

# Social Distancing

Guidelines for publicans (updated 25th June)

Following the announcement on 23 June regarding the COVID-19 secure guidelines for pubs to re-open on 4<sup>th</sup> July, the Government has acknowledged that, where it is not viable to have 2m social distancing, 1m(+) with risk mitigation is acceptable.

Whilst this guidance has been given, it should be noted that this is conditional on other mitigating factors being implemented. This will have the following implications on your business.

- You will be required to complete a risk assessment
- Tables will be needed to be placed 1m apart both inside and outside
- Customers will not be able to move these tables
- You will need to have clear markings on the floor spaced at 1m to ensure customers and staff maintain the required distance, this will result in reduced capacity of your venue
- You may be required to monitor the capacity of your venue
- You and your staff maybe required to wear PPE, dependant on your risk assessment.
- Customers may have to queue to enter your pub
- Customers will not be able to congregate at the bar
- You may wish to limit the amount of time a table is occupied to increase cover turn
- You will need to minimise contact with customers and cash
- You and your staff may have to supervise your customers to ensure they adhere to the social distancing rules. Signage will play an important and useful role here
- Legislation has however been relaxed in some areas with respect to drinking outside in terms of on pavements and pub car park.
- Once you have completed a risk assessment at your venue, you must share the results with your workforce. The government guidelines have a poster than can be utilised for both staff and customers.

The Government has now released their guidelines and below are some suggestions that will help you maximise the space you have in accordance with these. These are not exclusive, and many have been gathered from what our publicans are already putting in place as part of their re-opening plans:

## Test and Trace

- The Government is requesting your assistance by keeping a temporary record of your customers and visitors for 21 days, in a way that is manageable for your business, and to assist NHS test and Trace with requests for that data if needed. If you do not already have a system in place it is recommended you do. The Government is currently working with trade bodies and details will be set out shortly.

## Marketing Material

- We will be providing you template notices on keeping 1m(+) apart, which can be found on the Publican Channel and which you can print on site; alternatively, there are many providers on the Intranet that can be utilised
- Clear guidance should be provided on social distancing and hygiene to people on arrival, for example, signage, visual aids and before arrival using social media and websites.

## Layout & Customer Management

- Perspex screens could be placed in between tables that cannot be moved 1m(+) apart. We have sent you supplier details for these
- Time slots could be introduced for customers to even out busy and quiet times. Facebook offers a booking facility which could be utilised.
- Encourage customers to book tables to avoid crowding and queues
- You may only be able to seat one group of customers at once to avoid contact with other customers, so may need to think about where you ask customers to wait
- You could introduce a 'meet, greet and seat' role within your pub team
- If you have been offering a takeaway service and still intend to do so, think about how this can be achieved in light of the pub being open and in line with social distancing. For example, does this now need to operate in a specifically designated area?
- Implement a temporary one-way system with signs and guidance throughout the pub to ensure a safe entry and exit out of the pub.
- Upon arrival, customers will need to follow guidance on where to sit or wait to be seated which may necessitate the creating of a recommended waiting area.
- While waiting customers could sanitise their hands using a mobile sanitiser which could be placed at the entrance. Please refer to our Publican Channel for details of suppliers and signage
- To avoid overcrowding and bottlenecks, you may need to politely request your customers arrive at their allocated booking time and no earlier.

## Staff

- You may wish to consider allocating your staff specific working areas whilst on shift which they should not deviate away from unless requested to do so in a safe way by a manager
- Ensure staff are fit to start work. Anyone who is showing any symptoms should follow the Government guidelines and not attend work.
- If social distancing cannot be followed, side to side or back to back working should be used wherever possible.
- Reduce the number of people each person has contact with by using 'fixed teams or partnering'. This will allow minimal contacts with different people

## Outdoors

- Maximise your outside space including beer garden, pavement and even car park
- Some councils are expected to relax licensing restrictions for pavement and other outside areas for eating and drinking. You can check with your local council for updates on this issue
- You may need to consider extending your existing Wi-Fi to cover outdoor space
- Children's play areas should remain out of use
- Ensuring all outdoor areas, with regard to covered areas, have sufficient ventilation. For example, increasing the open sides of a covered area
- Increase supplies and usage of disposable plastic cups to reflect increased customer demand for drinking in outdoor areas and may also be an important element of your risk assessment. Some premises licences also make use of plastic cups a condition of using outdoor space, so it is important to check if such requirements exist
- Outdoor table service should also be encouraged although customers are permitted to stand outside if distanced appropriately. Where bar or counter service is unavoidable, prevent customers from remaining at the bar or counter after ordering.

