



COVID-19 – ADVICE FOR ANIMAL RELATED BUSINESSES AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN ENGLAND

Updated July 2021

Whilst the government in England intends to lift all legal restrictions on 19th July, it is clear that there is continuing circulation of the coronavirus and it is likely that this will continue. The Health and Safety at Work legislation requires business to provide protection for staff and customers and consequently it is reasonable to continue to undertake formal risk assessments and take some precautions against the transmission of infection.

As the pandemic has progressed it has become clear that the primary route of infection between people is airborne. Good ventilation, social distancing and the wearing of face coverings are the best protection against transmission. All pet businesses should undertake a risk assessment to consider how to reduce the potential for staff becoming infected by clients and vice versa. The simple expedient of, for instance, opening windows for training classes and using outside areas as much as possible for the handover of animals are sensible precautions. Some business operators may feel that insisting on face coverings for staff and clients are a condition of business. When dealing with clients from an infected or isolating household the risk assessment may make it prudent to continue to use the handover protocol.

It has also become clear that dogs and cats do not play a significant role in the transmission of the virus. However there have been a number of reports of pets (particularly cats) being infected by their owners. Whilst most pets have recovered, it is advisable that infected owners minimise their contact with their pets whilst infected. In situations where animals are handled by multiple clients, such as petting businesses, a risk assessment should be undertaken to ensure that the potentially infected animal does not pose a risk.



Government Roadmap from Monday 19 July:

The majority of legal restrictions will be removed and people will be expected to protect themselves and others through informed choice. The government expects and recommends that face coverings are worn in crowded and enclosed spaces, such as public transport, when mixing with people you don't normally meet.

While the government is no longer instructing people to work from home, a return to the workplace should be gradual and businesses should follow the published guidance.

Organisations and large events will be supported and encouraged to use the NHS COVID Pass in high-risk settings to help limit the risk of infection in their venues.

Positive cases and contacts of positive cases identified by NHS Test and Trace will still be legally required to self-isolate, to help break chains of transmission. There will be an isolation exemption for contacts of positive cases for under 18s and for double vaccinated adults from 16 August. School bubbles will end from 19 July.

Quarantine rules will remain for all those travelling from a red list country, and for amber list countries unless double vaccinated.