



Refugees At Home Coronavirus Police.

Last Updated 21.12.2020

Coronavirus is a viral infection which causes symptoms similar to 'flu. This has been declared a global pandemic in which large numbers of people are already infected. Measures are currently in place to try to limit the spread of the infection.

Current advice suggests that infection with the virus leads to a mild to moderate illness for the majority of people. A small proportion of the population is at risk of becoming more seriously unwell. Those who are thought to be more vulnerable include the elderly and those with underlying health conditions as well as those from BAME communities and pregnant women.

Coronavirus and concerns about the impact on the work of Refugees At Home (RAH).

This policy outlines the general principles which will form our response to this uncertain and ever changing situation. We will be guided by the official advice provided by the NHS and the Government, including devolved decisions from the four nations. This means there will be different approaches depending on area.

Employees and volunteers **cannot give advice** about the Coronavirus: hosts, guests, volunteers, referrers and home visitors will be asked to consult official NHS and Government advice when thinking through their own responses to possible exposure of the virus or the development of symptoms.

There is now different advice in different parts of the UK, including localised restrictions. This advice and these restrictions have been put in place by the authorities as a response to varying levels of severity. However, across the whole of the UK if anyone has symptoms or has been in contact with someone who has symptoms then they and their household should self isolate at home.

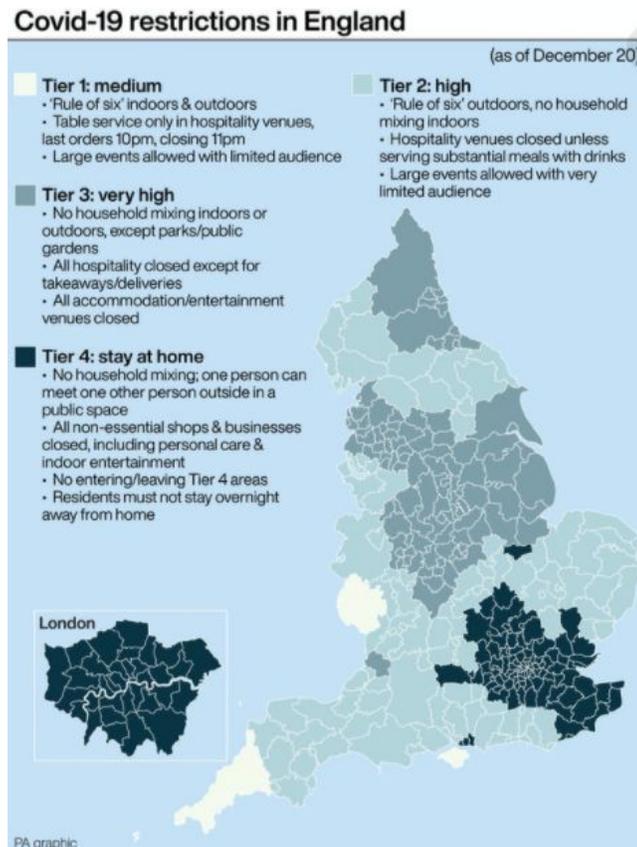
What is a household?

For the purposes of hosting, Refugees At Home is working on the premise that a guest is part of a household. If a guest who is currently hosted needs to move within a local area, we will review our ability to continue support depending on the specific level of risk in the area and the hosts we have available. Use of public transport will be strongly discouraged.

Tier System

A tiered system has been adopted to help people understand the level of risk in any given area. These levels are medium, high, very high and stay at home. **Note- in Scotland a 5 Tier system applies.**

A list of where different Tiers apply in England can be found [here](#).



A [4th tier](#) has been announced as of 19.12.20 and is essentially equivalent to a lockdown.

Local Lockdowns and Circuit Breaker Lockdown

Circuit Breaker lockdowns are similar to local lockdowns but tend to be applied across larger areas i.e Northern Ireland is currently in Circuit Breaker Lockdown. At the moment they are relatively new but we believe they are imposed on a temporary basis with more regular reviews than the lockdowns we have previously experienced.

