

# Covid-19 regulations for community groups

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What your group is allowed to do during Covid-19, Winter 2020/21

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Government regulations that relate to the Covid-19 pandemic are changing on a regular basis, and are different depending on where in the country you live. The information in this document applies to parts of England that are rated as having a 'medium' or 'high' Covid alert level. If you are in an area rated at 'very high' alert, you will need to check with your local authority about what your group is allowed to do.

The Resource Centre will try to keep this information up to date. Links to the full government guidance can be found at the end of this information sheet.

This information sheet was last updated on: **23<sup>rd</sup> October 2020**

## Activities your group can organise

When meeting with friends or family, you are never allowed to meet in a group of more than 6 people (unless your household is larger than 6 and you are meeting only with members of your household). There are some exemptions from this 'rule of 6' however, which mean that your community group can still organise some in-person activities for larger numbers of people. There are rules that apply to each activity (see sections below) but as long as you stick to the rules, community groups are allowed to organise activities including:

- ♦ Support groups
- ♦ Exercise classes and sports
- ♦ Performing arts activities
- ♦ Protests
- ♦ Supervised activities for children and young people
- ♦ Provision of voluntary/charitable services
- ♦ Registered childcare, education or training
- ♦ Support for a vulnerable person

# Rules for all activities

For every activity that your group organises, the group is responsible for ensuring:

## 1. Participants follow social distancing guidelines

This means that people who do not live together should:

- ♦ keep 2 metres apart from one another;
- ♦ avoid physical contact; and
- ♦ avoid touching the same items or surfaces.

If people cannot stay 2 metres apart, they should stay 1 metre apart and wear face masks.

## 2. The activity follows 'Covid-19 Secure' guidelines

To make sure that the activity you are organising is as safe as possible, your group must:

- ♦ Complete a Covid-19 risk assessment
- ♦ Hold the activity in either a public outdoor space or an indoor venue that has 'Covid-19 Secure' measures<sup>1</sup> in place
- ♦ Ensure everyone washes or sanitises their hands as soon as they arrive at the activity, and regularly throughout
- ♦ Minimise people touching the same surfaces or items e.g. cups, chairs, pens
- ♦ Plan the activity in a way that allows people to socially distance
- ♦ Make sure there is good ventilation
- ♦ Take part in NHS Test and Trace
- ♦ Not allow anyone to come to the activity who has Covid-19 symptoms

## 3. Specified sub-groups do not mix with each other before, during or after the activity

Although you may have more than 6 people in total at your activity, it is the group's legal responsibility to ensure that:

- ♦ In a medium alert area, no more than 6 people 'mingle' or socialise in any breaks or at the beginning or end of the activity session. You might want to split the group into sub-groups of 6 people (or fewer) and tell all your participants in advance who is in their sub-group. Each person is only allowed to chat or socialise with others in their sub-group.
- ♦ In a high alert area, no one socialises with anyone outside their own household or support bubble in any breaks or at the beginning or end of the activity session.

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<sup>1</sup> Most community centres and venues that hire out rooms are now following 'Covid-19 Secure' guidelines, but always check before you book. To be 'Covid-19 Secure', the venue must: have a Covid-19 risk assessment; clean more often; ask visitors to socially distance and wear masks; increase ventilation; take part in NHS Test and Trace; turn away anyone with Covid-19 symptoms.

# Details for some specific activities

## Support groups

Your community group is allowed to bring together up to 15 people (plus a group facilitator) to offer each other mutual aid, therapy, or any other form of support.

The government website used to list some examples of support groups, including those offering support to:

- ♦ victims of domestic abuse or other crime;
- ♦ recovering addicts;
- ♦ new and expectant parents;
- ♦ people facing issues related to sexuality or identity;
- ♦ those with long-term illness or disability and/or their carers;
- ♦ people who have experienced trauma or bereavement.

However, these are just examples. You are allowed to organise a support group to help your community or group members with any issues they need support with. You must follow the rules listed on page 2.

In a high Covid alert area, your support group is not allowed to meet in private dwellings.

## Sports and other physical activities

Your community group is allowed to organise sports and other physical activities like exercise classes. For all activities, your group must follow the rules on page 2.

### Outdoor sport and physical activity

Your group is allowed to organise outdoor sports, exercise classes and other physical activity for any number of people. You must follow the specific guidelines that have been developed by the sport's governing body (see link p4).

### Indoor sport and physical activity

Your group can organise indoor sports, exercise classes and other physical activity for as many people as can safely be accommodated in the venue (e.g. at a 2 metre distance for exercise classes, or following sport-specific guidelines for team sports). However, you are only allowed to organise such activities if you ensure that:

- ♦ In a medium alert area, participants are split into sub-groups of 6 and people do not mix across these sub-groups during, before or after the session.
- ♦ In a high alert area, participants do not mix with anyone outside their own household or support bubble during, before or after the session.

### Sport for disabled people, under-18s and education

Disability sport, supervised activities for under-18s and sport for educational purposes are exempt and are allowed to be organised for any number of people.

## Performing arts activities

Your community group is allowed to organise performing arts activities, including rehearsals and performances of choirs, orchestras and drama groups. Your group

must follow the rules on page 2 and check for additional measures for specific activities outlined in the performing arts guidance.

You are only allowed to organise performing arts activities if you can ensure that:

- ♦ In a medium alert area, participants are split into sub-groups of 6 and people do not mix across these sub-groups during, before or after the session.
- ♦ In a high alert area, participants do not mix with anyone outside their own household or support bubble during, before or after the session.

## Links to full government guidance

### Find out the Covid alert level in your local area:

<https://www.gov.uk/find-coronavirus-local-restrictions>

<https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19>

### Social distancing:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-meeting-with-others-safely-social-distancing/coronavirus-covid-19-meeting-with-others-safely-social-distancing>

### Covid-19 Secure guidelines:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

### Exemptions from the 'rule of 6':

Medium alert level areas:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-covid-alert-level-medium#meeting-family-and-friends>

High alert level areas:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-covid-alert-level-high#meeting-family-and-friends>

### Exercise classes and sports:

Medium alert level areas:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-covid-alert-level-medium#sport-and-physical-activity>

High alert level areas:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-covid-alert-level-high#sport-and-physical-activity>

Additional guidelines for physical activities:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-phased-return-of-sport-and-recreation/return-to-recreational-team-sport-framework>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/providers-of-grassroots-sport-and-gym-leisure-facilities>

Links to governing body guidance for different sports:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-phased-return-of-sport-and-recreation/return-to-recreational-team-sport-framework#team-sport-guidance>

### Performing arts guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/performing-arts>