Reopening your business safely

European Union
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Camden

Foreword from Councillor Danny Beales, Cabinet Member for Investing in Communities and an Inclusive Economy

The last few months have been a difficult time for our businesses. The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has caused an unprecedented impact across all areas of daily life in Camden, including our local high streets and town centres which were already under threat from long-term trends of changing shopping habits and rising business costs.

As the Government moves through its phased recovery strategy, we recognise the challenges that many businesses face to reopen safely. With the rapidly changing nature of the COVID-19 outbreak, information and advice from Government can change quickly.

We are doing everything we can to find new ways to support businesses at this time. We're working quickly to reopen our high streets and town centres, whilst making them safe and secure for our communities. We've already been making lots of physical changes to our streets to **make travel safer in Camden**. Relaxed planning and licensing restrictions will also make it easier to reopen, whilst using the public realm to support social distancing requirements.

Our vision is for Camden's high streets and town centres to be ready to face the future. We want them to be at the heart of their communities, with all our residents able to reach their local centre by walking or cycling in under 15 minutes or less. The high streets and town centres of tomorrow will be safe, family-friendly, environmentally responsible and accessible. They will be vibrant places to shop, work, socialise, live, and play.

Working together, we intend to take a 'think and do' approach to this challenge, working together with our businesses and residents to test new ideas in Camden's town centres and rolling out what works across the borough.

We're working to create more space for pedestrians and cyclists, and making changes to the public realm to adapt to social distancing with outdoor seating, openable shop fronts, greening, seating and park-lets. We're also supporting businesses to replicate their services online providing a local alternative to established online retailers.

These are just a few or the initial proposals and ideas, but we want to hear your views about what changes our high streets and town centres need. Please share your thoughts on our **commonplace website.**

We hope you find this guide useful in reopening your business and thank you for working with us to keep Camden safe. We look forward to working with you in the weeks and months ahead to ensure our town centres not just survive but also thrive.

Reopen your business safely during coronavirus

You can use this good practice guide to help reopen your business safely. You'll find further guidance on our business **support webpages**.

Can my business reopen?

Over the coming summer months, many of the businesses and venues that were previously required to stay closed to the public will be able to reopen. If your business can reopen, you must follow COVID-secure guidelines to protect customers, visitors and workers.

Find a full list of businesses that are able to reopen visit **here**.

Steps to reopen safely

The Government has set out five practical steps to reopen your business safely.

1. Carry out a COVID-19 risk assessment
2. Develop cleaning, handwashing and hygiene procedures
3. Help people to work from home
4. Maintain 2m social distancing where possible
5. Where people cannot be 2m apart, manage transmission risk

Read more **here** about the five practical steps.

The Government has also produced 14 guides that cover a range of different types of work. Please take time to review the government guidance to help employers, employees and the self-employed understand how to work safely during the COVID-19 pandemic. You can find the full guidance **here**.

Complete a risk assessment

Employers that want to reopen their business have a legal responsibility to protect their employees and other people on their premises. The Government recommends that you carry out a risk assessment and make sensible adjustments to the site and workforce. Access the Government's risk assessment tool **here**.

Mandatory face masks:

Remember your face covering when you're out in Camden.

The only indoor public spaces where face coverings are not required is in restaurants with table service, bars and pubs.

A face covering should cover the mouth and nose. If you don't have one, **here's a guide to making one**.

How to make your business COVID secure

Keep a safe distance

Where possible, businesses should encourage their customers and staff to continue to keep a safe 2m distance from others. Where they can't keep 2m apart, they can stay at least 1m apart – as long as other precautions are taken to keep people safe:

