor opening
- All accommodation can be open including hotels, hostels etc.
- Larger scale events can resume (for example indoors up to 1,000 or 50% capacity)

Whilst there are no longer any curfews or requirements for a meal whilst drinking alcohol; table service, rule of 6/one household, physical distancing and one-way systems etc. will be required for some time.

The Food Alert COVID-19 Secure Certification Standard will still be available for you to prove to your customers that you have put in place excellent COVID-19 secure procedures to keep them safe. More details on this can be found [here](#)

Step 2 Guidance

From the 29th March:

- All shops allowed to open
- Restaurants and pub gardens will be allowed to serve customers sitting outdoors, including alcohol
- Gyms and spas can reopen for individuals and households
- Hairdressers, beauty salons and other "close contact services" can reopen, including in people's homes
- UK domestic holidays away from home permitted, with self-contained accommodation able to reopen for use by members of the same household
- Children allowed to attend indoor play activities, with up to 15 parents or guardians allowed to join them
- Zoos, theme parks and drive-in cinemas can reopen
- Libraries and community centres can reopen
- Weddings attended by up to 15 people can take place

What does this mean for Hospitality?

- Outdoor areas at hospitality venues can reopen to serve customers in groups of up to six people or two households
- These venues may allow customers to use toilets, baby changing rooms or breast-feeding rooms located inside
- No social mixing indoors
- At any premises serving alcohol, customers will be required to order, be served and eat/drink while seated ("table service")
- People can use these venues outdoors in a group of six people, or with members of up to two households
- Social distancing will still apply
- Venues will be prohibited from providing shared smoking equipment such as shisha pipes
- NHS Test & Trace – venues will need to keep a record of all customers, visitors and staff for 21 days

- Venues in England legally obligated to display NHS app QR code poster.
- Businesses have a legal duty to remind people to wear face coverings in any indoor space
- Hospitality venues will also be allowed to provide takeaway alcohol. Takeaway food and drink (including alcohol) must not be consumed on the premises or adjacent to the premises. You need to differentiate between sales of alcohol that will genuinely be taken away from the premises and alcohol that will be consumed in the outdoor area. If it is the latter, then the table service rules apply

What is outside opening?

Only outside hospitality areas can be used but venues can erect outdoor shelters. Hospitality venues will be allowed to install gazebos and marquees in gardens for the entire summer, instead of the 28 days currently allowed without planning permission.

To be considered 'outdoors', shelters, marquees and other structures can have a roof but need to have at least 50% of the area of their walls open at all times whilst in use. Premises, or parts of premises, will be considered 'substantially enclosed' (i.e., indoors) if they have a ceiling or roof, but have an opening in the walls, which is less than half the total area of the walls. This is known as the 50% rule. The area of the opening does not include doors, windows or any other fittings that can be opened or shut.

Any premises considering the use of tents, marquees, gazebos or other similar structures should carefully consider whether they will comply with the definition of an outdoor space as described above. A marquee with a roof and four sides would not be an outdoor space. Igloo style pods or individual summer house type structures would also not be outdoor spaces.

It is also important to consider the placement of these structures. A gazebo with only a roof would in itself be considered outdoors, but if placed in a small courtyard with four surrounding walls within close proximity, the space may no longer be considered outdoors for the purposes of the coronavirus regulations.

Pavement licenses

A simplified route for pubs, restaurants and cafes to obtain a temporary pavement licence has been introduced with a capped application fee of £100 and a 10-working day consultation and determination period.

The temporary provisions which allow removable furniture to be placed on parts of the highway are currently due to expire on 30th September 2021, but the government is planning to extend these provisions for a further 12 months, subject to Parliamentary approval.

Weather

Unfortunately, even in poor weather it will be illegal for businesses to allow anyone to shelter indoors and so you need to have procedures in place to deal with this eventuality.

- You may provide blankets for warmth – replace after customer use
- Look at your food offer – make things easy and quick for service
- Keep an eye on the weather forecast and plan accordingly

Managing indoor spaces

If possible, allow customers access to outside spaces without going inside.

