

**Covid-19 – Shielding**  
**Local Authority**  
**Protection level 3 FAQ**  
**22 March 2021**

**What are protection levels?**

Protection levels aim to control the rise of coronavirus cases and help to keep people safe.

Protection levels will be set according to the rate of infection data within a local area. There is different guidance for each protection level. The information on protection levels will be available at [www.gov.scot/coronavirus](http://www.gov.scot/coronavirus).

Those who were previously shielding should follow the protection guidance advice for the general population. However, to help you make the most informed choice based on your level of risk, we have provided additional tiered guidance for activities such like work, school, shopping and contact with others. You can find this extra advice [here](#).

We believe that by providing this advice you will have the ability to make the best choices for yourself on a daily basis. To do this you should consider your own health, the number of cases within your local area and seek advice from your GP, consultant or clinician where appropriate.

**What protection level is my local authority in?**

As of the 26 April, all of mainland Scotland will be placed into level 3. If you live on the Islands this may be different, there are discussions taking place between your local authority and the Scottish Government to decide whether the Islands will move into level 2 on this date.

If you live in a level 3 area this means that the area where you live has an increased rate of coronavirus cases compared with some other parts of the country. To help slow the spread of the virus, enhanced measures have been put in place which may affect your daily activities.

**Am I being asked to go back into shielding?**

No. We are not advising people to start shielding again. It is important to strictly follow the protection level guidance for your area and maintain regular hand washing, physical distancing and face coverings.

As you are in protection level 3 we are advising you to take some extra precautions to ensure your safety. This includes:

- Limit meeting people outside your own household, avoid indoor public spaces
- Strictly follow the guidelines when shopping and limit the number of times you go to a shop

- Shop at quieter times
- Speak to your employer to ensure all appropriate protections are in place. The majority of workplaces can be made safe. Where you have a concern you should discuss this with your employer.

### **Why am I not being advised to shield?**

Those of you who are at highest risk from coronavirus will be feeling particularly anxious. Keeping you safe is at the forefront of decision-making. This is why we have provided extra guidance to ensure that you are supported in making the best choices for you.

We know that shielding has had a huge negative impact on people's mental and physical health. These new protection levels are designed to help reduce the spread of the virus in our communities and are an extra level of protection for you. Introducing these protection levels is the best way to protect you.

### **What measures will come into place on April 26?**

As of the 26 April 2021, the following easing of restrictions will come into effect within level 3 areas:

- extending outdoor socialising to permit up to 6 people from up to 3 households to gather
- allowing 12-17 year olds to meet outdoors in groups of 6 from up to 6 households
- travel within all of mainland Scotland permitted (subject to other restrictions that remain in place)
- remaining shops can reopen and mobile close contact services can resume
- gyms and swimming pools can reopen for individual exercise
- tourist accommodation to reopen (self-catering accommodation to be restricted in line with rules on indoor gathering)
- work in people's homes to resume
- non-essential childcare permitted
- driving lessons and tests to resume
- weddings and funerals for up to 50 (including wakes and receptions with no alcohol permitted)
- libraries, museums, galleries re-open
- outdoor hospitality to open till 10pm with alcohol permitted. Indoor hospitality permitted without alcohol and closing at 8pm

- social mixing in indoor public places will be subject to current maximum of 4 people from up to 2 households
- Further guidance on national restrictions can be found at [www.mygov.scot/shielding](http://www.mygov.scot/shielding)

### **I have received both doses of the vaccine, should I still follow the additional advice for those who have previously been asked to shield?**

The current guidance is that once you have received the first dose or second dose of the vaccine you should continue to follow the shielding advice. You will receive further information should this advice change.

To find out more about these measures, visit [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): shielding advice and support - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot).

### **What happens if I test positive for coronavirus?**

You will be contacted by Test and Protect if you have tested positive or have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive. If this happens, you should follow the instructions and self-isolate. Your local authority can offer essential practical support if it's required - for example help with delivery of food and other essentials. A new financial support payment of £500 will become available for workers on low incomes who aren't able to work at home.

### **How to request the shielding letter information in a different format**

Other formats of shielding correspondence may be available on request. If you or someone you know needs this information in a different format or language, please email [phs.healthdata@phs.scot](mailto:phs.healthdata@phs.scot). Use the subject line 'translation request'.

Please include these details about the person who needs the different format:

- name
- address and postcode
- CHI number
- format or language required

Please also tell us if we should send information in this format in future.

If you prefer, you can call the national helpline on 0800 111 4000 with this information. The helpline is open Monday to Friday, from 9am to 5pm.

### **How can I stay up to date with what's happening?**

**Text message service**

Sign up for the shielding text message service. If you have not already signed up, you can do so by texting your 10 digit CHI number to 07860 064525. You can find your CHI number on the shielding letters you have received.

**Data by neighbourhood**

Public Health Scotland publish information on their [COVID-19 dashboard](https://www.phs.scot/covid-19) including:

- data by neighbourhood areas
- testing numbers
- deaths data
- hospital and intensive care admissions

To access local data on the Public Health Scotland dashboard, select the 'Cases by neighbourhood' from the home page of the dashboard.

To pick a neighbourhood from this page:

- Select the local authority of interest from the drop down.
- The neighbourhoods within that local authority will be visible.
- Click on the neighbourhood and it will be highlighted on the map.
- Hover over the map to see data for that neighbourhood from the past 7 days.
- You can adjust the 7 day date range if you are interested in viewing an earlier period.
- The neighbourhood areas presented are 'intermediate zones' which is a statistical geography containing between 2,500 and 6,000 residents.