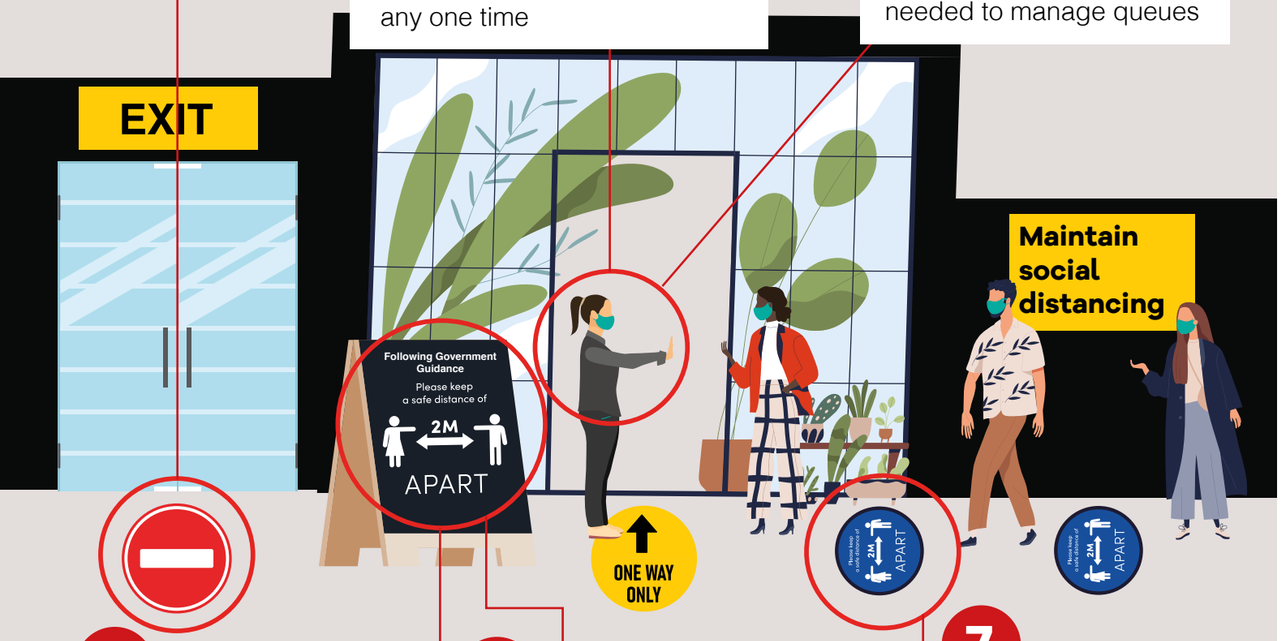
Outside your shop or business

1 Limit the number of entrances and exits, and try to keep entrance and exit points separate

2 Limit the number of customers inside your business or shop at any one time

3 Where necessary, liaise with nearby businesses about procedures to manage queues

4 Consider whether barriers and/or security staff are needed to manage queues



5 Display a notice to inform customers and staff that your shop or business is following government guidelines

6 Display clear signs about the social distancing measures customers should follow in your shop or business

7 Place markings to help customers maintain social distancing when queueing

Inside your shop or business

8 Regularly remind staff and customers of social distancing guidelines. Use signs throughout your business or shop to help customers keep to the rules

9 Staff should use facemasks and coverings

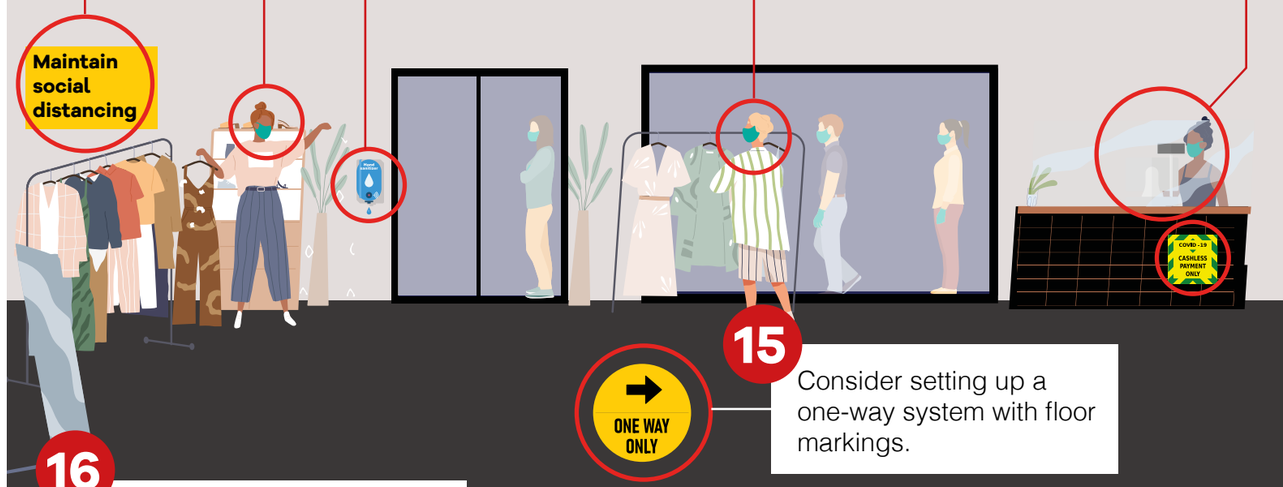
10 Provide handwashing facilities at entrance and exit points

11 Limit the number of customers in your shop or business at any one time so you can help maintain safe social distancing

12 Take payment by card or contactless payment – try to avoid cash payments

13 Regularly clean self-checkout touch screens and keypads if still in use

14 Use signs, covers or new display methods to limit customer handling of stock



15 Consider setting up a one-way system with floor markings.

16 Review shop or business layout and remove any unnecessary obstructions. For example, widen narrow aisles and shut tills that are close together – use screens at serving areas or till points

17 Keep returned clothes or goods separate for 72 hours or clean them before they are displayed on the shop floor

18 Review customer collection points to ensure social distancing can be maintained

19 Set up 'no contact' return and collection procedures for customers

Security advice during COVID-19

COVID-19 has changed the way businesses operate and how we use public spaces which brings new security challenges, including when protecting against terrorism. We need the help and support of individuals, businesses and communities across Camden to remain alert and maintain the safety and security of those places where we live, work and socialise.

If your business is reopening, you should undertake a risk assessment to help you understand the threats your business could face, and the security mitigations that may be appropriate to put in place. Find **full guidance** on protective security during COVID-19, including on risk assessments and security planning.

