

# STEP SYSTEM – ENGLAND

## GUIDANCE & FAQs

### Version 1

#### Introduction

From **Monday 8 March 2021**, England will enter a new system of ‘steps’ – with differing levels of business operation and restriction at each step. For reopening systems in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland please refer to the relevant guidance.

New guidance and regulations will be produced by the Government to explain these changes. This document is an interpretation of the information currently available as it pertains to hospitality, as we currently understand it. The headline details of Step system can be found in the Government’s overview document [here](#).

Those questions marked in green are areas where we are awaiting both further guidance from officials and the regulations. The guidance below is based on current feedback from Government as to how the step system is expected to operate. This FAQ is the shared view of UKHospitality, BBPA and BII on how aspects of the step system could be applied to different practical situations. **This FAQ will be kept under constant review. Please note not all of the information is currently available and may be subject to change.** This will be kept updated and revised as new information emerges. This note does not constitute legal advice.

*Note - the Government has stated around four weeks is required to see the impact of the previous step in the data, and the Government has committed to provide a further week’s notice to businesses, thereby creating at least a five-week period between each step. Steps will therefore take place no earlier than the dates shown below, subject to an assessment of the data against the Government’s four tests. If a step is delayed, subsequent steps will need to be pushed back in order to maintain the necessary five-week period to assess the impact of each step and provide notice.*

### STEP 1 – 8 and 29 March

**PLEASE NOTE THIS WILL BE KEPT UPDATED AS MORE INFORMATION BECOMES AVAILABLE**

#### 8 March

People can leave home for recreation as well as exercise outdoors - with their own household, support or childcare bubble, or with one person from another household.

29 March

**Outdoor sports facilities able to open include:**

- gyms
- swimming pools
- sports courts (such as tennis and basketball courts)
- golf courses, including mini golf
- water sports venues
- climbing walls
- driving and shooting ranges
- riding arenas at riding centres
- archery venues

People can use these venues outdoors in a group of six people, or with members of up to two households.

**Q. Can work meetings take place in Step 1?**

In-person meetings for work, training or education purposes can still take place but only where it is not possible to carry out the activity from home, and if social distancing can be maintained and the venue can demonstrate it has followed COVID-19 guidance. People should only attend a business meeting in person if it is necessary for them to be there - social meetings with work colleagues should not happen. Permitted venues, including exhibition and conference centres, can hire out function and event spaces for essential work, education and training purposes, where these events cannot reasonably be conducted remotely in Step 1 and 2.

**Q. When can outdoor swimming pools reopen?**

From 29 March outdoor sports facilities such as swimming pools and gyms will be open. People can use outdoor pools and gyms in a group of six people, or with members of up to two households. Indoor facilities, such as changing rooms, should not be used at this time, although toilet facilities can be accessed. At this stage, these gatherings must only include participants - not spectators.

**Q. What are the rules around travelling and holidays in Step 1?**

People should continue to minimise travel wherever possible, and should not be staying away from home overnight or taking holidays.

**STEP 2 – 12 April**

**Hospitality**

Outdoor areas at hospitality venues (cafes, restaurants, bars, pubs, social clubs, including member's clubs) can reopen, including for takeaway alcohol. Venues may allow customers to use certain indoor facilities listed in the Q&A section below. At any premises serving alcohol, customers will be required to order, be served and eat/drink while seated. If customers need to access any indoor areas, they will need to wear face coverings whilst indoors.

**Self-contained accommodation**

Self-contained holiday accommodation in which all facilities (including for sleeping, catering, bathing, and indoor lobbies and corridors for entry and exit) will reopen, but are restricted to the exclusive use of a single household/support bubble.

