

Home

Coronavirus

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Latest announcements

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Government guidance

The Prime Minister has announced a series of measures easing the lockdown in England.

The following changes took place from 4 July 2020:

- You should try to stay 2m apart from others where possible, but where this isn't possible you should keep at least one metre apart
- Restaurants and pubs will be allowed to reopen, providing they follow safety guidelines. Customers will have to give their contact details on entry. New guidance is being issued for businesses by the government
- Holiday accommodation will reopen and people in England will be able to stay away from home
- Two households of any size will be able to meet indoors or outside. This doesn't have to be the same set of households. Multiple households should not meet indoors because of the risk of infection
- Outdoors, people from multiple households can meet in groups of up to six. Two households can meet regardless of size
- More outdoor spaces will open including outdoor gyms and children's playgrounds
- Hairdressers will be able to reopen. Other close contact services such as nail bars cannot open yet
- Libraries, community centres, cinemas, museums, theme parks and amusement arcades among other venues will be able to reopen
- Places of worship will be able to open for prayers and services and weddings with up to 30 guests
- Nightclubs and indoor play areas remain closed

The government has issued new guidance on [social distancing after 4 July 2020](#).

You can read the government's guidance on social distancing until 4 July 2020 on their [page titled 'staying alert and staying safe until 4 July'](#).

Both of the above pages include information on:

- Protecting different groups of people
- Staying at home
- Businesses
- Venues
- Visiting public places
- Public gatherings
- Going to work

This guidance applies only in England.

They have also published frequently asked questions to help explain what people can and can't do [until 4 July 2020](#) and what people can and can't do [after 4 July 2020](#). This currently covers:

- Accessing public spaces
- Advice for vulnerable groups including the 'shielded'
- Going to work
- Public transport
- Schools and childcare
- Borders and enforcement

It is crucial that residents protect themselves against the spread of coronavirus.

- Good hygiene is the best preventative measure so ensure you wash your hands regularly and thoroughly
- You can find the latest [advice on the NHS website](#)
- You should use the [NHS 111's online coronavirus service](#) if you need medical help. Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital.

Call 111 if you need to speak to someone. Only use this service if:

- You feel you cannot cope with your symptoms at home
- Your condition gets worse
- Your symptoms do not get better after **10 days**

Face coverings

It is now mandatory to wear a face covering in shops and supermarkets, as well as on public transport. Your face covering must cover your nose and mouth at all times.

[More detailed guidance on face coverings](#)

North West England - local restrictions

New restrictions have been imposed on parts of Lancashire from 31 July. The areas covered by these restrictions are:

- Blackburn and Darwen
- Hyndburn
- Rossendale
- Pendle
- Burnley

No additional local instructions are in place in Blackpool.

[Information on these new local restrictions](#) are available on the GOV UK website.

Changes to guidance from 1 August

Some changes planned to come into effect from 1 August have been postponed for at least two weeks

This means:

- Casinos, bowling alleys, skating rinks and remaining close contact services must remain closed
- Indoor performances will not resume
- Pilots of larger crowds in sports venues and conference centres will not take place
- Wedding receptions of up to 30 people will not be permitted
- The requirements to wear face coverings is being extended to some other settings including cinemas, museums, libraries and places of worship

[More details are available in the Prime Minister's statement](#)

Local care home support plan documents

- [MSC letter - support for care homes \[PDF 234KB\]](#)
- [Infection Control Fund response to Helen Whately MP \[PDF 160KB\]](#)
- [Tracker draft narrative for minister \[ODS 20KB\]](#)

Local coronavirus statistics

The weekly Blackpool coronavirus statistics are published each week and are available on the [Blackpool JSNA website](#)

NHS Test and Trace

The government has introduced an NHS Test and Trace service for those with coronavirus (COVID-19) or have had close contact with someone who has tested positive.

The intention of the service is to help return life more to normal, in a way that is safe and protects our NHS and social care. The service will allow tracing the spread of the virus and isolates new infections and plays a vital role in giving an early warning if the virus is increasing again, locally or nationally.

[More information on the NHS test and trace service](#)

Maintaining records of staff, customers and visitors

The easing of lockdown measures following the COVID-19 outbreak is being supported by NHS Test and Trace.