Where outside spaces are only accessible from the inside you need to manage this carefully:

- Ventilate inside areas as much as possible with windows and doors open and any extraction fans on
- Air conditioning should not recycle air and be switched to fresh air supply
- Where possible use one-way systems
- Display signs advising customers on rules of entry
- Provide hand sanitiser at the entrance
- All customers (and FOH staff) must wear face coverings inside
- Keep internal doors open where possible to reduce touch points

Customers can use indoor areas to:

- Travel through the venue to an outdoor area
- Use the toilet
- Use the baby change facilities
- Provision of first aid etc.
- Pay where this is not possible outside

Venues should ensure that customers using toilets and/or travelling through the indoor area(s) are managed via COVID-19 secure rules:

- Face covering rules
- Customers must not be permitted to linger, block corridors or access points etc.

Risk assessment

Risk assessment is key to identifying the specific controls required for your business to reopen safely. Please contact us for access to our digital risk assessments on Alert65.

You must:

- Identify what work activity or situations might cause transmission of the virus
- Think about who could be at risk
- Decide how likely it is that someone could be exposed
- Act to remove the activity or situation, or if this isn't possible, control the risk

The main controls for COVID-19:

- Physical distancing
- Ventilation
- Disinfecting hand contact surfaces
- Enhanced hand washing and hand sanitiser use
- Vaccination & Testing

Employee safety

- Update food safety, health & safety and COVID-19 training
- Mental health considerations – reconnection with colleagues
- Daily COVID-19 briefings – remind team of measures in place
- Outside opening – provision of suitable clothing, what to do in bad weather
- Consider health & safety issues outside, such as risk of slips in wet weather
- Complete updated Return to work Questionnaires (see attached)
- Limit the number of people in changing rooms so that social distancing rules can be met, e.g., stagger breaks, have maximum occupancy numbers for small rooms
- Reorganise facilities in communal areas such as spacing out tables in meeting rooms, canteens etc

Ventilation

- Ventilation should be used as a control measure to reduce the risk of aerosol transmission of COVID-19 in enclosed spaces
- Ventilation will not reduce the risk of droplet or surface transmission, so other control measures such as cleaning and social distancing are also required
- There are different ways of providing ventilation, including mechanical ventilation using fans and ducts, natural ventilation which relies on passive flow through openings (doors, windows, vents) or a combination of the two

Wedding receptions

Wedding and civil partnership ceremonies and receptions with up to 15 people (in venues that are permitted to open) including:

- Conference centres and exhibition halls
- Holiday accommodation, including hotels (in a room approved for the solemnisation of marriage and formation of a civil partnership)
- Any purpose-built wedding venue (where that is its sole purpose)
- Visitor attractions may be used (if licensed) if the part of the venue used to hold the ceremony is used solely for that purpose and is not ordinarily open to the public
- Rooms or spaces within indoor visitor attractions (for example a room within a museum) if they can be accessed directly from the street, or open outdoor areas of the venue.

- Receptions in the form of a sit-down meal can take place in any COVID-19 Secure outdoor venue that is permitted to open.

Lateral flow tests and workplace testing

It's important that you continue to put measures in place to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission, including maintaining social distancing, frequent cleaning, good hygiene and adequate ventilation, even if your workers have:

- Received a recent negative test result
- Had the vaccine (either 1 or 2 doses)

Lateral kits for home testing by employees will now be available to businesses with more than 10 staff. Registration is needed before 12th April. You can order the tests [here](#) or using the link <https://www.gov.uk/get-workplace-coronavirus-tests>. This should make it much easier for hospitality businesses to take part in lateral flow testing without the need to set up testing facilities onsite.

Employees can also get tests at local test centres and you can find out if your area offers lateral flow tests for asymptomatic people [here](#) or using the link <https://www.gov.uk/find-covid-19-lateral-flow-test-site>

If anyone has symptoms, they must not use lateral flow tests but should arrange a PCR test and stay at home. More information can be found [here](#) or using the link <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>

Test & trace

Test and trace obligations will resume when hospitality reopens from 12th April, including for outdoor use only, and it will remain in place until at least September.

