# New national restrictions in England from 6 January

6 January 2021

New national lockdown restrictions came into force across all of England on Tuesday 6 January, which say that you should minimise time spent outside your home.

These restrictions mean that there are significant limitations on where people can go and who they can meet. You may be fined £200 for a first offence, and up to £6,400 for repeated offences, if lockdown regulations are broken.

Details of how the restrictions will be applied can be found on the “[National lockdown: Stay at Home](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-lockdown-stay-at-home)” page on GOV.UK website.

All of the devolved nations of the UK have similar levels of restriction on meeting people outside of your household and on movement, although the specifics are slightly different for each. For more details, follow the links below:

* [Scotland](https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/);
* [Wales](https://gov.wales/coronavirus); and
* [Northern Ireland](https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/coronavirus-covid-19).

## Sighted guiding

Where possible, your best option will still be support from a sighted guide within your household, with whom contact remains unrestricted. You can still receive sighted guiding support from people in a support bubble as a second choice, if it is not possible to be guided by someone in your household. Advice on forming a support bubble can be found in “[Making a support bubble with another household](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-a-support-bubble-with-another-household)” guidance.

**If you are extremely clinically vulnerable, and have been advised to shield, you should only be guided by someone in your household or support bubble.** You should also follow “[COVID-19: guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19)”.

If you are not extremely clinically vulnerable, you can also be supported by someone outside your household or support bubble, but this should be regarded as the least desirable option, while the lockdown in England is in effect. The government’s guidance says that it is a “reasonable excuse” for a sighted guide to leave their house in order to provide support for a disabled or vulnerable person, and that you would not therefore be breaking regulations in doing so.

The person providing support should not come into your house or flat before a sighted guiding begins. You should only meet a sighted guide not in your household or support bubble at, or outside, your front door, and may only be guided for activities allowed in the published lockdown restrictions. While out, you must follow “[Meeting with others safely (social distancing)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-meeting-with-others-safely-social-distancing/coronavirus-covid-19-meeting-with-others-safely-social-distancing)” guidance.

While being guided by anyone, you will still need to follow government’s “[Getting help with daily activities outside your home during coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-people-outside-of-their-home)” and the [Sighted Guiding guidance](https://www.rnib.org.uk/sites/default/files/Sighted-guiding-%28England%29-v2.0.docx) published by RNIB, Guide Dogs and Thomas Pocklington Trust.

Children under school age with a parent, or parents/carers supporting someone needing around-the-clock care do not count towards limits on the number of people who can meet.

## Further information

You can keep up to date with advice from [RNIB’s Coronavirus updates](https://www.rnib.org.uk/coronavirus-updates), and the [Sight Advice FAQs](https://www.sightadvicefaq.org.uk/) website. Both provide information for blind and partially sighted people on how to adjust to living with the impact of coronavirus restrictions. RNIB can also help blind and partially sighted people with [accessing Supermarket Priority Delivery Slots](https://www.rnib.org.uk/connect-community/connect-news-and-stories/essential-supermarket-information-and-updates).

The [Guide Dogs coronavirus section](https://www.guidedogs.org.uk/covid19) has information for blind and partially sighted people, and for those who support them, and has tips for getting out and about.

[Sight Loss Councils](https://www.sightlosscouncils.org.uk/resources), supported by the Thomas Pocklington Trust, have an online resources section with a range of guides that may be useful.

### If you are clinically extremely vulnerable

You can obtain help with collecting groceries, prescriptions, getting to medical appointments and regular friendly phone calls from the [NHS Volunteer Responders](https://nhsvolunteerresponders.org.uk/) website or call 0808 196 3646 (8am to 8pm, 7 days a week).