In Circuit Breakers and local Lockdowns **we will not** be able to make new placements until that circuit break has lifted. New referrals may still be made but our referrers will be advised that we will not be able to progress placements during that time. These will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

During local lockdowns we continue to review new referrals on a case by case basis. Any placement made will be approached with great care but with the ultimate aim of preventing homelessness during this difficult time. Our capacity in these areas will be reduced by the inability of our hosts to accept a new guest.

Priority for moving between hosts will be given to our currently hosted guests and on the condition that our self isolation and social distancing advice is followed.

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Refugees At Home retains the right to exercise discretion on making placements during a Circuit Break lockdown if an emergency situation presents for the purposes of preventing homelessness. These situations will be considered on a case by case basis.

Current National Advice -

England -

The details below refer to the different requirements in the 4 Tiers. These are overruled by any lockdown imposed or subsequent advice issued by the Government.

The three simple rules - Wash hands regularly, wear a face covering in enclosed spaces and stay at least 2 metres apart (1 metre if wearing a face covering).

Each area will have different rules depending on the Tier that they fall into - full details can be found [here](#). A postcode [checker](#) can help you find out which Tier you are in.

In Summary -

Medium - You must not socialise in groups of more than 6 indoors or outdoors (other than where a legal exemption applies)

You must wear a face mask.

You should continue to follow social distancing rules, work from home if you can effectively do so and avoid public transport and busier travelling times.

High - On top of the medium level restrictions you must not socialise with anyone other than your household or bubble inside. You must not socialise with more than 6 outdoors, including in gardens.

Very High - All of the above will apply and certain businesses will be forced to close. Mixing in groups of a maximum of 6 people will only be allowed in certain outdoor public spaces.

Tier 4 - Stay at home.

If you develop symptoms you should self isolate and book a test. If you have been in recent contact with a guest, host or home visitor you should contact Refugees At Home as soon as possible.

Scotland

In Scotland **FACTS** applies - **F**ace coverings, **A**void crowded spaces, **C**lean hands regularly, **T**wo metre distance and **S**elf isolate if you develop symptoms

Do not meet people from any other households in your home or in another person's home socially, unless they are in your extended household (bubble). This includes children.

Exemptions to this can be found [here](#)

In Scotland, you can meet no more than 6 individuals outdoors so long as the 6 people are from two households. This does not include children under 12.

Key differences between levels in Scotland

LEVEL 0 - Nearly normal

Indoor meetings allowed – maximum eight people from three households

Fifteen people from five households can meet outdoors

LEVEL 1 - Medium

Six people from two households can meet indoors and outdoors

LEVEL 2 - High

No indoor meeting with other households

Six people from two households can meet outdoors and in hospitality settings

Pubs permitted to sell alcohol indoors only with a main meal - and time restrictions may apply

LEVEL 3 - Very High

Alcohol sales not permitted indoors or outdoors

Restaurants may be able to remain open under strict conditions

LEVEL 4 - Lockdown

Closer to a full lockdown of the type the UK went into at the end of March, with non-essential shops being forced to close

Some outdoor meeting still allowed

Schools will stay open

Wales

Wales follows a 4 Tier system similar to the system in place in England.

The three simple rules - Wash hands regularly, wear a face covering in enclosed spaces and stay at least 2 metres apart (1 metre if wearing a face covering).

People are not allowed to meet socially anywhere indoors with people that they do not live with at home.

If you have formed an extended household (bubble) you can meet indoors with up to 6 people from that extended household. **This does not apply in areas under local lockdown.**

Full details can be found [here](#)

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Northern Ireland

There is a national restriction on any households mixing indoors except with those who have formed an extended bubble or have caring duties.