- In a change to the previous requirement, the contact details for **all** persons in a party (aged 16 and over) must be captured – it will no longer be sufficient to have the lead party member only. This means that for pre-booked meals etc. either all contact details must be captured at the point of booking or customers will have to scan the NHS QR code or provide contact details manually on arrival.
- It is a legal requirement for premises to display the NHS QR code posters – even if they choose to collect data by other means. The official [NHS QR code poster](#) can be generated online.

- You should display an NHS QR code poster at all customer entrance points as well as have an alternative method for recording customer contact details when people do not have the NHS Test & Trace app.
- You will need to confirm that a customer has checked in to your venue using the NHS COVID-19 app by asking them to show you their screen. Full details on how to do this, can be found [here](#).
- The requirement to capture contact information applies not just to customers but also to staff and visitors (not deliveries) so a record should be kept of staff rotas. Staff are also able to scan in using the NHS QR codes.
- There is an additional requirement for hospitality businesses to take 'reasonable steps' to refuse entry to those not providing contact details or scanning the QR code. However, if reasonable measures to restrict are not successful, it will not be illegal for a customer to enter the premises.

General Reopening Guidance

This guidance has been issued before for the previous reopening's that you will have undertaken and is still relevant now whether you are partially reopening outside or waiting until you can fully reopen in May.

Introduction

Opening your hospitality business after a period of closure is not a simple matter of turning the power and gas back on and returning to work. There are multiple considerations and more than a few steps to take to ensure that your premises, you and your employees and customers are safe. Things will have changed during the period of closure, for example, equipment may not restart, and maintenance and statutory inspection certificates may have expired.

The first decision to make is when you will start the process of re-opening. This requires thought and planning as before you receive any food deliveries your kitchen and all of the equipment within should be thoroughly clean and operating correctly and safely.

It is always best to be prepared prior to opening – remember that soft openings will give you an insight into how well your plans are being implemented. You may also wish to have an audit in advance of re-opening to confirm your standards. Food Alert is here to help you in this area, and to provide you with advice and guidance via our Advice Line service.

You may find a phased opening, trialling out any new measures that you intend to put in place such as reduced menu offerings, will help to guide you in the measures that work best. Trials will also help demonstrate how new COVID-19 controls will affect the number of staff that are required and the impact that this will have on the profitability of the business. Multi-site business may open certain sites first to trial the measures and test layouts.

General tasks required prior to opening

1. Pest control

Check for signs of any pest activity – droppings, gnaw marks/new holes, dead pests, bad smells etc. Remove any potential for pest harbourage. Check bait boxes are in place – the correct way up, and in the location agreed with the pest control technician. Re-instate pest control visits, if they were not taking place during closedown. If there are any serious pest issues you must contact your pest controller and take advice on eradication as quickly as possible.

Food Alert's pest control partners, Pest Pulse, offer a disinfection/pest riddance service. Contact them at **info@pestpulse.com** and mention Food Alert.

2. Electricity

Check your installation inspection certificate remains valid and that PAT tests are in date - arrange a re-inspection by a NICEIC electrical contractor if necessary, e.g., Citation Fire and Electrical.

3. Gas

If you think you have a leak or can smell gas, contact the National Gas Emergencies number immediately on **0800 111 999**.

Check appliances are all working and ensure preventative maintenance has been completed, where necessary by a Gas Safe approved contractor.

Check your CO2 gas detectors are working in the cellar and in other areas where required.

4. Refrigerated and frozen storage

Complete all preventive maintenance.

Turn on refrigeration equipment and let it run for 24 hours, then check the inside temperature against the temperature taken with a calibrated probe temperature to ensure it is accurate before storing foods inside. Sanitise and clean all fridges and freezers.

5. Ice machines

Clean and sanitise the ice machine. Make sure you clean the lid and all walls and the hard-to reach areas where mould accumulates.

Restart the ice machine and discard the first full batch of ice.

Follow manufacturer's instructions for the servicing of the machine if it has been sat unused for a period of time

6. Equipment

Clean and sanitise all equipment.