Organisations in certain sectors should assist this service by keeping a temporary record of customers and visitors for 21 days, in a way that is manageable for your organisation, and assist NHS Test and Trace with requests for that data if needed. This could help contain clusters or outbreaks. Sectors that this guidance applies to:

- Hospitality, including pubs, bars, restaurants and cafés
- Tourism and leisure, including hotels, museums, cinemas, zoos and theme parks
- Close contact services, including hairdressers, barbershops and tailors
- Facilities provided by local authorities, including town halls and civic centres for events, community centres, libraries and children's centres
- Places of worship, including use for events and other community activities

[More information on how to collect and maintain records](#)

Smoking and Covid-19

Advice to smokers about coronavirus

Quitting smoking is an important way for individuals to reduce their risk from coronavirus (Covid-19).

Smoking increases the risk of lung infections. Smokers are twice as likely to get pneumonia and five times more likely to get flu than non-smokers.

Quitting smoking rapidly reduces your risk of other health problems such as heart attack and stroke. It is especially important to prevent these problems at a time like now, when health systems are going to come under strain.

[For help to quit smoking](#)

Beat the Heat - Coping with heat and Covid-19

Stay cool at home

- Many of us will know how to stay safe at home this summer
- Know how to keep your home cool
- Look out for others safely, follow Covid-19 guidance

Stay cool, keep well

- Drink plenty of fluids, and avoid excess alcohol
- Slow down when it's hot
- Stay connected, listen to the forecast

Cooler, safer places

- Go indoors or outdoors, whichever feels cooler
- Self-isolate at home if advised to do so
- Use cool spaces considerately, keep your distance

Watch out

- Be on the lookout for signs of heat related illness
- Cool your skin with water, slow down and drink water

- Stay safe when swimming
- Get help. Call NHS 111 or in an emergency 999

[For more information](#)

FAQ Friday – your questions answered

Dr Arif Rajpura, Blackpool Council's Director of Public Health, will be taking part in a weekly video briefing to address frequently asked questions related to COVID-19.

As part of FAQ Friday, each update will see Dr Rajpura discuss the impact of the virus at a local level, explaining what is happening here in Blackpool and how we can all work together to stay safe.

To view each FAQ Friday video, or to find out how to submit a question, visit our [FAQ Friday page](#).

Corona Kindness

Blackpool Council is committed to maintaining essential services and protecting the most vulnerable members of our community.

We have established a community Corona Kindness helpline for those who want to offer help and for those that need help.

The services that we can help with include:

- Food shopping
- Medical supplies
- Social isolation and loneliness
- Dog walking

If you need to access any of those things or you feel you can help, please email helpneeded@blackpool.gov.uk or helpoffered@blackpool.gov.uk.

If you need help call 0808 1963080.

[Find out more about Corona Kindness](#)

Corona Kindness hubs

Twelve corona kindness hubs are now in the process of being established in Blackpool across a broad geographical spread to meet vulnerable people's needs.

Each hub will have a dedicated person to co-ordinate support to the people most at risk.

[Find out more about the Corona Kindness community hubs](#)

Council Tax

The annual bills for council tax that were sent out in March were prepared and printed before any government announcements.

We would like to thank all residents who are able to continue paying, as your contribution is helping us to maintain essential services that are delivered to all in our town. It is important if your circumstances have not changed, you pay what you should, maintain your direct debit payments, or payment plan as detailed on your bill.

If you are struggling to pay your council tax, we want to make you aware of the support available and how we can help if you have been affected.

- Make sure you have claimed all the benefits that you are entitled to. For example Universal Credit from the Department of Work and Pensions and Council Tax Support from Blackpool Council
- If you are struggling, please get in touch with us - our teams are here to help. The most efficient way to do this is to visit the dedicated [COVID-19 update on council tax](#)
- [Get information about help you can receive in relation to business rates](#)

Council Tax reduction grants

The chancellor announced additional hardship support for council tax payers in the recent budget.

Local authorities have been asked to award a reduction to all Working Age Council Tax Reduction customers.

The award will be £150 off their Council Tax bill or if less than £150 is owed in Council Tax after the award of benefit, the bill will be reduced to nil.

Working age residents in receipt of Council Tax Reduction do not need to contact us as the awards will be made automatically and a new Council Tax bill will be issued in due course.

[If your financial circumstances have changed and you now need to claim Council Tax Reduction, please complete your application form](#) as soon as possible

Blackpool Council service changes

Due to the rapidly changing nature of the coronavirus pandemic, a number of services are to be suspended.

