

# Covid-19 Restrictions

## Step 3 of the Roadmap

Valid From 17 May 2021

Information for Voluntary,  
Community Faith and Social  
Enterprises

# Covid-19 Frequently Asked Questions for Voluntary, Community Faith and Social Enterprises

Date valid – 17 May 2021

## Introduction

The Government has published a [roadmap](#) out of Covid-19 restrictions. This is summarised in a [BVSC guidance document](#). From 17 May until at least 21 June we are at Step 3 on the roadmap. This document is intended to support Voluntary, Community and Faith organisations and Social Enterprises in Birmingham to understand what is permissible currently under Step 3 of the Covid-19 restrictions.

Much more voluntary sector activity in the city is now allowed and we can continue to support those in need in the city. In most cases, you need to follow the government guidance for that activity. Some activities do not clearly fall into a set of guidance. In such circumstances an appropriate gauge for the type of activity you are delivering is how would your activity be viewed by a 'reasonable person' and how does this look against the requirements. The rule of thumb here should be that if in all aspects the activity resembles a prohibited activity it should be considered as such. This may mean you need to adapt your activity to design out the aspects that are now not permitted or that you need to suspend your activity until the regulations change.

This document sets out the understanding of the current situation from BVSC, but each venue, organisation and activity lead needs to consider their own circumstances and the official guidance, much of which is linked to in this document.

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## Overall guidance

Whilst we are at Step 3 [this is the overarching guidance](#) that applies and this is also in 12 community languages and an [easy read](#) version. [You can click through on all the guidance underlined to read the documents referred to.] In addition, the law is set out in [these regulations](#), (with some very [minor amendments](#)).

Gathering limits have been eased.

- Outdoor gatherings are now permitted for up to 30 people.

You are now allowed to meet indoors for any purpose within:

- a group of six people from any number of households. Children of any age have to be counted; or
- two households or [household bubbles](#) (support bubbles).

The [guidance](#) sets out a number of exceptions to this rule of six including:

- Where a group includes someone covered by such an exception (for example, someone who is working), they are not generally counted as part of the gatherings limit (except for residential trips for young people).
- People from different households can gather in groups larger than six people “*for work, volunteering to provide voluntary or charitable services.*”
- Organised parent and child groups or support groups can now be attended by up to 30 people inside (*providing venues can safely accommodate that number*)

This document will explain that a range of other activities and services can be held with more than six people. It is based on guidance on the national Government website. A list of [government guidance documents](#) is available, as is [guidance](#) relating to different work types.

### Key Changes

*Although Coronavirus cases are reducing across the country, a new Covid-19 variant is spreading in some parts of England. To continue to control the spread of the virus we are still asked to be careful and: continue to work from home where you can, meet outside rather than inside where possible and keep socially distanced from people outside of our households.*

However, travel within the UK is now allowed for all purposes under the law, although guidance still asks us to continue to minimise the amount that you travel where possible.

The first steps in the Government’s Roadmap out of Lockdown have already brought about some changes (Step 1 and Step 2) and further relaxations came in on 17 May (Step 3). The key changes this brings are:

- Gathering limits have been eased. Outdoor gatherings are limited to 30 people and indoor gatherings are limited to six people or two households (each household can include a support bubble, if eligible). New guidance on meeting friends and family emphasises personal responsibility rather than government rules.
- Indoor entertainment and attractions such as cinemas, theatres, concert halls, bowling alleys, casinos, amusement arcades, museums and children’s indoor play areas are permitted to open with Covid-secure measures in place.

- People can attend indoor and outdoor events, including live performances, sporting events and business events. Attendance at these events is capped according to venue type, and attendees should follow the Covid-secure measures set out by those venues.
- Indoor hospitality venues such as restaurants, pubs, bars and cafes can reopen.
- Organised indoor sport can take place for all. This includes gym classes. It must be organised by a business, charity or public body.
- All holiday accommodation can open, including hotels and B&Bs. This can be used by groups of up to six or two households (each household can include a support bubble, if eligible).
- Funeral attendance is no longer be limited to 30 people, but will be determined by how many people the Covid-secure venue can safely accommodate with social distancing.
- Limits at weddings, wakes and other significant life events have been increased to 30 people.
- The rules for care home residents visiting out and receiving visitors have changed, allowing up to five named visitors (two at any one time), provided visitors test negative for Covid-19.
- All higher education students are able to access in-person teaching.
- Support groups and parent and child group gathering limits have been increased to 30 people (not including under 5s)
- There is no longer a legal restriction or permitted reason required to travel internationally. A traffic light system for international travel has been introduced

## Risk Assessments

Undertaking, implementing and sharing risk assessments is important. There is a lot of information available. The Muslim Council of Great Britain has produced a document that provides a helpful [nine-step framework](#) for thinking about what you have to do to reopen, recommence or adapt activities. Though your context may be very different, it is useful thinking through steps from planning your plan to dealing with problems.