For more complex equipment, check with the equipment suppliers on the best course of action for re-commissioning.

Ensure all statutory testing for equipment up to date and all remedial actions have been completed.

7. Refuse

Make sure that your waste disposal contractor is contacted and that refuse collections are re-instated.

8. Water

Legionella bacteria can be found in both your hot and cold-water systems and you should follow these steps to reduce the risk that it may cause in both systems:

If you have been flushing your hot and cold-water systems weekly during closure, continue this practice until you re-open.

No expertise with your water systems?

Appoint a contractor to undertake legionella treatment. This will include a drain down of the hot water system, super chlorination treatment of hot and cold systems and re-instatement of water supply throughout.

Contractors will provide you with certification of cleaning and treatment.

You can also have legionella sampling undertaken to confirm that the treatment and cleaning has been effective.

Hot water

Turn off the mains cold water feed valve. Drain down your hot water tank, remembering to drain the cylinder from the valve at the bottom of the tank to remove any sediment.

Re-fill your hot water tank and heat water to above 60°C.

Open your hot water taps, starting with the sentinel tap (tap furthest away from the hot water tank) and run for at least two minutes. Repeat this with all hot water taps in the restaurant.

Remove any shower heads and clean them thoroughly, both inside and out. De-scale them using a suitable descaling chemical and immerse them in a chlorine solution (50ppm) before rinsing them in fresh water. Only re-fit shower heads when the business is ready to re-open.

Cold water

Open all cold-water taps and run them concurrently for a minimum of ten minutes to ensure that all supply pipes have been thoroughly flushed through. Run taps at approximately half flow during this process.

Clean and sanitise all taps around their outlets.

If your cold-water system feeds any water features, ensure that these are also run and cleaned in line with the rest of the water system.

If the cold-water system feeds any air conditioning units, ensure that specialist advice is taken.

9. Risk assessment

COVID-19 risk assessments should be completed to reduce risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level by taking preventative measures, in order of priority.

COVID-19 risk assessments should be documented if there are more than 5 staff employed. They must cover hazards to staff, customers, contractors, members of the public and visitors as relevant along with details of the controls in place to reduce the risk to acceptable levels.

Risk assessments must be made available to all staff and if possible, you should consider publishing the results on your website (all businesses with over 50 workers are expected to do this). Remember to train your staff in COVID-19 control measures.

Remember that controls may have changed since you first documented your COVID risk assessments - ensure that these are reviewed and accurately reflect your control measures in place.

10. Employees

Employees may be returning after a long period of not working and personal situations may have changed.

Shielding has now ceased but you may have employees who are extremely clinically vulnerable who are advised to continue to take extra precautions to protect themselves including having the vaccine. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has also published [guidance on protecting vulnerable workers](#), including [advice for employers and employees on how to talk about reducing risks in the workplace](#).

You should confirm in writing to staff that they must not return to work if suffering from symptoms, or if a member of household is affected and follow current

Government guidance. Remember it is your duty to make sure that staff who are classed as close contacts of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 can self-isolate for a period of 10 days i.e., you must not require that they come to work.

Inform staff they must inform their line manager if they become unwell at work. The NHS test and trace service (or equivalent in devolved nations) is in place to help to manage the spread of the virus. It is an offence for you (as an employer) to allow a worker to attend the workplace if you are aware that the worker:

- Has tested positive for COVID-19
- Has been in close contact with someone who has tested positive and they have received a notification to self-isolate from NHS Test & Trace.

Guidance for employers on Test and Trace can be found [here](#).

Advise employees to travel at quieter times. They must wear face coverings on public transport.

Inform staff of controls that will be in place following re-opening. In particular, the wearing of face coverings in front of house areas is mandatory and they will need to undertake regular hand washing using soap and water for 20 seconds.

Train staff on new procedures including physical distancing guidance and self-reporting illness for COVID-19. Retrain staff on the 'Essentials of Food Hygiene' and consider refresher training in Level 2 Food Safety. Food Alert offer online training via our partners Flow Hospitality.