Some of these changes are as a direct result of the government's guidance around social-distancing to limit the spread of the virus. The changes are outlined below.

Main receptions

- The reception at Number One, Bickerstaffe Square, Talbot Road is now closed until further notice.
- Note that the reception areas at Blackpool Coastal Housing (Coastal House and Grange Park) are closed until further notice along with community centres across their sites. The closures will be reviewed on a weekly basis. If you need to contact Blackpool Coastal Housing call 01253 477900.
- Housing benefit will be paid as normal and services [can still be accessed online](#). Enquiries can be emailed to benefits@blackpool.gov.uk or customers can telephone 01253 478847 between 9.00am – 5.00pm
- The vast majority of our services will continue as we seek to protect the most vulnerable members of our community during this difficult period.
- It is possible there will be a reduction in level of service in some areas due to an increasing number of staff absences. Please bear with us.
- If you need to contact us, it will help us if you can phone, email or use other electronic means. Daily service updates will be posted on this page

Customer First

Opening hours are limited to the following:

- Monday, Wednesday and Friday between 10.00am and 12noon, and then from 2.00pm to 4.00pm.

The service will be operating in a different way than people are used to for the time being, to ensure the safety of customers and employees. There will be some necessary restrictions and procedures in place and anyone wanting a face-to-face appointment is **required to pre-book**.

Customer First is advising people **not to drop in** as they are trying to minimise the number of people in the offices.

For advice or to see if an appointment is available please use the following:

- Council services: Residents can call customer services on 01253 477477 or email customer.first@blackpool.gov.uk
- Benefits: Residents can call 01253 478847 or email benefits@blackpool.gov.uk

If you secure an appointment, you will receive advice on what to do on arrival and the relevant safety precautions.

All payment machines, public computers or internal phones will **not be** available for use.

Register office

Please visit the register office information page for updated [information on registering births and deaths or getting married at the Wedding Chapel](#).

Children's services

Worried about a child?

We are all currently experiencing difficult times and this may go on for some time yet.

Whilst things are different, we still want to hear from you if you have any concerns about a child that may be being harmed.

If you have any concerns at all about a child please get in touch on: 01253 477299

Children's centres

- All family hubs are closed until further notice with the exception of Grange Park and Talbot and Brunswick.

Child employment during Covid-19

We have created advise on businesses that are employing children during this pandemic. This is [available on our child employment page](#).

Adult services

- Highfield Day Centres closed until further notice
- All adult, community and family learning courses are suspended until further notice.

Waste services

- The tip on Bristol Avenue has reopened with restrictions [Please check details before travelling](#).
- The Bulky Matters waste service has now restarted
- The Rover mobile recycling service has now restarted
- Household waste collections have now returned to their normal collection schedule
- If you're self-isolating and feeling ill, put any potentially infected items like used tissues or cleaning cloths into separate plastic bags and double-bag them. These bags should be put aside for at least 72 hours (3 days) before you put them into your external bin.
- All bins must be out ready at their collection point before 7.30am on the day they are due to be collected.
- Please leave your bins with the handles facing the road, ideally close to your neighbour's bins, and don't obstruct the pavement or road

Public toilets

- All public toilets have now reopened

Sports, leisure and arts

- The Solaris, including the café, is closed until further notice.
- The Grundy Art Gallery has now reopened
- All adult, community and family learning courses are suspended until further notice

Libraries

Layton, Moor Park and Palatine libraries are open with the following limited operating hours:

- Monday: 10.00am to 4.00pm
- Friday: 10.00am to 4.00pm
- Saturday: 10.00am – 1.00pm

As with many other venues, there will be some necessary restrictions and procedures in place to ensure the safety of customers and employees. Full details are available on the [library service web pages](#).

Blackpool Council's libraries are still offering a number of virtual services for adults and youngsters. Visit the above link for more information.

Please keep an eye on Blackpool Libraries' social media channels (Twitter and Facebook) for any updates.

Alternatively, if you have an enquiry please call 01253 478080 to speak to a member of staff or email: library.info@blackpool.gov.uk

Leisure centres

Phased reopening of activities

The following centres are open with activities being phased in over the coming weeks:

- Blackpool Sports Centre
- Moor Park Health and Leisure Centre

Activities currently available are

- [Gym](#)
- [Express Fitness](#)
- [Exercise classes, including indoor cycling](#)

Available to book now for Monday 10 August

- [Climbing and bouldering](#)
- [Athletics track](#)
- [Racquet sports](#)
- [Feel Good Factory](#)
- [High Ropes](#)

Please ensure you come to the centre workout ready, as changing rooms are currently closed (except for the disabled and those with additional needs).

