

Boosters to be added to NHS COVID Pass for travel

- NHS COVID Pass can now be used to demonstrate proof of a booster or third dose for outbound international travel
- Booster vaccination records to be visible through both NHS App and on NHS.UK
- Over 13 million booster vaccines and third doses delivered across the UK so far

Travellers who have had a booster or a third dose will be able to demonstrate their vaccine status through the NHS COVID Pass from Friday 19 November.

The addition will enable those who have had their booster or third dose to travel to countries including Israel, Croatia and Austria who have already introduced a time limit for the COVID-19 vaccine to be valid for quarantine free travel.

Booster and third doses will not be added to the domestic COVID Pass as it is not a current requirement for individuals to receive booster doses to qualify as fully vaccinated. It will also not be necessary to show evidence of a booster for travel into England at this time.

Over 13 million booster and third jabs have now been administered in the UK, providing those eligible with maximum protection as we head into winter.

This week, the government has also accepted the advice from the independent experts at the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) to expand the booster programme to those aged 40-49, which means millions more people will be eligible to get their booster.

Health and Social Care secretary, Sajid Javid said:

We want to make it as easy as possible for people to show their vaccine status if they are travelling abroad.

This update to the NHS COVID Pass will mean people can have their complete medical picture at their fingertips if they are going on holiday or seeing loved ones overseas.

Getting a top-up jab is our best defence against this virus and I urge all those who are eligible to come forward and get boosted.

The NHS COVID Pass enables people to demonstrate their COVID-19 status when travelling abroad or when visiting organisations who have opted to use the domestic certification process. Since its launch on 17 May, almost 20 million people have accessed the COVID Pass via the NHS App.

Vaccines Minister Maggie Throup said:

Getting a booster is the best way you can protect yourself ahead of winter and it's great those who have come forward can now demonstrate their vaccination status through the NHS COVID Pass if they are travelling overseas.

It has also never been easier to book your booster, with walk-in sites open across the country and appointments available to pre-book a month before you are eligible for your top-up. For anyone who hasn't yet had their jab, come forward as soon as possible for maximum protection ahead of Christmas.

Booster and third doses will show up automatically in the digital COVID Pass and will be visible from midday on Friday for users in England but will not immediately be available via the COVID Pass letter service. This will be updated in due course.

The booster vaccine will appear on the Covid Pass in Wales from 29 November. However evidence of a booster vaccine is not needed to enter venues in Wales which require a Covid Pass for entry. Evidence of two vaccinations or a negative lateral flow test in the last 48 hours remain the requirement.

Vaccines give high levels of protection but immunity reduces over time, so it is vital that people come forward to get their COVID-19 booster vaccine to top-up their defences and protect themselves this winter.

Results from the first UK real-world study by UKHSA show the pfizer-BioNTech vaccine booster significantly increased protection against symptomatic disease to nearly 95% in those aged 50 and above.

[New rules to drive down cost of school uniform for families](#)

Families will save money on school uniforms from next year, following new legally-binding guidance published today (Friday 19th November) requiring schools to make uniform affordable for all.

The Department for Education (DfE) guidance means schools in England must ensure that school uniform costs are reasonable, and parents get the best value for money.

[Research](#) from the DfE in 2015 showed that parents can save almost £50 on average if they can buy all school uniform items from any store, compared to uniform which all needs to be bought from a designated shop or school. From

next autumn, schools will be required to help keep costs down by taking steps to remove unnecessary branded items and allowing more high-street options, like supermarket own-brand uniform.

To support families, schools will have to make sure second-hand uniforms are available, also helping work towards achieving net zero carbon emissions. In the UK, an [estimated 350,000 tonnes](#) of clothes end up in landfill every year and encouraging families to use second-hand uniform can reduce waste and bring down emissions from manufacturing new garments, while making it cost-effective for families.

Secretary of State for Education Nadhim Zahawi said:

School uniform provides a sense of identity and community for children and young people, and should be a real source of pride. But it must never be a burden for parents or a barrier to pupils accessing education.