Social distancing remains a key element of risk assessments. There is Government [guidance](#) and the National Youth Agency [guidance](#) also sets out a wide range of mitigating actions if social distancing can not be maintained. This would be useful for other providers too.

The Government's guidance on [Working Safely During Coronavirus](#) covers many different sector and although it focusses on your responsibilities if you are an employer, they apply to running activities too and can help in producing your risk assessments.

A useful resource for those responsible for community buildings was the [Acivico webinar](#) BVSC held. Narthex and RnR Organisation have produced a risk assessment [template](#). The City Council has an [example](#) of one for reoccupying buildings too. Unite the Union has also produced a useful [guide](#) to undertaking risk assessments (shared by [Youth Work Support](#)).

You should calculate the capacity of a venue as part of the risk assessment and need to consider not just 2 metre distancing for an activity, but also moving around the building safely, toilet capacity, one-way systems, bottlenecks, ventilation of rooms, hand sanitisers, cleaning schedules etc.

This [guidance](#) for adult learning includes a useful set of reminders about risk assessments that applies to all organisations. It says you must record details of:

- risk assessments
- the measures taken to reduce these risks

- expected outcomes

You must review your assessment if:

- it is no longer valid
- there has been a significant change

Having assessed your risk, you must work through the system of controls. Make sure the measures you put in place:

- address the risks identified
- work for your organisation
- include support for participants with disabilities.

You, therefore, also need to consider the specific needs of those you are hoping to attend. Government guidance, for instance, is that people 70 years of age and older are at increased risk of severe illness from Covid-19 and need to be particularly stringent in following government advice including social distancing. The United Reform Church has an approach which could be useful of using an [personal risk assessment](#) for its worshipers, although it was developed prior to the vaccines and this needs to be considered too. The Scottish Government have also used a scoring basis for doing work based [individual risk assessments](#). Such an approach could help you decide about how risky it might be to bring those you support together again. However, you can also take many steps to reduce the risks.

Venues have to follow [Track and Trace](#) requirements. This includes all venues (including community centres, youth centres and places of worship) having a QR code for staff, volunteers and visitors to scan when they arrive. If you are reopening a venue and do not have one you can [order one on-line](#). If you have more than one venue, you need to create a separate QR code for each.

If you run a venue in Birmingham and want support with carrying out a risk assessment for the building or outdoor space, want to check you are doing everything you can do to keep people safe in your venue or want further advice about reopening your venue BVSC and Acivico are working together to support the voluntary sector. Please email [admin@bvsc.org](mailto:admin@bvsc.org) for further information or to book some support.

/continued overleaf

# Sports and Physical Exercise

[Government guidance](#) is available for running grassroots sporting activity. It has key principles for off-field activity, prior to activity, during activity and facility usage. Many national sports governing bodies have also set out guidance for running sports activities at the moment and, where these are up to date, they must be taken into account when deciding what activities can run and what needs to be covered in a risk assessment. [Sport England](#) guidance may also be helpful.

A [list](#) of many of the national governing bodies is available.

## **Our facilities include a sports hall or gym facility. Can we open?**

Yes. In Step 3 indoor sport and physical activity facilities can open. These include gyms, leisure centres, sport courts and pitches, dance and fitness studios, climbing walls, archery venues and indoor riding centres and swimming pools.

Additional government guidance sets out [guidance](#) for running a grass roots sports or gym facility which is very comprehensive and may also be helpful to other types of organisations.

## **We run a sports club. What can we do indoors with adults?**

Organised indoor adult sport and physical activity can return (including exercises classes) subject to sport-specific guidance. For organised indoor sport and physical activity, there's no limit on group numbers so long as people adhere to capacity restrictions on indoor facilities. Any activity needs to:

- be formally organised (for example, by a qualified instructor, club, national governing body, company or charity)
- follow sport-specific guidance drawn up by a national governing body
- follow other relevant Covid-secure guidance.