You must book activities in advance To ensure maintenance of social distancing and for NHS contact and trace you must book all of your activities in advance via one of the following methods:

- Sport Blackpool mobile App for Android or Apple
- [Book online](#)
- Telephone: 01253 478474

You must hold a leisure card (pay as you go) or membership, to be able to book activities.

[You can sign up for these online or request a call back from a membership advisor.](#)

[Membership payments for current members](#)

If you already hold a health and fitness membership with us, you will not pay and Direct Debits until the 4 September and you will also receive 1/3 off your September Direct Debit.

Annual memberships will be extended by a month and 10 days in addition to the time the centres were closed.

These offers do not apply to new memberships signing up.

Simply swim memberships will remain frozen until the pools reopen. It is proposed the pools will reopen in September with further details provided at the end of August.

[Palatine Leisure Centre development](#)

Palatine Leisure Centre is to remain closed until a proposed short redevelopment takes place.

The reopening date of the centre is yet to be confirmed, but we look forward to sharing details with you once the proposals are completed.

Any member who wishes to [freeze their membership until the centre reopens can do so](#) here

Further information including how to use the centres is provided on the [Active Blackpool website](#).

[NHS contact test and trace and Active Blackpool](#)

For NHS contact test and trace if you need to [update your contact information we hold for you](#), please do so.

[Parks](#)

- All of our outdoor parks are open
- The gates to the main car park at Stanley Park are now closed at the request of police
- The park remains open to those visiting on foot, although people are being reminded to follow social distancing rules
- Children's playgrounds have now reopened
- You may meet **six** person from a different household, but social distancing rules must be followed

[Car parks](#)

Seaside's Way car parks are closed until further notice.

Receptions and buildings

Housing Options

As of Monday 23 March, the Housing Options public reception on Chapel Street will be closed in the mornings and open in the afternoons for emergencies only. The telephone lines are open 01253 477760.

[More information for tenants/landlords in the private rented sector](#)

Tourist Information Centre

The [Tourist Information Centre](#) has now reopened

FYCreatives, Church Street

The FYCreatives building will remain open but there will be a managed reception service from Monday 23 March.

The HealthWorks, Corporation Street

The HealthWorks building will be closed to clients and customers. Department for Work and Pensions services and other employment advice will be delivered via telephone interviews.

There will be a managed reception service from Monday 23 March.

FY1 offices

The FY1 building will remain open but there will be a managed reception service from Monday 23 March.

Enterprise Centre, Lytham Road

The FY1 building will remain open but there will be a managed reception service from Monday 23 March.

Business support

COVID-19 business help desk

Blackpool Council has set up a dedicated helpdesk to support local businesses during the coronavirus pandemic.

The helpdesk will help businesses to understand and access the £330 billion package of rescue measures announced by the chancellor – including temporary loans, rate relief, grants and other help to small businesses and self-employed.

The wide-ranging measures include:

- The coronavirus Job Retention Scheme offering 80% wage subsidies up to a cap of £2,500 per month for 'furloughed workers'. Applies to all UK employers.
- Support for self-employed through the Self-employment Income Support Scheme.
- A business rates holiday for all retail, hospitality and leisure businesses in 2020-21, including business grants of £25,000 (for premises with a rateable value of £15k to £51k).
- A one-off grant of £10,000 to all businesses currently eligible for Small Business Rate Relief (SBRR)
- Business rates holiday for nursery businesses for 2020-21
- A Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) offering loans of up to £5m to companies with less than £41m turnover
- Support for larger firms through the COVID-19 Corporate Financing facility – aimed at companies with short-term cash flow issues
- Support for business paying sick pay to employees (a rebate scheme)
- Support for businesses with outstanding tax affairs through HMRC's Time to Pay service
- Support for businesses to defer VAT payments for three months (until 30 June 2020)
- For self-employed income tax payments due on July 31 will be deferred until 31 January 2021

The council's helpdesk will be manned by business support experts working closely with colleagues in the business rates department.

Businesses should [complete an enquiry form](#). The team will then respond with bespoke help and guidance.