This new binding guidance will help to make uniforms far more affordable for families by driving costs down as we work hard to level up the country.

Schools should make sure their uniform policy is published on their website and is clear and easy for parents to understand.

The new guidance also requires schools to use competitive and transparent contracts with suppliers. Should schools need to tender to secure a new contract, they have until December 2022.

Ensuring that uniform does not restrict where pupils go to school supports the Government's commitment to levelling up opportunity across the country.

Schools are expected to have taken steps to adhere to the new guidance before parents buy uniform for the academic year beginning in September 2022.

Matt Easter, Co-Chair of the Schoolwear Association, said:

We welcome this guidance as it takes a balanced and proportionate approach towards ensuring parents get good value for money from uniforms, without creating unreasonable burdens on schools or uniform suppliers. Importantly, it reinforces that the majority of schools are already doing the right thing and, in most cases, will already be fully, or almost, compliant.

As the leading schoolwear industry body, we are committed to helping schools understand the implications of the guidance for their uniform policies, and will continue to work with them to ensure the process of choosing a uniform supplier remains as

robust, competitive, and easy as possible.

Mark Russell, Chief Executive of The Children's Society, said:

For too many years the cost of school uniform has been a heavy financial burden on many families, causing money worries and even debt, so these new guidelines to make sure school uniforms are affordable are extremely welcome.

Until now, too many parents have had to fork out for expensive branded items rather than cheaper alternatives, while having to cut back on essentials like food or heating. So we hope schools are able to start working with the guidance, which should ultimately make it much easier for families to kit out their children for school without breaking the bank.

Ann Pope, CMA Senior Director of Antitrust, said:

No one should be made to pay over the odds when buying the basics that their children need to attend school. That's why it is important that schools have clearer rules on how to choose uniform suppliers, to ensure people get value for money.

We have been working with the government to develop this guidance, which legally obliges schools to consider the cost of uniforms and to undergo regular tenders if they have a single supplier. This should lead to lower prices for parents by ensuring suppliers compete more strongly to win schools' business.

Parentkind CEO John Jolly said:

Parentkind strongly welcomes the new guidance that reduces costs for parents and promotes schools engaging with their parent community on uniform policy. We were delighted to present parents' views to the Department, and we are pleased that they have been heard.

Our Parent Voice Report 2021 finds that uniforms top parents' concerns on schooling costs. More PTA-run second hand uniform shops, along with the new guidance, should quickly reduce the financial burden on parents.

UK and Pakistan finalise negotiations on bilateral readmissions agreement

World news story

The Permanent Secretary of the UK's Home Office, Matthew Rycroft on Thursday concluded a productive two-day visit to Pakistan by finalising an agreement to tackle illegal migration.



The Permanent Secretary of the UK's Home Office, Matthew Rycroft

Matthew Rycroft and Adviser to Pakistan's Prime Minister on Interior and Accountability Shahzad Akbar finalised negotiations on the UK-Pakistan Readmissions Agreement which will ensure the return of illegal migrants who have no lawful basis to remain in the country.

It was decided that the agreement will be presented to Pakistan's Federal Cabinet in the coming weeks in order to be implemented by the end of the year, subject to cabinet approval. The ground-breaking agreement will enable the sharing of criminal records between the UK and Pakistani authorities to support effective law enforcement cooperation between the two countries.

The UK is committed to working with Pakistan to develop an effective partnership on migration as part of a deep and mutually beneficial relationship. During his visit, Rycroft also spoke about the UK Home Office's new immigration system that will level the global playing field to those wishing to come to the UK. Pakistani students will benefit from new graduate routes, providing an excellent opportunity for Pakistani students to enter into skilled roles in the UK job market.

For further information

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Contact

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925 cultural organisations supported by £107 million in latest recovery fund

- Emergency grants providing a lifeline to organisations supported by the Fund for the first time
- Emergency support extended over winter period so more applicants can come forward to protect jobs and plan for the future
- Funding welcomed by celebrities including Dame Judi Dench, Clive Owen, Rebecca Hall and Mike Leigh

Hundreds of arts, heritage and cultural organisations across England will receive a share of £107 million from the additional £300 million announced by the Chancellor at March's budget for the Culture Recovery Fund, bringing the total cash support package made available for culture during the pandemic to close to £2 billion.