You can meet no more than 6 individuals outdoors so long as the 6 people are from two households. This does not include children under 12. More information can be found [here](#)

The Rule of Six

The rule of six now applies across the United Kingdom. Depending on where in the UK you are there are different rules however the rule of 6 will be overruled where local lockdown restrictions are in place. **Different Tiers are detailed below explaining where the rule of 6 applies.**

Nation	Rule of 6 rules
England	You cannot meet with more than 6 people inside or outdoors in England. This includes children regardless of their age.
Scotland	You cannot meet with more than 6 people inside or outdoors in Scotland and these 6 people must only come from 2 households.. This excludes children under the age of 12. Scotland will enter a national lockdown on 26th December 2020.
Wales	You cannot meet indoors with more than 6 people. This excludes children under the age of 11. Wales entered a national lockdown on 20th December 2020.
Northern Ireland	You cannot meet indoors but a group of 6 can meet outdoors. This can be extended to 15 in a public space. Northern Ireland will enter a national lockdown on 26th December 2020

Any further advice issued by the Government that is not detailed above should be followed. We may not be able to make further placements in certain areas depending on future restrictions. We will keep this under review and update our policy in accordance with changing advice.

Symptoms of Coronavirus

As Coronavirus is a relatively new virus we are still learning about it. Some people may develop all or some of the symptoms and others may not develop any at all.

The main symptoms are -

- A new, continuous cough
- A high temperature
- A loss or change to your sense of taste or smell

You may also experience

- Shortness of breath
- Extreme fatigue

Advice can be found on the [NHS website](#)

Hosting

We are open to new referrals and are working with our trusted referral partners to ensure guests fully understand the importance of continued social distancing

Where possible we will try to find move on options for our guests if they need to leave hosting.

All guests moving into a new household should isolate for a period of at least 10 days. Referrers will be asked to ensure that their guests understand and agree to this before the move is arranged. Guests will be reminded of this if they need to move between placements and the necessity of this will depend on the hosts involved.

We are asking all hosts and guests questions specific to Coronavirus, symptoms and contacts in the lead up to placements.

It is possible that it will become more difficult to find suitable move on hosts for our guests. We will always do all that we can to help and will keep hosts and referrers informed of any changes to continued hosting.

For current placements, hosts, guests and referrers will be asked to update RAH as soon as possible if they or anything they have been in close contact with develops symptoms.

House Rules

In addition to the required social distancing and hygiene rules, some hosts may have individual house rules, which we will ask guests to respect, so long as they are reasonable.

Guests should not move between their host's home and friends, unless this is

something their current host is happy with.

We will ask referrers to ensure that guests are aware of the current policy advice and restrictions on movement. If a guest will not abide by these rules we will end the placement and will not be able to offer further hosting.

If a guest feels uncomfortable in their placement and is worried that their host is not practicing social distancing, we ask that they let their referrers know. We will try and find an alternative placement but we cannot guarantee this.

We **ALWAYS** depend on our referrers to ask appropriate questions of guests and inform us of any health conditions. We rely on this more than ever. We are asking referrers to talk to their guests about the virus, using a translator if necessary. Information about a guests health is shared with hosts.

If someone develops symptoms -

If a host or guest develops Coronavirus or symptoms of Coronavirus, and either the host or guest asks for the placement to end, we will do all that we can to assist but must advise that **members of a household should self isolate together on the same premises.**

We will not be able to offer further placements until the guest has recovered and is no longer contagious. If we are to offer further placements after this time, the nature of how the original placement ended will be shared with prospective hosts.

If a host asks that a placement ends because of concerns surrounding the Coronavirus but not because any one has the virus, we will do all we can to find a new placement. However this cannot be guaranteed.

Home Visits

Home visits are temporarily virtual. A Home Visitor will not be asked to make a visit in person unless a host has a suitable outdoor space and both the host and home visitor feel comfortable with that arrangement. This will also be driven by the restrictions in each area.

If a home visit goes ahead this must be done outside and a video tour of the property arranged. We recognise the importance of face to face contact when doing a home visit however continued social distancing is important.

Where a virtual home visit is organised, we will ask that home visitors visit in person in the future - when it is safe to do so and our policy allows for it.

Any questions that the home visitor is unsure about should be relayed back to the placement team so we can provide consistent answers for our hosts and home visitors.

Employees and Volunteers



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Much of the work involved in Refugees At Home is undertaken remotely so there is limited face to face contact between volunteers, guests, hosts, referrers and others.

Members of the placement team will work from home and additional support will be given by the Executive Director and Trustee Operations Group.

The Placement team and volunteer team can seek advice from the Executive Director and Trustee Operations Group should they have concerns or questions about how to deal with this situation