[Regular updates on government support for business during the pandemic.](#)

Financial support

A number of financial supports have been introduced by the government to help businesses. These include:

- Business rates relief
- Business support grant funds
- Support for the self-employed
- Support for small and medium-sized businesses
- Support for large businesses

[View full details of financial support available](#)

Discretionary grant funding

Applications are invited for financial support under a new £2.4m discretionary grants scheme which goes live from Monday 1 June.

The Local Authority Discretionary Grants Fund supports small businesses and charities that have fallen outside of the scope of current grant schemes - the Small Business Grants Fund and Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grants Fund. The top-up fund is 5% of the value of those funds.

The fund will provide support for active small businesses and charities who can demonstrate on-going fixed property-related costs and suffered a significant fall in income due to the COVID-19 crisis.

[For further information, including full eligibility criteria, and details of how to apply.](#)

Job retention scheme

The government's coronavirus job retention scheme went live on 20 April, with businesses able to claim up to £2,500 a month towards staff wages.

Employers can furlough anyone they employ, provided that on or before 19 March they were on PAYE payroll and HMRC has been notified of payment via the RTI system.

The scheme has now been extended to the end of October. Key details to note:

- Furloughed workers across the UK will continue to receive 80% of their current salary, up to £2,500
- From August, furloughed workers will be able to return to work part-time with employers being asked to pay a percentage towards the salaries of their furloughed staff
- The employer payments will substitute the contribution HMG is currently making, ensuring that staff continue to receive 80% of their salary, up to £2,500 a month

Further details on implementation will be made available by the end of the month

- [The online portal](#)
- [Step by step guide for employers](#)
- [The guidance with calculator](#)

Working safely guidance

The government has issued new guidance to help businesses in the UK to get back up and running and workplaces operating as safely as possible.

This follows the Prime Minister setting out steps to beat the virus and restart the economy, so we can protect jobs, restore people's livelihoods and fund the country's vital public services.

[View the guidance](#)

Helping businesses to stay safe

Blackpool Council wants to assist business as much as possible during these incredibly challenging times.

It is of paramount importance that we all follow the government guidelines to limit the spread of coronavirus.

Where workplaces are permitted to be open, precautions need to be taken to reduce the risks; to yourself, your employees, and to the general public.

We have therefore provided a checklist for businesses, of measures that must be in place to control the risk of coronavirus.

[View coronavirus checklist for businesses](#)

Unfortunately, if businesses cannot comply with the relevant requirements, then the business will be asked to temporarily cease trading.

Shops and businesses reopening

As of 4 July 2020, many of the businesses and venues that were previously required to stay closed to the public will be able to reopen:

- Restaurants and pubs will be allowed to reopen, providing they follow safety guidelines. Customers will have to give their contact details on entry.
- Holiday accommodation will reopen and people in England will be able to stay away from home
- Hairdressers will be able to reopen. Other close contact services such as nail bars cannot open yet
- Libraries, community centres, cinemas, museums, theme parks and amusement arcades among other venues will be able to reopen
- Places of worship will be able to open for prayers and services and weddings with up to 30 guests
- Nightclubs, gyms, swimming pools and indoor play areas remain closed

You can find more information on the changes that come into effect from 4 July on the [government website](#).

Businesses must carry out a risk assessment before they reopen in order to identify the risks and controls required in the business to open safely with social distancing measures. [This guidance should help you with this](#).

We have also produced a number of signs/posters that you may find useful. [These can be downloaded and used as you need](#).

It is also the business owners responsibility to manage queues both inside and outside the premises.

Any businesses that would like advice on how to protect people from coronavirus in the workplace are encouraged to call the [Health & Safety Executive \(HSE\)](#) telephone advice line 0300 790 6787.

- [Updated information on shops that can and cannot open](#)
- [Full details of what requirements shops need to follow to open](#)

Eat Out to Help Out scheme

The new scheme was announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on 8 July for food businesses to offer a 50% discount during the month of August 2020.

The general details of the scheme are:

- The scheme will run from 3 to 31 August 2020 on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays
- It is a 50% discount, up to a **maximum of £10** per person
- It applies to food or non-alcoholic drinks to eat consumed **on the premises**
- Alcohol and service charges are excluded from the offer
- There is no limit to the number of times customers can use the offer during the period of the scheme
- The offer applies individually to all members of a group who are eating or drinking together – so it can't be applied where a person in the group is not eating (ie., if a couple have a baby, they can only get a maximum of £20 discount on their meal)

Eligible businesses

Eligible establishments are those in which food is sold for immediate on-premises consumption.