The Culture Recovery Fund has already got £1.2 billion out the door to around 5,000 organisations and sites across the country and this latest round of funding is giving a lifeline to regional theatres, local museums, independent cinemas and many more throughout the winter.

From this round of funding, over £100 million will be awarded in continuity support grants to over 870 previous Culture Recovery Fund recipients administered by Arts Council England, British Film Institute, National Lottery Heritage Fund and Historic England. Helping organisations survive and allowing them to resume programmes and events, the funding will mean people can have access to and enjoy everything they have to offer.

£6.5 million will be shared by 57 organisations in need of urgent financial support. Grants from this emergency resource support will protect jobs by saving the future of important arts and cultural organisations.

Culture Secretary Nadine Dorries said:

Culture is for everyone and should therefore be accessible to everyone, no matter who they are and where they're from.

Through unprecedented government financial support, the Culture Recovery Fund is supporting arts and cultural organisations so they can continue to bring culture to communities the length and breadth of the country, supporting jobs, boosting local economies and inspiring people.

Theatres across the country will receive over £30 million in vital continuity support so they can keep their doors open and welcome audiences to pantos and plays this Christmas. Over £500,000 will support Derby Theatre to continue producing theatre for their local community, engaging young people and working with those impacted most by the pandemic. £71,000 is going to the Little Angel Theatre, a children's puppet theatre in London, which will support their productions, as well as foster their school and community projects.

To make sure that everyone continues to have access to arts and culture, this funding will support creative, community-driven arts organisations and creative projects, to help nurture and sustain local talent. Over £390,000 will go to Arts at the Mill, Wigan, so they can continue to inspire through their ambitious creative initiatives, whilst a £35,000 grant will support Little Inventors in Newcastle to provide educational workshops to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Darren Henley, Chief Executive, Arts Council England, said:

This continued investment from the Government on an unprecedented scale means our theatres, galleries, music venues, museums and arts centres can carry on playing their part in bringing visitors back to our high streets, helping to drive economic growth, boosting community pride and promoting good health. It's a massive vote of confidence in the role our cultural organisations play in helping us all to lead happier lives

Funding is also keeping projectors rolling in local cinemas this winter with 62 cinemas awarded over £6 million administered by the British Film Institute. Almost £85,000 will help The Alhambra, Keswick to introduce a new air filtration system and set up a new film club for local sixth-formers allowing them to curate their own film programme, learn how to operate the projector, and run the kiosk for two screenings per week. Over £102,000 is supporting the Forum Cinema in Hexham to continue its commitment to making the cinema as accessible as possible for all audiences, for example by increasing the number of open captioned / subtitled films for D/deaf audiences.

Ben Roberts, Chief Executive, BFI said:

Traditionally, this time of year brings a wealth of culture to the big screen for people up and down the country as local cinemas offer seasonal classics, and new British films and blockbusters.

The Culture Recovery Fund has been vital to the survival and recovery of independent cinemas, enabling them to contribute to their high streets and communities, and crucially be there to welcome back their audiences.

The latest awards will continue to safeguard our most precious heritage and regional museums. A grant of £566,000 will give Exeter Cathedral the necessary financial support so they can continue to engage the local community through a packed calendar of activities such as historic costume character tours, festive family nights and Christmas carols in the Cathedral nave. £228,000 will also make sure Norfolk Museums Service can continue to inspire children and young people with its creative and engaging collections.

Ros Kerslake, Chief Executive, National Lottery Heritage Fund, said:

This latest round of the Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage has provided much-needed further support for Heritage sites, attractions and organisations as they move forward with their exciting plans to engage, entertain and educate us all. The UK's heritage has faced unprecedented times, and investing in the Heritage sector remains vitally important to driving tourism, supporting our wellbeing and making our towns, cities, and rural areas better places to live.

