

Staying at Home And Away From Others

Sanctions and police powers

It is vital that we do all that we can to reduce the spread of coronavirus to help the NHS and save lives. Staying at home and restricting non-essential travel may be the most important action we can all take.

1. Powers and penalties

Today we have introduced set of new rules that the police can enforce. If you do not comply, and leave your home without reasonable excuse, or gather in a public place for non-essential purposes, the police may now:

- Instruct you to go home, leave an area or disperse and/or make sure that a child that you are responsible for does the same
- If the police have reason to believe that your children are repeatedly breaking the rules they can instruct you to take reasonable steps to stop your children breaking these rules
- Take you home
- Arrest you - if you do not follow their instructions or where they deem it necessary

If they believe you have broken the rules (which are set out below), a constable may issue you with a fixed penalty notice for £30, doubling to £60 if you do not pay within 14 days. In such cases, they may also fine you if you refuse to follow their instructions. If you have already been issued with a fixed penalty notice for breaking these rules, a subsequent fixed penalty notice issued for breaking these rules would be for £120.

They may take you to court if you do not pay, with magistrates able to impose unlimited fines.

2. Rules

Under these rules, you should not leave your home unless strictly necessary for one of the following purposes:

- Shopping for basic household necessities including food and medical supplies and obtain basic supplies (including money)
- Taking exercise- no more than once a day- alone or with members of your household
- For a medical need

- To help a vulnerable person
- Travelling for the purposes of work where you can't reasonably work from home
- Avoid or escape a risk of injury, illness or harm
- To provide emergency assistance

You may also leave your home to:

- Attend a funeral of a member of your household or a close family member (or of a friend if they had no household or close family members) or as a carer for a person who is allowed to attend a funeral for one of these reasons
- Meet a legal obligation, such as attending court
- Access critical public services, such as children or educational facilities, or where advised to do so in person social services, or victims services
- Facilitate access to children where parents or a person who cares for a child live in separate households
- Move house
- Donate blood
- If you are a minister of religion or worship leader, to go to your place of worship

You must also not gather in public spaces with more than one other person unless it is in response to an emergency, for essential work purposes, or where you are with members of your close family or household.

The government is also stopping social events, and events such as weddings and baptisms, and we also recommend that non-essential social gatherings involving people from multiple households do not take place. The police may disperse such gatherings.

You may not enter certain footpaths and lands closed by a public authority unless authorised to do so. There will be notices in prominent places and if you fail to comply the police can move you (using reasonable force if necessary) or arrest you.

3. Police approach

There may be other limited circumstances, not set out in these rules, which require you to meet with others or leave your home.