



Covid-19 Update: National Lockdown
(with thanks to National ACRE for providing this information)

Community centres and village halls must close except for a limited number of exempt activities. The information below is National ACRE's best understanding at today's date and is subject to changes in Public Health England regulations and Government Guidance.

The lockdown effectively puts all England into Tier 4 with a few strengthened provisions. The three key changes for areas (such as Northamptonshire) already in Tier 4 are:

- all outdoor sports courts and pitches and outdoor gyms have to close;
- supervised out of school activities for children can only serve children entitled to attend school i.e., vulnerable children and children of critical workers. The list of critical workers is wider than that of the Spring 2020 lockdown and now includes, for example, teachers;
- a ban on sale of takeaway alcohol or through click and collect services.

Activities for which halls may remain open:

- Early years provision and childcare, e.g., pre-schools and nurseries;
- Education and training – for schools to use sports, leisure, and community facilities where that is part of their normal provision - for children of critical workers and vulnerable children;
- Supervised out of school childcare activities for those children eligible to attend school (i.e., children of critical workers and vulnerable children);
- hosting blood donation sessions and food banks;
- to provide medical services, dental treatment (including COVID-19 vaccinations) and veterinary services;
- for elite sports persons to train and compete, and professional dancers and choreographers to work, for disabled sport;
- for training and rehearsal without an audience (as a concert hall);
- for the purposes of film and TV filming;
- Support groups that have to be delivered in person can continue with up to 15 participants where formally organised by a business, charitable, benevolent or philanthropic institution or a public body to provide mutual aid, therapy or any other form of support to its members or those who attend;
- People are allowed to leave home for work or providing voluntary or charitable services, where it is unreasonable to do so from home. This includes hall maintenance, meter readings etc;
- Distribution centres operated by businesses are permitted to remain open and halls may therefore be used for e.g., packing by local companies;

- wedding ceremonies may only take place in exceptional circumstances, attended by no more than 6 people;
- Funerals can be attended by a maximum of 30 people. Linked religious, belief-based or commemorative events can also continue with up to 6 people in attendance;
- Voting in an election or referendum;
- Essential retail such as Community Shops providing food, newspapers etc., post offices, pharmacies, nurseries, and garden centres;
- Community cafes and community shops may provide take-away food and non-alcoholic drink;
- Market stalls selling essential retail only;
- Outdoor playgrounds, gardens, recreation fields, allotments;
- Public toilets;
- For providing a place of worship.

Financial Support (administered by Local Authorities)

1. One-off Top-up Grants for Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Businesses

Part of the Government's support package announced on 5 January. For premises and businesses which are legally required to close and cannot operate effectively remotely, there will be a one-off top-up grant as follows:

- £4,000 for businesses with a rateable value of £15,000 or under
- £6,000 for businesses with a rateable value between £15,000 and £51,000
- £9,000 for businesses with a rateable value of over £51,000.

This should be automatic for eligible premises, i.e., those with a rateable value and which are required to close (National ACRE believes exempt uses such as pre-schools, food banks etc should not affect eligibility).

2. Discretionary Grants

Part of the Government's support package announced on 5 January. This is a discretionary fund to support other businesses affected by the lockdown. Grants should be available to faith premises such as church halls, which do not have a rateable value, or where a local authority determines a hall is not eligible for a Top-up Grant.

3. Local Restrictions Support Grants

The Local Restrictions Support Grant (LRS) scheme was put in place with the introduction of tiers and will continue to operate. Government guidance indicates that all businesses required to close when Tier 4 restrictions were applied are eligible for grants of up to £1,500 for each 14-day period of closure.

Refer to:



<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/46-billion-in-new-lockdown-grants-to-support-businesses-and-protect-jobs>

And:

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-if-youre-eligible-for-the-coronavirus-local-restrictions-support-grant-for-closed-businesses?utm_source=f8130ba6-edeb-487d-9692-da298ce8c612&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily