

# Health and Social Care Secretary's statement on coronavirus (COVID-19): 5 June 2020

Good afternoon and welcome to Downing Street's daily coronavirus briefing.

Before taking questions from members of the public and the media, I'd like to start by sharing the latest data.

First slide please.

The first slide shows the information on infections, and the data published by the Office for National Statistics this morning shows the number of people who had coronavirus in England fell from around 139,000 between 3 and 16 May to around 53,000 between 17 and 30 May.

That's represented in percentage terms in this right-hand chart. It demonstrates that the percentage of the population testing positive has been falling consistently over recent weeks. SAGE have confirmed that the R across the whole of the UK is between 0.7 and 0.9.

The ONS survey also estimated the number of new coronavirus infections which stands at 39,000 per week which is equivalent to around 5,600 per day. And this is lower than the similar estimate made last week. So these are encouraging trends about the reducing spread of coronavirus across the country.

This slide shows progress on testing and the number of new confirmed cases. In total 5,214,277 tests have been carried out including 207,231 tests yesterday. And these data on tests include both the swab tests to find out if you have coronavirus and also the antibody tests, which stand at just over 40,000 antibody tests a day.

The antibody tests find out if you have had the virus. And if you have had the virus you can help make a difference because by donating your plasma from your blood that has your antibodies in it then you can help somebody who is currently suffering in hospital with coronavirus.

I did this earlier today. I gave my antibodies and the process is simple, it's straightforward. If you have had coronavirus, if you go to the NHS Blood and Transplant website NHSBT then you too can donate your antibodies and help protect somebody who is currently in hospital with coronavirus. And I'd encourage anybody who can do that to step forward.

The chart also shows that the number of confirmed cases is 1,650 yesterday which brings the total of confirmed cases, confirmed by swab tests, to 283,311.

This slide shows the data from hospitals. There were 694 admissions, new

admissions, with COVID-19 on the latest data, which has fallen over the last week. Those data include England, Wales and Northern Ireland. They don't include Scotland. And also the bottom data which is across the whole UK, shows the number of people in ventilator beds has fallen from 751 on 28 May, a week ago, down to 571. This is down from a peak of over 3000 on 12 April.

Slide 4 shows the regional breakdown of people in hospital. And it shows that over 7,000 people remain in hospital, 7,080 to be precise. But this is down 15% from 8,285 a week ago and a peak of over 20,000 in April. The final slide shows the number of people who have sadly lost their lives. And this number stands at 40,261 on the latest information, which is 357 higher than yesterday.

These slides demonstrate, although the past few months have been a time of sorrow for so many people, because of these deaths is not a statistic but the loss of a loved one for so many families. The slides also show that we have made a progress in our fight against this virus. But they also show that there is so much more to do.

It shows that we must always remain vigilant.

Especially when it comes to protecting our NHS, which has been at the front line of the battle.

And of course thanks to an enormous national effort, we protected the NHS and prevented it being overwhelmed which in turn saved lives.

And today I want to set out further that we are taking further steps to protect the NHS and especially around face coverings and face masks.

Yesterday, the Secretary of State for Transport announced that face coverings will become mandatory on public transport from June 15 – with a few specific exceptions – for instance those with breathing difficulties.

This doesn't mean surgical masks, which need to be kept for clinical settings, but the kind of face masks that you can easily make at home – in fact there's a good [guide on GOV.UK](#).

As more people go back to work, and the passenger numbers start to increase, so face coverings on transport are more important.

Likewise, as the NHS reopens right across the country, it is critically important to stop the spread amongst staff, patients and visitors too.

So today we are setting out that all hospital visitors and outpatients will need to wear face coverings.

One of the things that we've learnt is that those in hospitals, those that are working in hospital are more likely to catch coronavirus, whether they work in a clinical setting or not.

And so to offer even greater protection, we are also providing new guidance for NHS staff in England which will come into force again on the 15 June, and

all hospital staff will be required to wear Type 1 or 2 surgical masks.

And this will cover all staff working in hospital.

And it will apply at all times, not just when they are doing their life-saving work on the frontline. It will apply in all areas, except in those areas designated as covid-secure workplaces.

And of course where PPE guidance recommends more stringent protection, of course, that remains in place.

We are upgrading this guidance to make sure that even as this virus comes under control, as we saw the falling incidences across the country, our hospitals are a place of care and of safety.

We have also strengthened infection control in care homes. And we are working with the social care sector on how this approach can apply appropriately in social care too.

It's about protecting our NHS and social care, which means protecting our colleagues who work in the NHS and in social care.

And I want to say this to you all my colleagues in health and social care.

As we get this virus under control, it is so important that we stamp out new infections and outbreaks.

And of course in health and care you do this brilliantly all the time – and coronavirus is no exception.

That means that if one of your team tests positive, you have to follow the isolation advice.