If sporting and physical exercise is not formally organised or if the governing body rules are not being followed then this exemption does not apply and your activity can only take place with up to six participants or two households.

Contact combat sports can resume contact training with handheld and wearable equipment (such as pad work), but there should be no direct personal contact or contact with clothing. Training which involves contact should take place within 'training bubbles'. More information is in the [guidance](#).

## **Does that mean we can socialise inside at the club?**

No. When not taking part in organised sport, people using sport facilities must adhere to the rules on social contact. In indoor areas, people can gather in groups of up to six people, or two households/bubbles. However, in outdoor areas, people can now meet in groups of up to 30 but it is still advised that venues limit the time spent congregating at a venue before and after sporting activity.

## **Can we reopen the indoor facilities?**

You can allow participants access to toilets. You can also open your changing rooms, but can discourage use and encourage participants to shower and change at home where possible, or to minimise time spent inside. Keep indoor spaces well-ventilated. Further [guidance](#) is available.

## **Can my exercise class start to meet indoors?**

Yes, if these are formally organised, there is no legal limit on numbers. However they must follow the measures for organised sport participation events set out in the [guidance](#) on safe provision of grassroots sport and 2m social distancing should be in place between participants.

EMD UK have produced [guidance](#) and a useful [support pack](#) for instructors, including a [self assessment](#).

## **Can our walk or race take place?**

Yes, organised sport participation events such as races and organised walks can take place outdoors and are exempt from legal gathering limits. However they must follow the measures for organised sport participation events set out in the [guidance](#) on safe provision of grassroots sport.

## **We organise indoor sport and exercise sessions for people with disabilities. Are the rules the same?**

You can run indoor sport sessions for people with disabilities as long you follow published Covid-secure guidance. People with disabilities are permitted to mix with people they do not live or bubble with, and indoor sport for people with and without disabilities is exempt from the gathering limits for adults and children where it is formally organised.

However, you need to weigh this exception against individual's risk of catching Covid-19.

## **Can we return to all our usual indoor sporting activities with under 18s?**

Yes, with modifications. In Step 3 all children can take part in organised indoor and outdoor sport and physical activity. Numbers are only restricted to what is a Covid-secure number for a venue.

However, it is advised to reduce physical contact between participants in training and activities. More information is available in the grassroots sport [guidance](#).

The Association for Physical Education has useful [advice](#) for schools which also apply to community based activity:

*“For sport provision, outdoor sports should be prioritised where possible, and large indoor spaces used where it is not, maximising natural ventilation flows (through opening windows and doors or using air conditioning systems wherever possible), distancing between pupils, and paying scrupulous attention to cleaning and hygiene. This is particularly important in a sport setting because of the way in which people breathe during exercise.”*

The Youth Sport Trust have developed a useful [planning tool](#) for reintroducing PE into schools which could be useful for other youth sporting activities too.

## **Some adults are reluctant to come back and restart classes or exercising. What can we do?**

Sport England have produced a helpful 5 point plan around [Return to Play](#) which is summarised below.

*Showcase your safety measures:*

Manage limitations on numbers, enforce social-distancing measures, and use signage that encourages positive behaviour. For team sports, make the guidelines you are using very clear.

*Emphasise the enjoyment factor:*

Give people something to look forward to. Tailor your messages to emphasise what your activity will bring people – fun, confidence, ‘me time’, a social element, wellbeing and fresh air.

*Mental health matters – but show the benefits, don't tell:*

You do not need to tell people that physical activity and sport is good for their mental health – they already know this. Messaging should centre around making small lifestyle changes and building up gradually to increase physical capability as well as confidence. Encourage people to share their own stories and celebrate the daily victories.

*Ease people back in:*

Encourage people to make small, manageable changes to everyday habits to increase strength and stamina, as well as confidence.

*Keep it cheap or free*

Some groups of people have been badly hit financially during the pandemic, so consider how to offer low cost and flexible options.

/continued overleaf



# Community Centres and Community Indoor and Outdoor Spaces

## **Are people required to wear a mask in the building we manage?**

The face coverings [guidance](#) includes a list of many inside venues where it is required to wear a mask. These include community centres, youth centres and social clubs. The guidance says “*you are expected to wear a face covering before entering any of these settings and must keep it on until you leave unless there is a reasonable excuse for removing it.*” However, there are no requirements to wear face coverings for outdoor activities although you may choose to include this in your risk assessment.

