

Government delays restrictions on multibuy deals and advertising on TV and online

- Restrictions will be delayed in light of unprecedented global economic situation and in order to give industry more time to prepare for the restrictions on advertising
- Rules limiting the location of unhealthy foods in shops will go ahead as planned in October

Rules banning multibuy deals on foods and drinks high in fat, salt, or sugar (HFSS) – including buy one get one free (BOGOF), '3 for 2', and restrictions on free refills for soft drinks – will be delayed for a year.

Restrictions on the placement of less healthy products – a key part of the government's commitment to reduce obesity – will still come into force in October 2022 as planned. These will mean less healthy products are no longer promoted in key locations, such as checkouts, store entrances, aisle ends and their online equivalents.

Economies across the world have been affected by higher than expected global energy and goods prices, leading to increased costs across supply chains which are affecting both businesses and consumers.

The delay to restrictions on multibuy deals will allow the government to review and monitor the impact of the restrictions on the cost of living in light of an unprecedented global economic situation.

The restrictions banning HFSS adverts on TV before 9pm and paid-for adverts online will also be paused for a year, meaning they come into force January 2024. This is due to a delay to the Health and Care Bill receiving Royal assent, as well as a growing recognition that the industry needs more time to prepare.

A consultation on TV and paid-for-adverts online will be launched in the coming weeks.

Public Health Minister Maggie Throup said:

We're committed to doing everything we can to help people live healthier lives. Pausing restrictions on deals like buy one get one free will allow us to understand its impact on consumers in light of an unprecedented global economic situation.

Media, Data and Digital Minister Julia Lopez said:

We are determined to tackle childhood obesity and are working hard to improve young people's health, including by investing £550 million of government and lottery cash to level up access to sport and physical activity right across the country

We have listened to the concerns which have been raised and will not be bringing in restrictions on junk food advertising until confident that the time is right.

Shoppers will now be able to continue taking advantage of multibuy offers on all foods, including healthier foods which were not included in the original restrictions.

Addressing obesity remains a priority for government, and will reduce the strain put on the NHS as it works to tackle the covid backlogs.

Last month saw laws on calorie labelling in large restaurants, cafes and takeaways come into force.

The government will also be launching the Better Health: Rewards scheme in Wolverhampton later this year to test whether financial incentives can support adults to move more and eat better.

The government will publish a Health Disparities White Paper later this year, aiming to break the link between factors such as people's social or economic circumstances and their prospect for a healthy life. This will mean looking at the biggest preventable killers, including obesity.

The government has taken action to support families worth over £22 billion in 2022-23 to help with rising costs. National Insurance starting thresholds will rise to £12,570 from July 2022, meaning people across the UK will keep more of what they earn before they start paying tax.

Households liable for Council Tax in Bands A-D in England will receive a £150 non-repayable Council Tax Rebate, and Local Authorities are receiving extra discretionary funding to help those who are in need but not eligible.

A new statutory instrument will be introduced to parliament to confirm that the restriction of volume price promotions will be delayed.