**Outdoor Attractions**

Outdoor attractions can reopen at:

- adventure parks and activities
- animal attractions (such as at zoos, safari parks and aquariums)
- drive in events, such as for cinemas, theatres, and other performances.
- film studios
- funfairs and fairgrounds
- model villages
- museums and galleries
- skating rinks
- theme parks
- trampolining parks
- water and aqua parks

**Indoor sports and leisure facilities can reopen. This will include:**

- gyms and leisure centres
- sports courts
- swimming pools
- dance studios and fitness centres
- driving and shooting ranges
- riding arenas
- archery venues
- climbing wall centres

**Gift Shops at Attractions**

Permitted businesses operating in otherwise closed attractions (such as a gift shop or a takeaway kiosk at a museum) may only open where they are a self-contained unit and can be accessed directly from the street.

**FAQs – Step 2**

**PLEASE NOTE THIS WILL BE KEPT UPDATED AS MORE INFORMATION BECOMES AVAILABLE**

**Q. Can I allow customers into the indoor elements of my venue, for reasons connected with their use of the outside space? For example to use the toilet, baby change facility, travel through the venue to an outdoor area, pay indoors (if can't be done outdoors), provision of first aid etc.**

A. The intention of the forthcoming regulations will be to allow the use of indoor areas for the above and similar activities ancillary to the use of the outside area. Venues should ensure that customers using toilets and/or travelling through the indoor area(s) are managed via COVID-19 secure rules, face covering rules, customers not permitted to linger, block corridors or access points etc.

**Q. Will table service be required for food and drink consumed in outdoor areas of hospitality?**

Yes. At premises serving alcohol, customers will be required to order, be served and eat/drink whilst seated. If you are not serving alcohol, table service is not required.

**Q. Will a substantial meal have to be served as a condition of serving alcohol?**

No. Alcohol can be served and consumed outdoors without food. Table service will apply as above.

**Q. Who is allowed to meet outdoors?**

A group of up to 6 from mixed households, or two households.

**Q. What entertainment can I offer outside?**

A. We believe that background music and TV sport will be allowed outside, but we are awaiting further clarification.

**Q. Can takeaway alcohol be served?**

Yes. Further guidelines are expected on the detail. However, you will need to differentiate between sales of alcohol that will genuinely be taken away from the premises, and alcohol that will be consumed in the outdoor area. If it is the latter, then the table service rules apply.

**Q. Weddings and wakes locations (to clarify).**

A: At this step, funerals proceed with up to 30 attendees. Weddings, receptions, and commemorative events including wakes will be able to take place with up to 15 attendees (in premises that are 'permitted to open' – we are seeking further clarity as to what this means in practice, and will update this FAQ).

**Q. Pavement licences – how do these work?**

A: If you wish to use outdoor areas, please ensure you have the relevant permissions i.e. the fast track pavement licensing system. In 2020, a new, streamlined pavement licence process to allow businesses to secure the use of outdoor space was introduced. These licences allow removable furniture to be placed on parts of the highway. Licences can be granted for use up until 30 September 2021. If the applicant has a licence to serve alcohol on-premises temporary amendments to the Licencing Act 2003, through the Business and Planning Act 2020, currently allow them to sell alcohol for consumption off the premises without needing to apply for a variation of their licence. More detail can be found here: [Guidance: pavement licences \(outdoor seating proposal\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pavement-licences-outdoor-seating-proposal)

**Q. How is self-contained accommodation defined in detail?**

A. We are awaiting further feedback on the detail of this.

**Q: What are the rules on travel at this stage?**

A: Overnight stays away from home in England will be permitted and self-contained accommodation can also reopen, though must only be used by members of the same household.

**Q. When can trampolining and climbing reopen?**

Indoor climbing walls can open from Step 2 - no earlier than 12 April. Unless a specific exemption exists, these must only be attended/used in line with the wider social contact limits at this stage - as a single household or bubble indoors.

Outdoor trampolining parks can open in Step 2 - no earlier than 12 April. Unless a specific exemption exists, these must only be attended/used in line with the wider social contact limits at this stage - in a group of 6 people or 2 households outdoors.

**Q. When can indoor swimming pools reopen?**

Indoor swimming pools can open in Step 2 - no earlier than 12 April. This is in line with indoor gyms, leisure centres and sports courts. Unless a specific exemption exists, these must only be attended/used in line with the wider social contact limits at this stage - as a single household or bubble indoors.