Advise all staff and managers of your COVID -19 sickness policies. You should also re-affirm the usual 48-hour rule for vomiting and diarrhoea and the importance of keeping hands, food preparation surfaces, and food equipment clean, even more so at this time.

You could reduce staff required in the kitchen by limiting the menu offer so that fewer staff are required to work in the kitchen.

Once opened, it is recommended that you split your staff into separate teams – Team A and Team B who work the same shift patterns. This will help to limit the impact if someone on one team is a confirmed case COVID-19 as fewer of their work colleagues will be classed as contacts and be required to self-isolate.

In larger businesses you may consider restricting individuals to specific areas of the business. This will help to reduce spread.

Where possible, employees should not work across different sites. This is also relevant to those in regional or area roles.

Managers must know how to spot symptoms of COVID-19 and be clear on any relevant processes, for example sickness reporting, self-isolation, sick pay, and procedures in case someone in the workplace is potentially infected and the manager needs to take appropriate action.

If an employee is proven to have contracted COVID-19 from another employee, then this will be reportable under RIDDOR.

Ensure that return to work interviews cover changes to personal circumstances. Personal circumstances may have changed during lockdown so ensure you discuss this with employees prior to starting work. For example, if someone is now pregnant, a new and expectant mothers risk assessment should be completed.

11. Cleaning

A complete clean of the entire premises prior to opening will be required. This includes walls, windows, floors, furniture, fixtures, and every piece of equipment. Remember though that COVID-19 only lasts for a few days on surfaces so if your business has been closed for a significant period of time you will not need to consider treatments such as fogging as the virus, if present at one time, will be dead.

Food and hand-contact surfaces such as kitchen worktops, taps, chopping boards, door handles, toilet doors, toilet flush handles, telephones, light switches, keyboards, tills etc. should be cleaned using a chemical confirmed to be effective against COVID-19.

Disinfectants and sanitisers should continue to comply with BS EN 1276. Check with your chemical supplier if necessary.

There will be a lot of demand for these products prior to reopening, therefore we advise you liaise with your supplier now. You must remember to check that contact times are suitable and known.

You should update cleaning schedules to reflect the increased need for cleaning of high touch areas including door handles, front of house counters, toilets and back of house areas.

Once opened, enhanced cleaning in both front of house and back of house areas is essential. Identify common contact points such as door handles, touch screens, light switches tables and chairs and handrails etc. paying particular attention to those surfaces which are in constant use and shared. These points should be sanitised every 30 minutes to minimise any viral loading. A checklist on common contact points can be found [here](#).

12. Front-of-house physical and social distancing

Physical distancing for both customers and employees. The current requirement is where possible to keep 2m apart. Where this is not possible keep a social

distance of 1m+ i.e., 1m apart plus additional precautions such as side by side seating.

Post signage promoting the wearing of face coverings and physical distancing upon entry; to advise persons with symptoms not to enter and to indicate the maximum number of customers and staff a restaurant can accommodate at any one time.

Mark the direction of travel, to designate entrances and exits, pick up areas and toilets.

Provide additional hand wash/sanitising stations especially at the entrance.

Consider whether a queuing system is required and ensure that it is implemented appropriately. Floor markings and signage should be in place to advise customers of physical distancing requirements.

Consider the provision of booking times for customers with strict arrival time criteria in place.

Use technology where possible to reduce person-to-person interaction, for example mobile ordering, menu tablets and contactless payment options.

Install physical barriers, such as clear plastic sneeze guards. Consider installing physical separation between customers and staff in counter service and payment settings.

13. Ventilation

Evidence suggests that the virus is less likely to be passed on in well-ventilated buildings and outdoors and therefore where possible you should increase ventilation rates in the work environment.

This could be as simple as opening a window or doors. You should use external extractor fans where available to keep spaces well ventilated and make sure that ventilation systems are set to maximise the air flow rate. Heating and cooling systems can be used at their normal temperature settings.

The use of air conditioning units which re-circulate air from inside the premises should be avoided.

If you have outside areas, you should look to maximise the use.

Prop open frequently used (internal) doors if space and fire safety allow.