- Outdoor gatherings should only be occurring in groups of up to two households (or support bubbles), or a group of at most six people from any number of households

### Indoors

- We will be sending you some yellow and black tape so you can mark 1m spaces on the floor inside your pub.
- Indoor table service must be used where possible, alongside further measures such as assigning single staff members per area.
- Indoor gatherings should only be occurring in groups of up to two households (including support bubbles)

### Payments

- Ensure you have PDQ payment facilities and that limit has been increased to £45 to reduce the amount of cash handling.
- Where you are willing to accept cash payments consider insisting that the member of staff washes their hands thoroughly after handling the cash.
- Customers could order and pay via an app to avoid having to go to the bar. Please refer to the Publican Channel for details of the app service provided by Round

### Dining & Drinking

- If ordinarily your tables are pre-set for dining, you may wish to review this.
- Napkins and cutlery should only be brought out with food.
- The use of sauces in bottles which are shared is likely to be discouraged and many businesses and restaurants are moving to single sachet sauces instead. If this is not possible shared condiments should be cleaned in between each use or sauces served in individual pots.
- Consider offering a reduced menu as your kitchen team will also have to maintain the 1m social distancing
- Consider adapting working practices to prevent customers from congregating at points of service. For example, having only staff collect and return empty glasses to the bar

### Toilets

- Use signs and posters to build awareness of good handwashing technique, the need to increase handwashing frequency and the need to avoid touching of the face.
- Consider the use of social distancing marking in areas where queues normally form, and the adoption of a limited entry approach, with one in, one out (whilst avoiding the creation of additional bottlenecks).
- Put up a visible cleaning schedule and ensure it is kept up to date.
- Keep the facilities well ventilated, for example by fixing doors open where appropriate.

### Entertainment

- The government have stated at this time venues should not permit live performances, including drama, comedy and music to take place in front of a live audience. This is important to mitigate the risks of aerosol transmission, from either the performer or the audience.
- Steps should be taken to avoid people needing to unduly raise their voices to each other. This includes but is not limited to, refraining from playing music or broadcasts that would encourage shouting. Whilst this is not stating not to play music, ensure the music is at an appropriate level that would allow normal conversations to occur.

- For pub quizzes etc, you should encourage use of online ticketing to ensure you are able to manage your indoor capacity and allow customers to be seated.

#### Other areas to consider:

- The Government has said that the 1m(+) rule is under permanent review and maybe altered at any time. Therefore, we would recommend that you typically invest in affordable and temporary solutions that can be adjusted to reflect changes in social distancing requirements.
- Ensure that you review any procedures you do introduce comply with any changes with Government guidelines.
- To help you plan to re-open your premises there are several videos on YouTube that may assist including one from [Stonegate](#)
- Increase your visible cleaning regime or consider introducing a continuous cleaning regime: all the evidence suggests that customers will expect to see this. Tables will need to be frequently cleaned between use both in food and drinking establishments. Other areas to include in an enhanced cleaning regime are door handles, bar services and gaming machines
- Train your staff on any new measures you introduce and the impact on how they perform their role. There is also training available for staff on COVID 19
- Communicate your COVID-19 safety and social distancing measures to your customers via your social media and through in-pub signage and notices
- Conduct a dummy run of how you will operate prior to officially re-opening in order to resolve any staff training issues and to iron out any problems with the customer journey
- Consider your opening times and make sure you clearly communicate any changes to your customers via your social media and in-pub notices. Consider using closed periods to undertake deep cleans.
- Consider signage to indicate where a table has not yet been sanitised after a customer vacates to demonstrate a responsible approach to the welfare of customers. A full clean down procedure should be put in place for clearing and sanitising tables after every time it is used.
- Consider organising your staff so that there are very specific cleaning responsibilities for each individual for each shift, e.g. checking and refilling hand sanitiser dispensers, cleaning the toilets at least every 30 minutes, sanitising contact points including surfaces, door handles, handrails etc.
- With unpredictable sales levels on reopening striking the right balance on the level of stock that is ordered can be understandably challenging. Be mindful of order levels for products with relatively short shelf life such as cask ale. Consider too how takeaway drinks have grown in popularity during lockdown and how this remains a potential option to sell slow moving stock.