The natural impulse of course of anyone in care, in the NHS is the thing you can best do is be there to help. To be there for the patient.

But if you have the virus, or are at risk of having the virus, the best thing you can do for them, as well as yourself, is to isolate at home.

And this means that social distancing in the workplace also must be reiterated and it matters just as much as anywhere else.

And I know that social distancing and self-isolation can cause big logistical challenges, and we will support you in doing what is right and necessary.

All of us have a role to play here.

And the last thing I want to say is this, ahead of this weekend, when I know there are plans for further protests, I want to say something to you as Health Secretary.

Like so many, I am appalled by the death of George Floyd and I understand why people are deeply upset.

But we are still facing a health crisis and coronavirus remains a real threat.

And the reason that it is vital that people stick to the rules this weekend is to protect themselves and their family from this horrific disease.

So please for the safety of your loved ones, do not attend large gatherings – including demonstrations – of more than 6 people.

We all need to stay alert, control the virus and save lives.

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## [Face masks and coverings to be worn by all NHS hospital staff and visitors](#)

Evidence from the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) previously confirmed face coverings can help reduce the risk of transmission if you are suffering from coronavirus, but not showing symptoms.

NHS staff already wear face masks in clinical areas within 2 metres of a patient, but this new guidance applies to everyone working in all areas of the hospital.

Members of the public are strongly urged to attend hospital wearing a face covering, but a face mask will be provided in emergencies.

Last month, government set out [advice for people on how to make their own face coverings easily at home](#), using scarves or other textile items. These face coverings should cover the mouth and nose while allowing the wearer to breathe comfortably and can be as simple as a scarf or bandanna that ties behind the head to give a snug fit.

The government has adequate stocks of face masks to meet demand and continues to pursue contracts for additional stock.

Further guidance for hospitals will be published by 15 June to allow hospitals to get stocks and plans in place, and the guidance will be kept under review.

We are working with the social care sector to implement a similar approach.

At the press conference today, Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

As the NHS reopens right across the country, it is critically important to stop the spread amongst staff, patients and visitors too.

So today we are setting out that all hospital visitors and outpatients will need to wear face coverings.

One of the things that we've learnt is that those in hospital, those who are working in hospital, are more likely to catch coronavirus, whether they work in a clinical setting or not.

And to offer even greater protection, we are also providing new guidance for NHS staff in England which will come into force again on the 15 June, and all hospital staff will be required to wear Type 1 or 2 surgical masks, and this will cover all staff working in hospital.

It will apply at all times, not just when they are doing their life-saving work on the frontline. It will apply in all areas except those areas designated as COVID-secure workplaces.

And of course where PPE guidance recommends more stringent protection, that remains in place.

There is further [advice on making a face covering available](#).

People should wash their hands or use hand sanitiser before putting their face covering on and after taking it off and it is important that people don't touch their face covering when wearing it, where possible, to avoid hand to mask transmission of the virus.

The public are advised to consider wearing face coverings in enclosed public spaces where you may be more likely to come into contact with people you do not normally meet, the government announced today.

On 4 June government announced that it will work with operators to make it mandatory for passengers to wear face coverings when using public transport in England from 15 June.

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**[Conflict, Stability and Security Fund:  
Call for Bids 2020](#)**



The Conflict, Stability and Security Fund- CSSF is the UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Office's (FCO) global fund supporting the efforts in the region to tackle illicit economies, serious and organised crime and corruption in Colombia, Peru and Panama primarily (but with potential to cover linked events in other neighbouring countries).

In Colombia for 2020/21 we are inviting proposals in the specific topic outlined in the attached terms of reference. PLEASE APPLY ONLY TO THESE THEMATIC AREA, BIDS OUTSIDE THEM WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.

#### **PRIORITY**

We are seeking an implementer to undertake a regional investigative journalism project which focuses on the dynamics of corruption, serious and organised crime and illicit economies. How these dynamics are interacting with the current COVID-19 pandemic might also be a focus of project activity.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

The ultimate form of the project depends upon the project implementer but might include the following:

- Creating a new platform that strengthens media organisation throughout the region and provides journalists with a platform in which they can collaborate and build regional stories on the key thematic areas, as well as to provide them with instruments to enhance their investigative journalism capacity;
- Providing a new network of support to journalists already working in this area and further increasing their capacity as well as the possibility of investigative journalism in the key thematic areas appearing in regional press outlets;
- Support to the operations of a pre-existing media organisation/alliance already working in these thematic to enhance capabilities/expand their ambition

#### **How to apply:**

Proposals should be sent to the British Embassy in Colombia. Instructions for this bidding round in Bogota are outlined below.

The following documents are attached, please read all guidance.