Of the 57 organisations awarded grants from the emergency resource support strand of funding, 44 are being supported with resource grants from the Culture Recovery Fund for the first time, with more applications undergoing assessment over the coming weeks. Recipients include Arty-Fact Theatre in Nantwich who will receive £32,000 to continue bringing innovative theatre to schools in the UK, and The Charles Causley Trust in Cornwall who are getting £95,000 to make sure they can carry on promoting creative writing and the arts in the local area.

Providing access to emergency funding throughout the winter period, the Emergency Resource Support programme will be reopened. This will give more applicants at imminent risk of financial failure an opportunity to bid for support, protecting even more organisations so that they can continue to create jobs and contribute to the economy. The application window will open shortly, and Arts Council England, National Lottery Heritage Fund, and the British Film Institute will be publishing the details on their websites soon.

Today's announcement follows the second round of the Heritage Stimulus Fund – part of the Culture Recovery Fund – delivered by Historic England. Supporting 142 locations with a total of £35 million, historic sites will benefit from an injection of cash for vital repairs and major restoration work.

Those benefiting include Leigh Spinners Mill in Wigan, whose grant of £126,000 will help refurbish the fifth floor, repair the roof and engine house, and create a heritage store and a large multi-use space. This will also provide 20 new jobs and new opportunities for on-site work experience as

part of their wider construction skills training.

Duncan Wilson, Chief Executive, Historic England said:

The Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage schemes and the Heritage Stimulus Fund administered by Historic England continue to provide essential support for heritage and the arts across the country. The latest recipients indicate the breadth of organisations that are being saved as we emerge from the effects of COVID on our sector.

Additional quotes:

Dame Judi Dench, Patron of Omnibus Theatre, said:

Now here is some very good news. Small theatres such as Omnibus are the lifeblood of our industry, and this funding will be vital in continuing their brilliant work.

Clive Owen, Actor and Patron of Little Angel Theatre, said:

I'm incredibly happy to hear that the Little Angel has received funding to support its future work. This theatre is very special and has been important to my family for many years.

Rebecca Hall, Writer and Director of *Passing* starring Tessa Thompson and Ruth Negga, and star of *Christine* and *The Awakening*, said:

Growing up in central London I had access to a number of incredible local art-house cinemas, which gave me an education in and love of film. I think that only when we are together in a theatre can we really experience the enveloping power of cinema. Without that experience, I wouldn't be a filmmaker today. Unless we support independent cinemas, we will fail to nurture the next generation of British cinema.

Mike Leigh, Salford-born and BAFTA-winning Writer and Director of *Vera Drake*, *Mr. Turner*, *Secrets & Lies* said:

Growing up in North Salford in the 40s and 50s, there were 14 local independent cinemas within walking distance of our house – quite apart from the fancy big movie houses in Central Manchester, a short bus-ride away.

Each cinema showed two films in every programme, as well as shorts and newsreels. The programme changed on Wednesdays, and there were

yet different offerings on a Sunday. This feast inspired my earliest passion for cinema, and my resolve to make films. Everybody went to the pictures – it was a vital part of community life. It still is, and it must remain so. Which is why the support for independent cinemas by the Culture Recovery Fund is of such vital importance.

Gurinder Chadha, Writer and Director of *Bend it Like Beckham*, *Blinded by the Light* and *Viceroy's House*, said:

I have been counting the days for when my favourite independent cinemas will open. They are a life blood to my industry as a filmmaker and an utter pleasure to lose oneself into different cinematic worlds globally. Please support your local cinema for the big screen experience.

Tamara Rojo CBE, English National Ballet's Artistic Director said:

I'm so pleased to see continued support for the sector from the Culture Recovery Fund. It will allow organisations to survive and thrive beyond the pandemic so that they can continue to collaborate with talented artists and creatives to make exciting work which can, in turn, be shared with the widest possible audience.