## **What if someone refuses to wear a mask at one of our events?**

If someone has a genuine medical reason not to wear a mask then it is potentially discriminatory to exclude them. However, personal safety is most important and you should reinforce the 2 metre social distancing rule for safety.

## **Should we encourage handwashing?**

On entering and leaving a community facility everyone, including staff, should be asked to wash their hands thoroughly for at least 20 seconds using soap and water or to use hand sanitiser if hand washing facilities are not available.

## **Do we have to take the names of people coming into the venue?**

You have to follow the [requirements](#) for NHS Track and Trace. One change is that you must ask everyone coming in to scan the NHS QR code using their NHS Covid-19 app or provide their name and contact details, not just a lead member of a household or group. The guidance refers to cafes and hospitality venues and also to local authority run services such as community and youth centres being required to follow this. It is good practice and an expectation of the Public Health Team in Birmingham, however, that if you are running another community or faith space you follow that guidance as it helps to keep the citizens you work with safe. You can generate official NHS QR posters [online](#).

The guidance refers particularly to community centres and says all details gathered from, for example signing in, needs to be kept by the person responsible for the hire of the centre.

## **Can we rent out our building?**

Yes, for activities that are permitted. You do need to discuss the infection protection and control measures with anyone hiring it and ensure that it will be safe to operate from. Good practice is for both parties to share their Covid-19 risk assessments – ensuring there is one for the building or premises and another for the activity.

## **Can we start running indoor activities again?**

Yes, you can run some activities inside again, however the size and circumstance of your premises will determine the maximum number of people that can be accommodated while also facilitating social distancing. You will have to take steps to ensure activities are Covid-safe and groups of more than six people or two households do not mingle indoors. The [guidance](#) on multi-facility facilities applies.

## **Can our centre café or monthly community lunch restart indoors?**

Yes, food and drink can be served, whether indoors or outdoors. Any food/drink must be consumed whilst seated, and social distancing needs to be in place. Customers must adhere to the rules on social contact in indoor areas, eating in groups of up to six people, or two households/bubbles, inside or groups of up to 30 outside. If you don't serve alcohol customers can order and collect food and drink from a counter. But they must consume food and drink while seated at a table. Government [guidance](#) includes more information and UK Hospitality have produced detailed [guidance](#)

## **Can we hold meetings in our centre (committee meetings, planning meetings etc.)?**

At the moment, the advice is if you can do it virtually, continue to do so. However, if you are using a venue with a risk assessment this is allowed. You can certainly hold a team meeting of your staff.

## **Can we rent out the building to more than one group at a time?**

If you are a community venue, you can have a number of different activities taking place in different parts of the building. However, your risk assessment needs to take account of the full effect of this. For example, you should take into account access to and capacity of toilets, kitchen areas, the way in and out of the building, staggering start and finish times etc.

## **Can our choir / orchestra / performing arts group meet to practice?**

Indoors: a single group of up to six non-professional singers or two households can now rehearse with social distancing being maintained at all times. *Indoor communal singing can still not take place.*

Outdoors, you can run non-professional performing arts activity as long as you ensure social distancing rules are kept (including a limit of groups up to 30). The [performing arts guidance](#) should be followed and a risk assessment needs to be in place.

You can put on performances either inside or outside, although you must adhere to the venue's audience capacity limits and rules on Covid-19 hygiene and safety. People should attend in groups of up to six people, or two households/bubbles and be kept separate from other groups throughout the activity.

## **Can we run events inside and outside?**

From Step 3 (17 May 2021) both outdoor and indoor gatherings or events, organised by a business, charity, public body or similar organisation, can be organised, subject to specific conditions: that they comply with Covid-secure guidance including taking reasonable steps to limit the risk of transmission. You have to ensure social distancing rules can be followed and social contact limits can be maintained;

- Indoors - rule of 6 or 2 households
- Outdoors - 30 people
- Organised sport - exempt from social contact limits.

If you feel it is unlikely to be able to keep social distancing requirements in place between groups of attendees, or if other Covid-secure requirements cannot be met (such as events such as music festivals and carnivals) then you should talk to Birmingham City Council for advice. Officers are expected to look at each event on its own merit and if they refuse you this should be based on evidence that shows you are not following the correct guidance or that your risk assessment is not robust enough.