#### **Bidding process:**

1. Potential implementers are invited to submit a Concept Note to [claudia.castilla@fco.gov.uk](mailto:claudia.castilla@fco.gov.uk) and [cianan.good@fco.gov.uk](mailto:cianan.good@fco.gov.uk) by Thursday 18

June 2020, 11.59 p. m. Bogota time (template attached). Concept bids should be no more than 3 pages in length. We will not consider proposals that are delivered after the deadline.

2. The Embassy in Bogota will evaluate all Concept Forms and decide which proposals should move forward in the funding round. Only potential implementers invited to continue in the process will be contacted by the Embassy by (Thursday 25 June 2020), notifying them of the decision and inviting them to prepare full project proposal forms. If you have not heard from the Embassy by then please assume your bid has been unsuccessful.
3. The deadline for submitting the full project proposal will then be Sunday 5 July by 11.59 p. m. Bogota time (again, only implementers that are asked to by the Embassy should send full proposals). We will not receive proposals after this deadline.
4. Successful bids will be announced by 10 July 2020. Projects approved for funding will start at the latest on 1 August 2020 but sooner if possible.

All proposals (concepts and full bids) must be submitted in English. The Budget must be presented in pounds (GBP), and an exchange rate of COP/£ 4764.25 must be used; however, the Embassy will not cover any variances in the total amount of the budget due to the exchange rate.

Full proposals at Stage 3 must be supported by a realistic activity based budget, set out with as much detail as possible.

## **Selection Criteria**

Bids will also be assessed against the following criteria:

- value for money
- alignment with the terms of reference
- project viability, including capacity of implementing organisation(s)
- project design, including clear, achievable objectives/outputs
- good risk and stakeholder management

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Last updated 11 June 2020 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 11 June 2020

Edited the Project Bid, Scope and Scale, and Deadline sections – the date changed from 30 March 2020 to 30 March 2021. Edited the budget section – changed from GBP 150 to 200,000.

2. 5 June 2020

First published.

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## **Ban on evictions extended by 2 months to further protect renters**

- Suspension of evictions from social or private rented accommodation extended by 2 months
- New court rules will ensure vulnerable renters will be protected when the suspension of evictions ends
- Government committed to ensuring that no one is evicted from their home this summer due to coronavirus.

Millions of renters across England and Wales will receive greater protection after the government extended the suspension of new evictions until 23 August.

The extension announced by the Housing Secretary today (5 June 2020) takes the moratorium on evictions to a total of five months to ensure that renters continue to have certainty and security.

Ministers are also working with the judiciary, legal representatives and the advice sector on arrangements, including new rules, which will mean that courts are better able to address the need for appropriate protection of all parties, including those shielding from coronavirus. This is to ensure that judges have all the information necessary to make just decisions and that the most vulnerable tenants can get the help they need.

Where tenants do experience financial difficulties as a result of the pandemic, the government is clear that landlords and tenants should work together and exhaust all possible options – such as flexible payment plans which take into account a tenant's individual circumstances – to ensure cases only end up in court as an absolute last resort.

Over the coming weeks, the government is taking careful steps to ease lockdown measures, alongside decisive steps already taken to unlock the housing market so people can move if they need to – for example where they may need to move for work or for family reasons.

While the government is taking unprecedented action to protect tenants and landlords during these times, the ultimate ambition is to transition out of these measures at the end of August to allow the market to operate while ensuring people have appropriate access to justice.



Housing Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

We have provided an unprecedented package of support for renters during this pandemic. Today, I am announcing that the government's ban on evictions will be extended for another 2 months. That takes the moratorium on evictions to a total of 5 months.

Eviction hearings will not be heard in courts until the end of August and no-one will be evicted from their home this summer due to coronavirus.

We are also working with the judiciary on proposals to ensure that when evictions proceedings do recommence, arrangements, including rules, are in place to assist the court in giving appropriate protections for those who have been particularly affected by coronavirus – including those tenants who have been shielding.

Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice, Robert Buckland QC MP, said:

Protecting vulnerable people has been our priority throughout this pandemic. Extending this ban will give people invaluable security in these turbulent times and work continues at pace to ensure vulnerable renters remain protected long after the ban ends.

Today's announcement builds on the radical package of measures taken during these difficult times to protect both renters and landlords affected by coronavirus, including:

- The introduction of emergency legislation so landlords won't be able to start proceedings to evict tenants for at least a 3 month period which will remain in place until at least September;
- Extending mortgage payment holidays to include landlords whose tenants are experiencing financial difficulties due to the pandemic;
- Supporting businesses to continue to pay their staff through the furlough scheme, as well as strengthening the welfare safety net with a nearly £7 billion boost to the welfare system and increasing Local Housing Allowance;
- Delivering £180 million in Discretionary Housing Payments to councils across the country to support renters with housing costs in the private and social rented sectors;
- Guidance which helps landlords and tenants to work together to resolve issues at the earliest opportunity.
- On request of the Lord Chancellor the Civil Procedure Rule Committee has today agreed to extend the ban on eviction proceedings by a further 2

months. The CPRC is an advisory non-departmental public body, made up of judges, barristers, solicitors and lay advice members, which makes rules to set out the practice and procedure to be followed in the Civil Division of the Court of Appeal, the High Court and the County Court.

- The two month extension will come into force on 25 June, ensuring there's no gap between the existing ban and the extension, and also applies to home owners, commercial and leasehold.
- The Master of the Rolls, as head of civil justice, has convened a judiciary-led, cross-sector, task-and-finish working group to consider and to address so far as practicable matters affecting litigants and the courts when the present stay on possession proceedings is lifted. This group has the support of the Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government;
- The focus of the group is on preparing the courts for the lifting of the suspension including how best to support parties, including vulnerable renters. The group will also include rules, guidance (including to private landlords as well as social landlords), the provision of information and the sharing of best practice.
- Membership includes representatives from the judiciary, government, advice sectors, legal profession, Legal Aid agency, charities and pro bono organisations;
- These changes apply to England and Wales.
- Guidance for landlords and renters is in the process of being updated to reflect these changes

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## [Universities Minister sets out support for international students](#)

Measures to support international students and the higher education sector against the global challenges coronavirus poses were outlined by the Universities Minister today (5 June).

Speaking at the British Council's Going Global online event today, Michelle Donelan emphasised that the UK's world-leading universities remain open to international students, and the Government is working as a priority to make processes as flexible and easy as possible to allow them to study at UK institutions under the current circumstances.

The Minister highlighted a range of support measures for students, including flexibility on visa regulations, as well as announcing the appointment of Sir Steve Smith as an International Education Champion to boost the numbers of international students in the UK.

The role of the Champion will be to work with organisations across the breadth of the education sector, including universities, schools, the EdTech industry, vocational training, and early years schooling providers. The

Champion will also target priority regions worldwide to build networks and promote the UK as the international education partner of choice.

The appointment of Sir Steve Smith fulfils a headline action from the International Education Strategy, published by DfE and DIT in March last year. The former Exeter University vice-chancellor will spearhead overseas activity and address a number of market access barriers on behalf of the whole education sector, including concerns over the global recognition of UK degrees.

Universities Minister, Michelle Donelan said:

“International students are an integral part of our society, culture and economy and we are proud that so many international students come here every year to study. That is why I want to stress to overseas students at this unprecedented time that they will always be welcome in this country.

“Supporting international students is one of our top priorities and we are working hard to make sure we are as flexible as possible and make processes as easy as they can be, including around current visa regulations.

“Now, more than ever, it is critical we work together internationally, sharing our knowledge to mitigate the challenges we all face. I am delighted to announce Sir Steve Smith as the International Education Champion, a role that will be integral to our outward-looking approach to international education, from early years through to higher education.”

Minister for Exports, Graham Stuart MP:

“I’d like to extend my congratulations to Sir Steve Smith on his new role as International Education Champion. I’m proud to lead the Department for International Trade’s education work and to have published our International Education Strategy with the appointment of a Champion at its heart. The UK’s education sector is world leading and world class, and we need to ensure that it stays that way.

“Education spending will continue to rise around the world and the UK is well placed to grow its exports and contribute to millions of lives. I look forward to working with Sir Steve to promote and highlight the UK as the international education partner of choice.

“International trade is critical to the UK’s coronavirus recovery plan and we need to ensure that our education sector plays a full role in meeting global need and helping both the UK and its partners to come back from the economic impacts of the virus.”

In his new role, Sir Steve Smith will also highlight exporting opportunities for the sector and help to address any challenges and barriers to growth. Education exports are currently valued at more than £21 billion per year and help to forge global and meaningful relationships. These underpin opportunities for the UK and international partners to develop, trade and collaborate. This will prove crucial as the UK begins to recover from the economic impact of coronavirus (COVID-19).

The Universities Minister acknowledged the vital part international students play in the UK's higher education agenda and highlighted the work from the Government and institutions to ensure the safety and wellbeing of current and prospective international students, as well as ensuring access to high quality teaching and learning.

A letter from the Universities Minister to international students last month detailed a number of measures designed to safeguard students from the impacts of Covid-19 and enable them to continue their studies as planned.

These include temporary concessions to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 and ensure the immigration system is as flexible as possible, the launch of the new points-based Student route later this year and the new Graduate Route in the summer of 2021, which will enable international students who have been awarded their degree to stay and work in the UK at any skill level for two years.

The Government has also worked closely with the Office for Students, the independent higher education regulator in England, to ensure students are able to continue their studies, receive good quality provision and work towards a degree that they and future employers value.

Sir Steve Smith will join the role from Exeter University, where he was Vice-Chancellor for 18 years, following over 20 years of university leadership both in the UK and internationally.