

Jobcentre guidance on COVID-19 Local Restriction Tiers



The department will follow the latest government and Public Health England (PHE) guidance to ensure colleagues and customers remain safe throughout.

On 23 November 2020, the Prime Minister announced that the government will be returning to a strengthened Local Restriction Tiers system of COVID-19 measures in England from Thursday 3 December 2020 to protect the NHS and save lives.

This means from 3 December 2020 in England, the following updated jobcentre guidance will apply to customers, and will ensure essential support is provided whilst keeping colleagues and customers safe.

Local Restriction Tier 1 (Medium) and Tier 2 (High):

- Work Coaches will be empowered to support customers by the best and most appropriate channels – whether online, by phone, or in person – with jobcentres remaining open to help those who need extra support and are unable to interact with us on the phone or digitally.
- All jobcentres to remain open – maintaining social distancing and regular desk and communal space cleaning in line with current COVID-19 guidance.
- Face-to-face assessments for disability benefits remain suspended.
- If you think you might be entitled to a health and disability benefit you should contact us as soon as possible to make a claim in the normal way.
- For existing customers, payments will continue as normal. Anyone who has a change in their needs should contact us immediately so we can ensure they are receiving the correct level of support.

Local Restriction Tier 3 (Very High) and Tier 4 (Stay at Home):

- All face-to-face assessments will be suspended, except for vulnerable customers who will still be able to attend jobcentres for urgent support.
- Work Coaches will be empowered to support customers by the best and most appropriate channels – whether online, by phone, or in person – with

jobcentres remaining open to help those who need extra support and are unable to interact with us on the phone or digitally.

- All jobcentres to remain open – maintaining social distancing and regular desk and communal space cleaning in line with current COVID-19 guidance.
- Face-to-face assessments for disability benefits remain suspended.
- If you think you might be entitled to a health and disability benefit, you should contact us as soon as possible to make a claim in the normal way.
- For existing customers, payments will continue as normal. Anyone who has a change in their needs should contact us immediately so we can ensure they are receiving the correct level of support.

On 3 November 2020, we also confirmed that the suspension of the Minimum Income Floor – for self-employed customers claiming Universal Credit in England, Scotland, and Wales – has been extended to the end of April 2021. This means that self-employed customers on Universal Credit will receive a payment that reflects their earnings at this difficult time.

For Scotland:

On 2 November 2020, the Scottish Government introduced a five level tiered system. The following will therefore apply to jobcentres and customers in Scotland:

Levels 0 and 1:

- For these levels, the jobcentre guidance in place for Tier 1 (medium) of the updated Local Restriction Tiers system (above) will apply.

Level 2:

- For this level, the jobcentre guidance in place for Tier 2 (high) of the updated Local Restriction Tiers system (above) will apply.

Levels 3 and 4:

- For these levels, the jobcentre guidance in place for Tier 3 (very high) of the updated Local Restriction Tiers system (above) will apply.

For Wales:

The Welsh Government has introduced a system of four COVID alert levels for Wales. The following will therefore apply to jobcentres and customers in Wales:

- Alert level 1 – For this level, the jobcentre guidance in place for Tier 1 (medium) of the Local Restriction Tiers system (above) will apply.
- Alert level 2 – For this level, the jobcentre guidance in place for Tier 2 (high) of the Local Restriction Tiers system (above) will apply.
- Alert level 3 and 4 – For these levels, the jobcentre guidance in place for Tier 3 (very high) of the Local Restriction Tiers system (above) will apply.

From 28 December 2020, Wales will move into Alert level 4.

For Northern Ireland:

Please contact the Department for Communities for more information on measures introduced in Northern Ireland – 028 9082 9000.

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 3267 5144

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1. 21 December 2020

Added jobcentre guidance for Tier 4 (Stay at Home) in England.

2. 18 December 2020

The Welsh Government has introduced a system of four COVID alert levels for Wales. This page has been updated to reflect this.

3. 2 December 2020

From 9 November, the Welsh Government announced an easing of restrictions. From then, the jobcentre guidance in place for Tier 2 (high) of the updated Local Restriction Tiers system (above) will apply to jobcentres and customers in Wales.

4. 27 November 2020

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