This could include:

- Restaurants
- Cafés
- Public houses that serve food
- Hotel restaurants

- Restaurants and cafes within tourist attractions, holiday sites and leisure facilities
- Dining rooms within members' clubs
- Workplace and school canteens

[More information the scheme](#)

Registration

To claim the discount from government, businesses must register.

Registrations will open on **13 July and close on 31 August.**

You can register if your establishment:

- Sells food for immediate consumption on the premises
- Provides its own dining area or shares a dining area with another establishment for eat-in meals
- Was registered as a food business with the relevant local authority on or before 7 July You cannot register if your establishment:
- Only offers takeaway food or drink
- Provides catering services for private functions
- Is an accommodation business that provides room service only
- Dining services (such as packaged dinner cruises)
- Mobile food vans or trailer

The registration will be instantaneous with businesses receiving a reference number to use to claim reimbursement from the government. They will also receive downloadable promotional materials to use to let your customers know they are part of the scheme.

[Register your business for the scheme](#)

Employment support

We are working with the Lancashire Skills Hub to make sure people have access to the employment support and skills training they need during this difficult period and to assure you that there is help available whether you've been:

- Made redundant
- Furloughed
- Are at risk of redundancy
- Have been unemployed for a while

[Find what support is available in Blackpool](#) to help you learn new skills, access training courses, get careers advice and guidance and get one-to-one support to help you get back to work.

Blackpool business and visitor economy

All of Blackpool's key attractions, theatres and most hotels are temporarily closed along with all bars, restaurants, cafes, nightclubs, gyms and cinemas.

Many events due to be staged over the coming months have been cancelled.

Our current advice to visitors is to follow government advice and stay at home.

The following attractions remain closed

- Grand Theatre
- Winter Gardens
- VIVA Blackpool
- Blackpool Football Club (fixtures in the English Football League are suspended)
- Ascent Trampoline Park
- Blackpool Transport Heritage Tram Tours (will run over August Bank Holiday)

As a result of the attraction closures, the VisitBlackpool Resort Pass scheme is suspended for the months of April, May and June.

Events

Known event postponements and cancellations include:

- The European Dance Championships (original dates 10-12 April, rescheduled to October 15 - 17) at the Winter Gardens
- The Blackpool Junior Dance Festival (original dates April 16 - 19. Ballroom, Latin and sequence events rescheduled to August 31 - September 4. Formation events rescheduled to September 19 - 20)
- Blackpool Air Show (due to be held over 7 and 8 August)
- Ride the Lights (due to be held 2 September)
- [The Blackpool Illuminations Switch-On will now be an online virtual event](#)
- The World Fireworks Championships (originally scheduled for September 11, 18, 25 and October 2)
- Blackpool Dance Festival (original dates May 16 - 29, rescheduled to August 25 - September 6)
- The annual USDAW conference in April has been cancelled along with the International Fitness Exhibition. The GMB union conference in June has also been cancelled. All were due to be held at the Winter Gardens

Virtual visit

VisitBlackpool has produced a [Virtual Blackpool package tour](#) which includes a brilliant online collection of rollercoaster rides, water slides, tours of venues and attractions, educational videos, and plenty of fun and games for the family to enjoy.

Public transport

It is mandatory to [wear a face covering when using public transport](#).

Concessionary travel

From **Monday 15 June** holders of concessionary travel passes, including elderly and disabled will no longer be able to travel for free before 9.30am. If you're travelling earlier than this, you will need to pay the correct fare.

Holders of Blackpool issued disabled concessionary passes who travel before 9.30am will see an increase to their 50p concessionary rate. To bring Blackpool in line with the rest of Lancashire, the fare will increase to £1 if travelling before 9.30am.

Blackpool Transport

Tram services are currently suspended until **Sunday 19 July** with the service 1 and other bus routes alternatives to the tramway.

Frequencies of bus services are reduced, but more bus journeys are being added from Monday 12 July

This change ensures that Blackpool Transport are still able to operate a reliable vital service for those who need to travel for essential reasons and comes in line with a large reduction in those travelling with us due to people following government rules.