**Q. Can pool tables, darts, fruit machines etc. be used?**

A: These will not be permitted to be used indoors.

## **STEP 3 – 17 May**

**PLEASE NOTE THIS WILL BE KEPT UPDATED AS MORE INFORMATION BECOMES AVAILABLE**

### **Hospitality**

Indoor areas of hospitality venues (cafes, restaurants, bars, pubs, social clubs, including in member's clubs) can reopen. As outdoors, table service will be required. Unless seated to eat or drink, customers will be required to wear face coverings whilst indoors. Venues will be prohibited from providing shared smoking equipment such as shisha pipes.

### **Accommodation**

Remaining holiday accommodation can reopen including hotels, B&Bs and Hostels

### **Indoor entertainment and visitor attractions**

Businesses that can reopen will include:

- cinemas/theatres/concert halls
- museums and galleries
- adventure playgrounds and activities
- amusement arcades and adult gaming centres
- bingo halls/casinos
- bowling alleys/skating rinks
- games, recreation and entertainment venues such as escape rooms and laser quest
- play areas (including soft play centres and inflatable parks)
- trampolining parks/water and aqua parks
- indoor visitor areas at outdoor attractions that opened on 12 April 2021

Indoor trampolining parks can open in Step 3 - no earlier than 17 May. These must only be attended/used in line with the wider social contact limits at this stage - in a group of 6 people or 2 households indoors.

Indoor bowling can open in Step 3 - no earlier than 17 May. Unless a specific exemption exists, it must only be attended/used in line with the wider social contact limits at this stage - in a group of 6 people or 2 households indoors.

### **Outdoor Events**

Remaining outdoor entertainment events, such as cinemas, theatres, and other performance events will also be permitted.

## **FAQs – Step 3**

### **Q. Will table service be required for food and drink consumed in indoor areas of hospitality?**

Yes. At premises serving alcohol customers will be required to order, be served and eat/drink whilst seated.

### **Q. Will a table/substantial meal have to be served as a condition of serving alcohol?**

No. Alcohol can be served outdoors without food. Table service will apply as above.

### **Q. Who is allowed to meet indoors at my venue at Step 3?**

A group of up to 6 from mixed households, or two households.

### **Q. Who is allowed to meet outdoors at my venue at Step 3?**

Groups of up to 30 from mixed households.

**Q. Are stays now allowed in non self-contained premises?**

A. Yes. Stays are permitted in hotels, B&Bs etc.

**Q. What are the rules around larger scale events?**

A. Controlled indoor events of up to 1,000 people or 50% of a venue's capacity, whichever is lower, will be permitted, as will outdoor events with a capacity of either 50% or 4,000 people, whichever is lower. The Government will also make a special provision for large, outdoor, seated venues where crowds can be safely distributed, allowing up to 10,000 people or 25% of total seated capacity, whichever is lower. In addition, pilots will run as part of the Events Research Programme to examine how such events can take place without the need for social distancing using other mitigations such as testing.

**Q. What are the wedding/life event rules?**

A. At this step, weddings, receptions, funerals, and commemorative events including wakes can proceed with up to 30 attendees. A broader range of stand-alone life events will also be permitted at this step, including bar mitzvahs and christenings.

**STEP 4 - 21 June**

**PLEASE NOTE THESE WILL BE KEPT UPDATED AS MORE INFORMATION BECOMES AVAILABLE**

Remaining businesses to open including:

- nightclubs and adult entertainment venues
- lifting the restrictions on large events

# QR CODES

There is a FAQ regarding the NHS QR codes and app available for England on the NHS website here <https://faq.covid19.nhs.uk/category/?id=CAT-01043&parentid=CAT-01027>

To summarise legal requirements re Test and Trace from 18 September 2020 (these are compulsory):