Kwame Kwei-Armah, Young Vic Artistic Director and Despina Tsatsas, Young Vic Executive Director, said:

This Cultural Recovery Fund has been a lifeline as we continue to navigate the most challenging period in our fifty-year history. More than a lifeline, it has given us the means to rebuild as a stronger, more accessible and innovative organisation. Thanks to the investment of CRF3, we can boldly plan for a better future for the Young Vic, artists, audiences and our entire community.

Harry Macqueen, Director of *Keswick-shot Supernova* starring Colin Firth and Stanley Tucci, said:

Cinema is essential. Its value lies in its unique ability to transport us into other people's lives; to usher us into other cultures and in doing so remind us of the shared experience of being human. Watching a film in a cinema – with strangers around us – is a progressive, collective act. It is a communal experience that informs and inspires. But cinema can only do so if it is accessible to all. It is therefore now more vital than ever that we support independent cinema and cinemas, where important stories and

storytellers thrive. Long live your local indie!

Steven Knight, Oscar-nominated writer of Dirty Pretty Things, creator of 'Peaky Blinders', writer of Spencer, and Writer/Director of Locke, said:

For more than 100 years cinemas have been at the heart of British communities and the existential threat to them has been alarming. Any initiative which helps to ensure the survival of moving pictures as an essential form of entertainment is to be heartily welcome.

Felicity Jones, Oscar-nominated actress for The Theory of Everything, who has also starred in The Aeronauts and Rogue One: A Star Wars Story, said:

Local cinemas are vital in our communities- a place where we can be transported into different lives and cultures in the company of others enriches all of us. The lights going down, the hushed voices, the sense of anticipation and the feeling of diving into the unknown make independent cinema a scintillating experience. Growing up, it was the power of that moving image in those dark, intimate spaces that made me feel that anything was possible. Long may we continue to nurture our independent cinemas.

Phil Clapp, Chief Executive of the UK Cinema Association, said:

While the recent months have seen many positive signs of recovery for the UK cinema sector, we know that there is still some way to go before the future is truly secure, and that some venues particularly impacted by lockdown and other restrictions will need additional help.

For that reason, we are delighted to see a number of our smaller operator members benefiting from this latest round of Culture recovery Fund Support and join them in welcoming this further show of support from the BFI, DCMS and Government.

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

For media queries please call the DCMS press office on 020 7211 2210

For more information on awards please visit (to note these sites will go live at 00.01): [ACE](#) [BFI](#) [NLHF](#)

For more information on the Heritage Stimulus Fund awards please visit [here](#).

[Compiled list of awards for background](#) (ODS, 67.1KB)

[Teesside Freeport open for business](#)

- Teesside Freeport will be at the forefront of local low carbon sector creating thousands of jobs in green energy
- The freeport has estimated it will create more than 18,000 jobs and provide £3.2 billion boost to local communities
- Seven freeports to follow in England including Thames and Humber in due course

Teesside Freeport has begun operations today (19 November 2021) putting the region at the forefront of green energy, manufacturing, and innovation.

It is estimated that the freeport will create more than 18,000 new highly skilled jobs and generate £3.2 billion for the local community over 5 years (1). It will have access to a share of £200 million of government funding to support the region's levelling up ambitions and become the UK's clean energy powerhouse.

Close to the North Sea, Teesside is ideally placed to serve the offshore wind sector and with its excellent transport links it will be a gateway to global markets via air, sea, rail and road.

The freeport has already secured multi-million-pound investment from GE Renewables to build a new offshore wind blade manufacturing plant which they estimate will deliver up to 750 manufacturing jobs and a further 1,500 roles in the supply chain.

These blades will supply the world's biggest offshore wind farm, Dogger Bank, helping to power millions of UK homes, and the government has also committed an additional £20 million to create a new deep-water quay to service the offshore wind industry.

Up to 3 more offshore wind manufacturers could be housed on the site, boosting the UK's offshore and net zero ambitions, and creating thousands of jobs for local people.

The next 2 freeports to become operational will be Thames and Humber. Both have had tax sites designated today and are working at pace to become operational in the near future.

Minister for Levelling Up Neil O'Brien MP said:

I am delighted to see the Teesside Freeport begin operations today, putting the region at the forefront of the UK's drive to net zero and bringing thousands of high-skilled jobs to the area.

Freeports will help to generate prosperity and spread opportunity by driving trade and innovation as we level up in every corner of the United Kingdom.

We're seeing evidence of this in Teesside already with GE Renewable Energy's multimillion pound investment as they bring their new blade manufacturing plant to the site.

Lord Frost, Minister of State at the Cabinet Office, said:

Having left the European Union we now have the freedom to do things differently, including setting up new freeports to turbo-charge our trade with the world's fastest growing markets.

Today's announcement is great news for Teesside and it shows that we are maximising the opportunities of Brexit to create well-paid jobs and drive growth right across the UK.

As well as more freeports, we want to go further and faster to create a competitive, regulatory environment which supports innovation and boosts inward investment.

Tees Valley Mayor Ben Houchen said:

The day has finally come – after years of campaigning and shouting about the transformative potential of a freeport for Teesside, Darlington and Hartlepool, we're at last open for business.

We're throwing our doors open to the world, showing businesses that we're a truly outward-looking, international region ready to welcome the cutting-edge sectors of the future. We're already reaping the benefits of the Teesside Freeport with the likes of GE who are creating thousands of good-quality well paid jobs for local workers.

As we lead the UK in the cleaner, safer and healthier industries and jobs of tomorrow, the sky's the limit as to what the Teesside Freeport can achieve.

Councillor Shane Moore, the Leader of Hartlepool Borough Council, said:

The sea and our ports have shaped the fortunes of Hartlepool for hundreds of years and it's absolutely fantastic news Teesside Freeport has begun operations today.

I was delighted to play my own part in ensuring the Port of Hartlepool and Able Seaton Port were included in the bid and I believe Freeport status will help harness the power of the Tees Valley's highly skilled workforce, and our established and emerging industrial clusters.

We are continuing to work with other freeports to ensure they reach this important milestone as soon as they are able. Other successful prospective freeports locations include:

- East Midlands Airport
- Felixstowe & Harwich
- Liverpool City Region
- Plymouth & South Devon
- Solent

(1) Source: <https://teesvalley-ca.gov.uk/teesside-freeport/>

Freeports are special areas within the UK's borders where different economic regulations apply. Freeports in England are centred around one or more air, rail, or seaport, but can extend up to 45km beyond the port(s). See more information on [Freeports](#).

Covering 4,500 acres, Teesside estimate that it will create more than 18,000 new jobs.

The freeport will also facilitate a world-class, highly skilled workforce specialising in manufacturing, engineering and offshore industries supported by the new [Teesworks Academy](#).

At Budget, in March 2021, the Chancellor announced 8 successful prospective freeports locations in England, as selected following the fair, open and assessment process outlined in the Bidding Prospectus.

Locations selected to progress to the next stages of designation are: East Midlands Airport, Felixstowe & Harwich (known as Freeport East), Humber, Liverpool City Region, Plymouth & South Devon, Solent, Teesside and Thames.

Subject to business case appraisal, they will be able to access a share of £200 million of seed capital funding.

At Budget, in October 2021, the Chancellor announced that the first tax sites will be in Humber, Tees and Thames. Thames and Humber tax sites go live today (19 November 2021).

Eligible businesses that base themselves in tax sites at these freeports can benefit from several tax incentives including: an enhanced Capital Allowance; a Structures and Buildings Allowance; a Business Rates relief; and a Stamp Duty Land Tax relief.

Teesside have also had a customs site designated today (19 November) which means that businesses that base themselves in the site can benefit from the

customs facilitations – including tariff suspension, exemption, and deferral.

The government is working hard to support the other prospective freeports. Subject to agreeing their governance arrangements and successfully completing their business cases, we expect the next set of freeports to begin operations from 2022.

The UK government remains committed to establishing its Freeport programme in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland as soon as possible and are confident our model embraces the highest employment and environmental standards.

Local councils will be able to retain 100% of business rates growth generated by the freeport tax sites for the next 25 years, providing them with financial security to invest in regeneration in their local area.