[More about these changes to services](#)

Until further notice, **all NHS staff can travel for free** onboard the Blackpool Transport bus network. Simply show your NHS ID card to their drivers as you board. Get full information on the Blackpool Transport website.

£1.50 flat fare

From Sunday 9 August the temporary £1.50 flat fare will be replaced by a new simpler fare structure. [Details of the new fares](#) are available on the Blackpool Transport website

Rail travel

There is heavy disruption across the rail industry. Temporary timetables are in operation on the Northern network. Avanti West Coast has also cancelled the direct service between Blackpool and London until further notice.

The rail company, Grand Central, has postponed the launch of daily services between London and Blackpool until next year.

National Express

Coach services in and out of Blackpool are suspended until further notice

Schools, colleges, nursery and childcare closures

School reopening in September

The government are planning for all pupils, in all year groups, to return to school and college full-time from the beginning of the autumn term.

Schools in Blackpool will be open to all pupils in September.

Blackpool Council is working closely with school leaders, the Department for Education, teachers, unions and parents and carers to ensure that Blackpool schools reopen in the safest way possible.

[Find out about the safety measures in place on our dedicated back to school safely page.](#)

Staying safe online

To help you make sure your children are staying safe online whilst at home, we have put together some [resources to help you maintain their safety](#).

Online radicalisation

The closure of schools means that opportunities for children to talk to and play with friends will be limited to online interaction. This will almost certainly lead to children spending more time online.

Parents working from home may not be able to monitor their children's use of devices as they usually would which may result in children being exposed to extreme ideas.

To help prevent this you should look out for increased instances of:

- Exploring new and unusual websites, chat forums and platforms due to boredom or frustration
- Joining new or secret groups since isolation
- Speaking with new friends or being secretive about chats during online gaming or in forums
- A strong desire to seek new meaning, identity and purpose
- Using language you wouldn't expect them to know
- Watching, sharing or creating films online linked to religious, political or racial hate

[More information and help is available on the NSPCC website](#) or ring the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000.

Online learning resources

- [DFE have now produced a list of online education resources that can be used by families.](#)
- [Century Tech allow all families to access their resources for free during this period](#)
- [Education Goes On - Resources for fun educational activities](#)

Homelessness support and referral

Blackpool Council and its partner agencies continue to support those at risk of, and those experiencing homelessness.

Blackpool Homeless Partnership (which consists of a wide range of statutory and third sector partners working together to prevent homelessness) are in constant communication. It is this collaboration of people who are ensuring accommodation, food and other support is being offered to those that need it.

Continued efforts ensure the following is in place:

- Regular street outreach by our team and partner agencies to identify anyone who is homeless or in need of support
- To date around 95 people have been temporarily housed in emergency accommodation, predominately B&Bs, to keep them safe and well
- 3 hot meals a day are now being provided, 7 days a week to the homeless via a delivery service. This ensures that they do not need to leave their accommodation to get food, keeping themselves safe and also limiting risk to everyone else
- Advice and support for those who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness via our Housing Options Team. Contact should be made via telephone where possible on 01253 477760. For emergency, out of hours support please call 01253 477600
- Those that smoke will be provided with Nicotine Replacement Therapy to discourage them from leaving isolation for cigarettes

- We're working with Delphi (our drug and alcohol treatment services) on supporting those with any addiction needs and where possible we'll be looking to support those individuals into recovery
- Entertainment is being considered, for example, radios being provided where there are no TVs within the accommodation. There are ongoing discussions how to support residents with their mental health through activity provision

People who are not homeless but still in need during this pandemic should contact the Corona Kindness helpline on **0808 196 30 80** Monday to Friday 9.00am to 5.00pm or email helpneeded@blackpool.gov.uk

If you are able to offer help in anyway, please let us know by emailing helpoffered@blackpool.gov.uk

If you want to donate food to the homeless please follow the link to find more information on how to do this (link to the bit on the website about Blackpool tower provision)

Care home visiting

Please to follow government guidance on social distancing when keeping in touch with family and friends living in care homes and supported living services. You should continue to keep in contact with your friends and loved ones using digital technology such as video calling, social media or by phone rather than visiting in person.

The recent relaxation of the lockdown measures means that there are now opportunities for residents living in care homes and supported living to receive visits from family, loved ones and close friends in some circumstances.

Each care provider will have their own policy on visiting, but it is recommended that people should only visit in person when it is absolutely essential and visits should be limited to a maximum of two people from the same household.