Your events need to be capped at 1,000 people or 50% of a venue's capacity, whichever is lower at indoor events and 4,000 people or 50% of a site or venue's capacity, whichever is lower at outdoor events, although the [guidance](#) provides for higher numbers if seated in some circumstances. If you are expecting more than this you have to explain to the City Council how you will manage the site and any public transport to avoid any crowding.

Further information is in the [guidance](#) on organised events guidance for local authorities. Further information has been produced by the [Association of Event Organisers](#) and by a coalition of [festival organisers](#).

### **Can we run community activities such as bingo, metalworking, creative writing etc?**

Yes, you can, but participants must adhere to the rules on social contact in indoor areas, attending in groups of up to six people, or two households/bubbles. The [multi-use facilities guidance](#) says that in Step 3 you can organise larger gatherings to allow informal classes, activities and events to go ahead if, as above:

- You are a business, charity, public body or similar organisation;
- You take reasonable steps to ensure that those attending do not mix beyond six people or two households indoors and 30 people outdoors; and
- You abide by the capacity caps for larger events.

/continued overleaf

## Supporting Vulnerable People

### **Can we continue supporting people in their homes?**

Yes. It is now possible for a group of six or two separate households to meet inside. Therefore, you have much more scope to now carry out activities in people's homes, such as befriending, supporting them to get on-line and doing benefits assessments, provided safeguarding is considered. The [guidance](#) for working in homes allows that, as long as a risk assessment is in place and you keep to the long-standing rules about social distancing, hand hygiene etc. The guidance on [face coverings](#) does not require one in someone's home, but it is good practice to include this as one of your mitigations in your risk assessment.

### **Can we continue to meet people we are supporting one to one, such as in our offices or inside cafes?**

Yes. The Government [guidance](#) on close contact services may be useful to you. The British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy has also produced [guidance](#) on counselling and managing Covid-19 risks (yet to be updated for Step 3).

### **Can my support group go ahead (breast cancer/ Alcoholics Anonymous etc.)? And is there a size limit?**

One of the exceptions to the rule of six is support groups. The [guidance](#) says you are allowed to run support groups of up to 30. As usual, you need a risk assessment.

## Informal Activities

### **Can our informal activities restart? A group of us meets every month to discuss a book / play the guitar / knit and natter and we used to meet in someone's house.**

Groups of up to six people can now meet indoors to do things together. This includes meeting in someone's house. However, it is advisable to maintain social distancing, wash your hands and wear a face covering when indoors with those outside of your household/bubble.

Groups of up to thirty people can now meet outside in public spaces and in gardens to do things together.

Most informal activities do not fit neatly into any guidance and care needs to be given to how they can be adapted to meet the rules.

If an established charity supports the activity and you run it in one of their venues, then talk to them about a risk assessment. A rule of thumb is both the venue and the activity need to be part of a risk assessment.

### **Can my walking group meet with up to 30 and sit inside at a café?**

Yes, but inside you would have to split into groups of six and not mix between them. All of you could sit outside the café as one group, but it is still advised to maintain social distancing.

# Children and Youth Activities

## Can our out-of-school activities, wraparound childcare and youth activities continue?

Yes. All children can attend any indoor or outdoor children’s activity, including sport, whether or not they are vulnerable or their parents need the childcare to enable them to go to work. This can be drop in activities and they do not have to be pre-booked. This includes wraparound care (before and after school childcare), youth groups, children’s playgroups, holiday clubs, dance classes and uniformed groups. It includes informal education such as tuition and madrassa or Sunday school. The [out of school settings guidance](#) provides advice, which in some cases is different to current rules for schools. Youth settings are still being required to remain as Covid-secure venues. For example, face coverings are still required for activities inside for young people, even though these are not required in schools now.

The [National Youth Agency guidelines](#) are detailed and for further information there is a video of a webinar on line on the same webpage which goes into further detail, including what to do if someone tests positive for Covid-19. There are also a range of useful tools from Action Plan and Risk Assessment templates to Covid-safe posters on the [Youth Work Support website](#).

Bubbles and support group sizes are no longer regulated for under 18s. However, the National Youth Agency advice is to keep young people and children in groups of 15 or under, to ensure it is possible to manage social distancing and hygiene measures. It also suggests that children should remain in the same bubble as they are in during the school day and if this is not possible, keeping children from the same school together and keeping them in small groups of up to 15 children with one regular staff member.