- from 18 September, pubs, bars, cafes, restaurants and other leisure venues in England need to advise customers of their obligation to take bookings of no more than 6 people (subject to exemptions, please see Q&A), ensure people are not meeting in groups of more than 6 people on their premises (see below exemptions in Q&A) and ensure there is sufficient social distancing space between tables and that tables do not mingle
- it is also mandatory for businesses and organisations, including hospitality, close contact services and leisure venues to collect customer, visitor and staff contact detail logs from Friday 18 September. If the whole group uses the official NHS app and QR code there is no further requirement for data collection. If customers choose to use the NHS QR code to check-in, the guidance is that staff should check the customer's phone screen to ensure that the check-in has been successful.
- businesses should refuse entry to customers that do not provide their details or provide details that are believed to be inaccurate
- from Thursday 24 September 2020, these businesses need to display the official NHS QR code posters to make it easier for people to check-in at different premises. If the whole group choose to check-in using the NHS QR code poster they do not need to log in via any other route
- the aim of the law is to enable an individual (over the age of 16) who seeks to enter the relevant premises and has a smartphone in their possession to scan the NHS QR code with that smartphone as, or immediately after, they enter the premises

To generate and download the official NHS QR Code for an individual site visit <https://covid19.nhs.uk/venue-check-in-businesses.html>

However please note that **the requirements for Test and Trace and rule of 6 are different in England than in Wales or Scotland. If you are operating in these areas, please consult the respective national guidance. Please read the FAQ above in full, some key points are outlined below:**

## **WHICH VENUES IN ENGLAND SHOULD DISPLAY THE OFFICIAL NHS QR CODE POSTER?**

If your business or venue falls into one of the sectors or categories that should provide a customer log, then you must display an NHS QR code poster at your venue. This applies if you provide:

- hospitality services, including pubs, bars, restaurants and cafés
- tourism and leisure services, 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.

## **IF I CREATE AN OFFICIAL NHS QR CODE POSTER FOR MY VENUE IN ENGLAND, DOES THIS REMOVE MY RESPONSIBILITY TO COLLECT CONTACT DETAILS BY OTHER ROUTES?**

If your business or venue falls into one of the sectors or categories that must provide a customer log, and a visitor chooses to check-in using the official NHS QR code, they will not need to provide their contact details by any other route. However, you will still need to have an option for recording visitors' contact details for people who do not have a smartphone or do not want to use the NHS COVID-19 app.

## **I AM CURRENTLY USING MY OWN QR CODE CHECK-IN SYSTEM AT MY VENUE IN ENGLAND. CAN I CONTINUE TO USE THIS INSTEAD OF THE OFFICIAL NHS QR CODE POSTERS, OR INTEGRATE THE TWO?**

The NHS COVID-19 app is only able to scan official NHS QR code posters. This is for security reasons and because the NHS QR technology means that venue check-in history remains on the user's device.

In England, even if you're currently using your own QR code or other system to collect records of your staff, visitors or customers, you must have a NHS QR poster on site from 24 September.

If you use any other QR code system at your venue, you must ensure that it does not show any NHS or NHS Test and Trace logos. You should also explain to your customers that you are using more than one QR code system in your venue. Unofficial QR codes will not work with the NHS COVID-19 app.

## **WHAT INFORMATION MUST I COLLECT?**

It is now the law that venues must request this information from at least one member of the party. These records must be retained for 21 days. Please see section above for recent developments regarding the national test and trace app.

The law states you must collect:

- the name of the individual
- a telephone number on which the individual may be contacted;
- an e-mail address if the individual is unable to provide a telephone number;
- a postal address if the individual is unable to provide an email address;
- the date and time that the individual entered the relevant premises;
- where the individual is a member of a group seeking permission to enter premises together, the number of people in that group (including any member of the group that has scanned a QR Code when seeking to enter the premises).

If a customer uses the NHS QR Code and app, this discharges the obligation for the venue to collect their details.

## **DO I HAVE TO REFUSE SERVICE TO THOSE WHO DO NOT PROVIDE DETAILS?**

Yes. The law states that where a business is aware that a customer has not provided details, or has reason to believe that the details provided are inaccurate, they must take all reasonable steps to prevent entry by an individual to the relevant premises that they occupy or operate.

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