In homes where there are confirmed outbreaks of Covid-19, no visiting will be allowed, apart from in exceptional circumstances when residents are at the end of their lives.

[More information on shielding and protecting vulnerable people.](#)

Energy supplies

The government has agreed measures with the energy industry to support vulnerable people through COVID-19.

These will help to ensure vulnerable customers who may fall into debt remain supplied with energy while in self-isolation.

With immediate effect, customers with pre-payment meters who may not be able to add credit can speak to their supplier about options to keep them supplied.

This will benefit over four million customers. This could include:

- Nominating a third party for credit top ups
- Having a discretionary fund added to their credit
- Being sent a pre-loaded top up card so that their supply is not interrupted.

Any energy customer in financial distress will also be supported by their supplier, which could include debt repayments and bill payments being reassessed, reduced or paused where necessary, while disconnection of credit meters will be completely suspended.

Please telephone the relevant company if you have a prepay meter tell them your self -isolating

- British Gas 0333 202 9802
- EDF 0333 200 5100
- [EON](#) 0345 052 000
- N Power 0800 073 3000
- Scottish Power 0800 027 0072
- SSE 0345 026 2658

[More information](#)

Government benefits

- If you are making a new claim for Universal Credit you no longer have to call as part of the process
- The Department for Work and Pensions has temporarily [paused the recovery of benefit overpayments, for three months.](#)

- [General guidance for people already receiving benefits](#)
- [Support for modern slavery victims affected by coronavirus](#)
- Deductions from benefits through the [Eligible Loan Deduction Scheme have been paused](#). You do not need to make any repayments until July 2020 at the earliest. Payments will stop automatically and restart in July at the earliest.
- Work on Personal Independence Payment law changes has been suspended in support of the government's response to coronavirus. DWP is focusing on ensuring customers get the financial assistance they need.
- [Guidance for people who are self-employed](#)
- [Guidance for people who are employed and cannot work due to coronavirus](#)

Support for children with complex needs

The Department for Education has announced that low-income families with children that have complex needs and disabilities can apply for a grant to make their lives easier during this period of social distancing.

The grant can be used towards a number of resources, such as computers and tablets, specialist equipment and educational toys.

A proportion of funding has been committed specifically for families that are staying at home more than usual to shield themselves from COVID-19, and are looking after and educating critically ill or disabled children themselves.

For further information and to apply, visit the [Family Fund website](#).

Dental care

If you have a dental issue during lockdown, it is important that you know how to access help when you need it.

All high street dental and orthodontic practices can give advice, guidance and prescriptions, which you can collect from your local pharmacy. If you are in pain or in need of support and need help or advice, please telephone your dental practice in the usual way.

If you are [not registered with a dentist, you can go to the website](#) or call the Lancashire dental helpline: **0300 1234 010**.

This may be because:

- You have severe toothache
- A dental infection
- You have noticed other changes inside your mouth such as a white or red patch
- A lump or an ulcer that won't heal

You will be assessed and given advice over the phone, which may result in a remote consultation with a dentist.

To support NHS services, it is important that **you do not visit** hospitals or doctors' surgeries with dental problems.

Outbreak management plan

As part of the gradual relaxation of lockdown measures, a new NHS Test and Trace service was launched on 28 May 2020 across England with the aim to help identify, contain and control coronavirus, reduce the spread of the virus and save lives.

Effective and timely contact tracing will need to be implemented to allow a sustained reduction in new cases and outbreaks and reduce transmission. This will be achieved through a Department of Health and Social Care led integrated programme that consists of a proximity alerting app, web-based and telephone-based contact tracing service and optimised testing arrangements.

Blackpool Council's public health team have published a detailed outbreak management plan for this process

- [Outbreak Control Plan Covid-19 \[PDF 1.64MB\]](#) *

Links

- [Government coronavirus information](#)
- [More information is available on the NHS website](#)
- [Public Health England COVID-19 dashboard](#)
- [Specific advice for taxi drivers and private hire operators in Blackpool](#)
- [Guidance on Business Rate changes](#)



Residents

- [Advice-and-support](#)
- [Benefits](#)
- [Blackpool-Illuminations](#)
- [Council-tax](#)
- [Education-and-schools](#)
- [Health-and-social-care](#)
- [Housing](#)
- [Libraries-arts-and-heritage](#)
- [Life-events](#)
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Business

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Your Council

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