If you normally run sessions indoors, you should consider whether you can run them safely outside instead, as the risk of transmission is lower outdoors. Whilst youth leaders can move between groups to manage behaviour or for safeguarding reasons this is advised against, where possible. You also need to keep records for 21 days of the groups children have been mixing in and the staff / volunteers working with them.

The National Youth Agency (NYA) [Guidance](#) sets out requirements for each of the issues in the diagram below in order to run Covid-secure activities.



The National Youth Agency suggests activity should only recommence when the following requirements are in place:

- Assessment that the risk to workers, young people and the community can be safely managed;
- Effective safeguarding arrangements to ensure the most vulnerable in society and all children and young people can be safeguarded;
- Enhanced cleaning arrangements;
- Ability to comply with social distancing requirements and limits on gathering size limits;
- Ability to ensure hygiene levels are maintained, including for frequent hand washing/cleansing with alcohol gel; and
- Safely managed risk to workers, young people and the community.

### **Do children have to wear face coverings inside?**

Although this requirement has been dropped for schools, it has not for activities inside in out of school settings. So, yes, if a child is 11 years old or older they need to wear a face covering inside, unless they are eating or drinking, playing team sports in a large indoor space, such as a sports hall, or are exempt.

### **Can the nursery we run continue?**

Yes. Early years settings can be open for all children. The Early Years Alliance has detailed [guidance](#), and there is Government [guidance](#). If your activities include singing, music or drama, additional information is available [here](#) to reduce risk of infection.

### **Am I restricted in organising sports activities for young people?**

You can run [supervised](#) activities for under-18s<sup>1</sup>, including indoor and outdoor sports and exercise groups, with more than six. You need to follow the relevant [guidance](#) and your risk assessment. Any team sport needs to have approved national governing body rules. The list of those who have this is at the end of the [guidance document](#). There is further [guidance](#) on contact sports, including bubble sizes.

Spectators are now permitted and this includes parents of the children participating. The guidance on managing numbers is [here](#).

### **Is detached youthwork allowed?**

Yes. But for over 18s the rule of six applies. The National Youth Agency makes clear that you are allowed to approach a group and engage with a group that is bigger than that if you are working.

### **What if we have activities or groups for over and under 18s?**

In that case you need to follow the rules for over 18s.

### **Can we visit a young person at home?**

Yes. Home visits are allowed, where necessary, if following Covid-safe guidelines.

### **Can we run trips and overnight activities?**

Yes, if trips are necessary, this is possible. You can use minibuses, cars, taxis and public transport. The National Youth Agency suggests these should only be run if you can not meet the

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<sup>1</sup> Rules applying to under 18s apply to those young people who were under the age of 18 on 31st August 2020



learning outcomes in another way and that you ensure all participants have lateral flow tests before setting off.

Overnight and residential experiences are now permitted, if Covid-secure. But the group limit is six, including staff and volunteers, and can not interact with any other group. Each group of six needs to travel independently and needs to eat separately and can not share activities. Any venue would be following the guidance for hotels. The National Youth Agency guidance has a detailed section on this.

You should require everyone (young people aged 12 and over and staff) to do a lateral flow test prior to departing and then every three – four days. If a young person is ill they should be tested and then sent home. If a member of staff is ill you can not substitute another member of staff from another group and so the whole group needs to return home and be tested.

You should also check if your insurance covers a trip or residential.

### **Can we run groups for parents and children?**

Yes. Parent and child groups can meet inside, although not in homes. You are allowed to have up to 30 parents plus a leader. As children under five do not count in the 30, it would seem that children aged five and above contribute to the total of 15 people. The Government Early Years setting guidance and the Early Years Alliance guidance will apply to such groups. They set out a list of protective measures including steps to take on:

- completing a risk assessment
- maintaining social distancing between adults not in household bubbles
- maintaining good hand hygiene
- adults wearing face coverings
- the areas used are well ventilated
- no more than 6 adults in the room should sing due to the risk of aerosol infection
- activities taking place separately from areas used for formal childcare
- cleaning rooms after each use
- adhering to Track and Trace requirements.

### **Can I provide informal childcare for my grandchildren/ best friend etc.?**

Yes. Although the guidance for childcare bubbles remains in place, in effect as groups of six or two households can meet indoors any informal childcare can fall into this and so is permitted.

### **Can we provide respite care?**

You are allowed to provide respite care for a vulnerable person, someone with a disability and children in care.

