

# Ireland placed on Level 5 of the Plan for Living with COVID-19

From [Department of the Taoiseach](#)

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The government has decided today that, as of midnight on Wednesday 21 October, all of Ireland will be placed on Level 5 of the Plan for Living with COVID with a small number of exceptions as set out below.

This action is based on current public health advice, the deteriorating situation with the disease across the country and the government's objectives to support families by keeping schools and childcare facilities open, maintaining non-COVID health services and protecting the vulnerable.

Level 5 restrictions will remain in place for a period of 6 weeks.

Given the difficulties that these restrictions place on individuals and families across the State, the risk of job losses and of poverty and homelessness, the government has agreed that the moratorium on evictions be reinstated and that Pandemic Unemployment Payment and the Employee Wage Subsidy Scheme be amended to reflect these challenges.

Placing the country at Level 5 Restrictions will have the following implications:

- people are asked to stay at home. People should work from home unless providing an essential service for which their physical presence is required (see below for essential services)
- people will be permitted to exercise within a radius of 5 km of their home
- there will be a penalty for movement outside 5km of home, with exemptions to this for essential work and essential purposes (see notes to editors)
- in line with current NPHEA advice in respect of Level 5, schools, early learning and childcare services will continue to remain open and are deemed essential
- in addition, in recognition of the impact on children and young people of restrictions, non-contact training can continue for school aged children, outdoors in pods of 15. All other training activities should be individual only, with some exemptions, see below
- there should be no visits to other people's homes or gardens
- however, there will be the concept of an extended household (or support bubble) for defined categories of individuals to support those at risk of social isolation and/or mental ill-health (see notes to editors)
- no social/family gatherings should take place, with the exemptions to this for weddings and funerals (see below)

- it is possible to meet with one other household in an outdoor setting which is not a home or garden, such as a park, including for exercise
- there should be no organised indoor or outdoor events
- essential retail and essential services will remain open (see below)
- public transport will operate at 25% capacity for the purposes of allowing those providing essential services to get to work [School transport unaffected]
- in line with current NPHEA advice in respect of Level 5, professional, elite sports and inter-county Gaelic games, horse-racing and greyhound racing can continue behind closed doors
- bars, cafes, restaurants and wet pubs may provide take-away and delivery services only. Wet pubs in Dublin remain closed
- hotels, guesthouses and B&Bs may remain open, but only to support provision of essential services
- those aged over 70 and the medically vulnerable are advised to continue to exercise personal judgement. It is recommended that they stay at home as much as possible, limit engagement to a very small network for short periods of time, while remaining physically distanced. When taking exercise outdoors, it is important to maintain 2 metres distance from others and wash hands on returning home. It is recommended to shop during designated hours only, while wearing a face covering, and to avoid public transport
- religious services will be available online
- museums, galleries and other cultural attractions will remain closed
- libraries will be available for online services only
- outdoor playgrounds, play areas and parks will remain open with protective measures
- visits to Long Term Residential Care facilities are suspended with the exception of visits required for critical and compassionate circumstances

**ENDS**

## **Notes**

### **Essential purposes for travel (permitted outside 5km limit)**

- to shop for essential items
- travel to and from work, where work involves providing an essential service (see below)
- to attend medical appointments and collect medicines and other health products
- for vital family reasons, such as providing care to children, elderly or vulnerable people, and in particular for those who live alone, as part of an extended household but excluding social family visits
- to attend a wedding or funeral
- for farming purposes i.e. food production and/or care of animals
- to visit a grave

Exemptions for weddings (irrespective of venue):\*\* Up to 25 guests for wedding ceremony and reception.

Exemption for funerals: Up to 10 mourners.

## **Sports/Training/Matches**

No training or matches should take place, with the exception of professional, elite sports and inter-county Gaelic games, horse-racing and greyhound racing, which are being permitted to continue behind closed doors.

## **Extended Household Concept**

In order to support those who risk isolation, such as single adult households and those who have shared parenting or shared custody arrangements; those living alone who have mental health challenges, or those living with partner with dementia for example, it will be possible for those in such circumstances to nominate one other household with whom they can mix. This will allow for social support beyond the caring exemptions already available.

## **Amendments to PUP and EWSS**

We know the move to Level 5 will have a significant impact on businesses – we know many people will temporarily lose their jobs on Thursday

As a result of the fact that businesses have to close we are making changes to the PUP and the EWSS

The new payment structure for the PUP is as follows, with the rate of €350 restored to those who were earning in excess of €400 per week:

Prior Weekly Earnings (Gross)	PUP Payment
less than €200	€203
€200 - €299.99	€250
€300 - €399.99	€300
more than €400	€350

This change to payment rates will apply for payments issued from Tuesday 27 October (PUP is paid weekly on a Tuesday) in respect of all existing and new applicants.

The EWSS is also being amended to align with the amendment to PUP. This means there will be 5 payment rates/bands as follows:

- 0 - €151 = €0
- >€151 < €203 = €203
- >€203 < €300 = €250
- >€300 < €400 = €300
- >€400 < €1,462 = €350

The main aim of this scheme is to ensure where possible employees retain their link with their employer rather than become unemployed. This revised scheme will run to end January 2021.