14. Licensing

During the period of closure there may have been changes to the management or colleagues at the business. Any changes that could impact the licence need

to be addressed, and action taken to make sure other licensing requirements are met.

To ensure the licensing requirements are being adhered to, consider the following:

- Ensure that Designated Premises Supervisor (DPS) details are up to date
- Update team training on the sale of alcohol
- Display the correct signage, including any age verification posters and a summary of the premises licence
- Check that the CCTV system is fully operational and recording correctly. Check that any external cameras are unobstructed by overgrown trees or bushes etc.
- Ensure that any layout changes for example to facilitate social distancing, do not require CCTV cameras to be moved to ensure that the cameras cover key areas of the business

15. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Face coverings are mandatory in all inside public areas. Staff in indoor customer facing roles must wear face coverings which cover the nose and mouth.

Customers are required to also wear face coverings at all times when inside on the premises, except when seated to eat or drink. Signage should be displayed at the entrance reminding your customers of this requirement. Customers who refuse to wear a face covering and do not have an exemption should not be permitted access to the premises.

Disposable gloves – Gloves should only be used where the risk cannot be controlled in other ways.

Hand washing and sanitising are more important than wearing gloves. If gloves have to be worn, then hands should be washed regularly as if they were not being worn.

Disposable aprons may be required, for example decanting deliveries or when cleaning guest rooms.

Ensure all PPE is stored in a clean, protected location. PPE must also be paid for by the employer.

16. Signage

Order/arrange printing of sufficient quantities of signage and floor markers to use to remind of social distancing measures etc.

17. Suppliers

There may be shortages in most supply areas, and you will need create back up plans to address and substitutes may be required. Remember that many hospitality businesses will be opening at the same time and therefore supplies will be in high demand.

Check any new products for allergens and ensure you update your allergy information.

18. Menu planning

Cut the complexity of your menu to make it easier to prepare, for example complex tasting menus, which involve multiple items, many trips to the kitchen for the server and increased labour may be best avoided.

Use your POS data to research your historic menu trends, bestselling items, and avoid dishes that are more cost and effort than they are worth. Look at combinations of ingredients that offer the most options.

Remove self-serve buffets, salad bars and beverage self-serve stations that require customers to use common utensils or dispensers until physical distancing measures are relaxed.

Ensure allergen information is updated and available.

You may have alternative ingredients or suppliers so you must check ingredients carefully for allergens.

19. Menus and payment

Avoid menus that cannot be cleaned between customers. Make use of single use disposable menus or cleanable menus if in app ordering is not an option.

Encourage customers to use touchless payment options, when available. Minimise handling cash, credit cards, reward cards, and mobile devices, where possible.

20. Stock

Look at stock levels and order ingredients etc. as required.

Check all stocks of food packaging materials are clean (e.g., takeaway containers) and order more if required. Food may have been frozen longer than the normal business' policy. Prolonged freezing of food does not usually impact safety, but can reduce the quality of the product. Consider how this food is used to ensure the finished product to the customer is of the quality expected, for example only use thawed cheese in sauces. If ingredients are changed in recipes, this must be reflected in the allergen information for the dishes.

21. Guests

Focus on your guest experience, including public perceptions on how you are dealing with the risks of COVID-19.

Sit at each table as if you were a customer and view everything through a customer's eyes. Make any changes or adjustments as needed.

Decide how you will layout the business based on the current Government guidance.

22. Recording Contact Details

Each of the devolved nations and England have different names for their Test & Trace schemes e.g., NHS Test & Protect in Scotland. However, the requirements are largely the same in all four nations.

The contact details of staff and the shifts that they have worked in the previous 21 days must be recorded and maintained.

Customer details must be checked and recorded upon entry. This can be via mobile app or by paper records (please remember to apply GDPR controls). All customers over the age of 16 must have details recorded (where previously a lead party member could check in, now all persons must check in separately).

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.



How can Food Alert help?

Throughout the pandemic our team of Hygiene and Health & Safety consultants have helped hundreds of hospitality operators to 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 reopening needs and general Food Hygiene and Health & Safety requirements.

Or get in touch with us **online** and we'll call you back at a time that suits you.

Food Alert