### **Can staff and volunteers meet to plan activities for young people?**

Yes. Staff or volunteers who need to meet for the purposes of planning or training can do so and there is no staff team size limit or length of time sessions meetings/ training can take place. However, you should ensure social distancing, hygiene, face coverings and welfare.

### **What Next?**

The earliest Step 4 will come into effect is 21 June. The National Youth Agency expects group sizes still to be restricted and their current advice is not to book or commit to activities beyond 21 June if you are dependent on a further relaxation of rules.

## Faith settings

### **Can more than six people attend worship – e.g. church / mosques / synagogues / gurdwara?**

Yes. Limits for communal worship should still be decided on the basis of the capacity of the place of worship following an assessment of risk. Individuals can attend communal worship in groups of six or two households.

[Government guidance](#) sets out the safe use of places of worship and further guidance sets out ways to [celebrate festivals](#) in Step 3 whilst keeping safe. The City Council is encouraging all faith organisations to sign up to the [Charter for Faith Settings](#) which provides a template and seeks a commitment to operate within Covid-19 controls. Some free resources are also available for those taking part in this very supportive process.

It is not a legal requirement, nor are you expected to police this, but the Council's Public Health team advise that all worshippers should be encouraged, each time they attend, to take a lateral flow test on the day of attending worship or in the two days before. The Council's [website](#) has up to date information of where these can be obtained or you can [order home tests](#) from the NHS.

You are allowed to hold congregational prayer with more than six people provided there is a robust risk assessment in place that is being followed. The limit of numbers is not set out in law; it depends on the capacity of the space, the flow round the building and capacity of toilet facilities etc. Alterations may have to be made to rituals and there can be no mixing of households.

If you want to serve refreshments afterwards, you need to follow [the guidance for hospitality settings](#).

### **Is singing allowed?**

For worship inside you are now permitted to have a single small group of singers if this is essential to an act of communal worship. The [faith settings guidance](#) sets out some principles for doing this safely and the [performing arts guidance](#) also needs to be followed. This should be limited to as few singers as possible and they need to be socially distanced. Communal singing should still not take place inside due to the high risk of infection.

### **What are the current rules on life events like weddings and funerals?**

There are still [limits](#) to the numbers of people who can attend weddings, receptions, funerals, wakes, private baptisms, naming ceremonies and bar/bat mitzvahs. Weddings, civil partnership ceremonies, wakes and other commemorative events can take place with up to 30 people (plus anyone working). Communal singing is still not permitted inside.

Wedding receptions can also take place for up to 30 people. They can take place in a Covid-secure venues (not homes) and outdoors, including private gardens if steps are taken to keep people safe. There is some additional guidance on [wedding ceremonies](#).

Funerals no longer have a legal limit on the number of people who can attend. The numbers, instead, need to be determined by how many people the venue can safely accommodate with social distancing measures in place.

### **Where can I find guidance about my faith setting or rituals?**

[Faith Action](#) have recordings of good practice webinars and many examples of guidance from different faith organisations.



## Other Questions

### **Can I meet a colleague in a coffee shop or cafe?**

Yes, cafes can now permitted to allow a group of six people from any number of households to be seated indoors. However, you may need to book in advance and also adhere to COVID safety measures in place at the venue.

### **Are protests allowed?**

It is expressly permitted now for voluntary sector organisations, amongst others, to arrange protests, so long as the organisers have taken steps to ensure these are Covid-safe.

### **What if I find out someone was infected or had symptoms when they attended one of our activities or our venue?**

You can contact Birmingham's Public Health Team on [contacttracing@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:contacttracing@birmingham.gov.uk) for advice. They are taking a supportive, rather than punitive approach – so you should not be fearful of being criticised for anything you have done, but they can advise if you need to take any steps to stop the spread of the virus.

### **I have read this and the Government guidance, but I am still unsure an activity we want to hold is allowed. Who can help?**

If you have read through all of this and are still worried about something please contact us at BVSC. We can help you to find the information you need and can call on Birmingham's Public Health team. Email [Benitaw@bvsc.org](mailto:Benitaw@bvsc.org)

We are also working with facilities management experts, Acivico so will be running workshops and providing one to one support around reopening community buildings. One workshop is planned for [10 June 2022](#) and more can be arranged. Please email us for further information, to book a workshop or to request some one to one support on: [admin@bvsc.org](mailto:admin@bvsc.org)