The risk to pedestrians from a Vehicle As a Weapon attack remains a realistic possibility during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is vital for staff to remain vigilant to potential security threats such as terrorism and other criminal activity. The Met Police have produced advice on **staying safe from terrorism**.

Social distancing measures will require businesses to safely manage customer flow, including queues to enter premises. To minimise risks to queues of people, businesses can take practical steps to keep people safe. **Full guidance is available** from the National Counter Terrorism Security Office.

Please take the time to ensure that all of your staff are alert to suspicious behaviour and know how to respond. You can find training resources for staff about security risks to the public at **ACT e-learning**.

How to manage queues

1. Work with neighbouring premises to develop a plan for queues
2. Queues should not be positioned near live traffic i.e. roads. If they have to be, position away from the kerb edge
3. Move queues to areas where vehicles don't normally access
4. Avoid creating long queues. Consider a secondary marshalling area if required
5. Marshalling can help enforce queue structure, length, social distancing and provide additional vigilance and response to an incident
6. Place "Do not join the queue" signs when its length or position increases the risk to people
7. Where possible, orientate the queues so people can see hazards or dangers approaching
8. Fast dispersal / escape routes for pedestrians should be considered when setting out your queue
9. Where possible, orientate queues so they are at right angles to potential vehicle attack routes. Positioning queues near or in between street furniture can also provide some protection

Making Travel Safer in Camden

COVID-19 has created new road safety challenges in Camden. We want to make it easier and safer for people to walk and cycle locally, shop on their local high street, reach their local green spaces, schools and NHS sites, all while maintaining physical distancing. Transport for London has also published **advice for employers** on getting back to work safely and sustainably with all the latest information on what you can do to help your staff travel safely.

We are continuing to make changes to streets across Camden in response to COVID-19 and to support your staff and customers to walk and cycle more.

We are making it easier for people to physically distance by widening pavements across our town centres, high streets and residential roads giving more space for pedestrians and queuing systems.

By restricting through travel on some residential streets, to reduce rat running and speeding, we are making it safer for pedestrians and cyclists to travel. We continue to encourage more cycling by improving existing cycle infrastructure as well as adding new pop up cycle lanes, cycle storage hangers and dockless bike hire bays. You can find out more about all the changes we are making on our **website**.

Planning and licensing guidance

Relaxing planning and licensing restrictions

We recognise that many businesses may need to operate differently to meet Government guidelines to be COVID-secure.

This may include changes to how you use your business or physical changes to your business premises.

To make is easier for you to adapt to Government guidelines and reopen safely, some planning and licensing restrictions have been relaxed, effective from 24 March 2020 until 23 March 2021. Full guidance is available on our **website**.

FAQs

I run a cafe, pub or bar, do I need planning permission or a licence to provide takeaway food?

You do not need planning permission to provide takeaway food. Please check the full guidance for details on conditions.

If you are providing takeaway alcohol you will need to ensure that you are licensed for 'off-sales' and any takeaway hot food after 23:00 hours will require a premises licence (late night refreshment).

If I want to change the use of my shop, cafe, restaurant or bar, do I need planning permission?

In some cases, you may not need planning permission to change the use of your business.

Do I need permission to change the internal layout of my business?

No, you do not need planning permission to change the internal layout of your business. However, if your building is listed, you will need permission. You will also need to ensure that the plan attached to your current premises licence reflects any changes made to the internal layout of the premises.

Do I need planning permission to change my shop front?

Yes, you are likely to need planning permission to change your shopfront.

Do I need permission to install barriers to help with queue management?

If any barriers are temporary and are removed/ stored inside at the end of the day, you do not need planning permission.

Do I need planning permission or a Licence to put tables and chairs on my forecourt or pavement in front of my business?

No, you do not need planning permission to place tables and chairs on the forecourt or pavement if these are temporary and can be removed at the end of each day you will however require a table and chairs licence.

If you wish to make changes that do require planning permission or a licence, we are here to provide you with free advice and support. You can reach us by emailing **planning@camden.gov.uk** or **licensingenquiry@camden.gov.uk**

NHS Test and Trace

Please take the time to talk to your staff and customers to ensure they know what to do if:

1. They develop COVID-19 symptoms
2. Someone in their household develops symptoms
3. They are asked to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace

Understanding NHS Test and Trace

NHS Test and Trace prevents further spread of COVID-19 by:

- allowing people with COVID-19 symptoms to get tested
- for those who test positive, tracing their recent close contacts so that they can also self-isolate

What should my employees do if they develop COVID-19 symptoms?

- Anyone who develops COVID-19 symptoms must self-isolate for 7 days and organise a test by going to **nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test** or calling **119**. Self-isolating means not leaving your home at all, except to get a test
- Anyone who lives with others who have symptoms, will need to self-isolate for 14 days from the day the first person started having symptoms. They may be able to stop earlier than 14 days if everyone in their household with symptoms gets a negative test result
- Anyone who has had close recent contact with someone who has COVID-19, must self-isolate if the NHS Test and Trace service advises them to do so
- If anyone is worried about being able to self-isolate, help and support is available from Camden Council on **020 7974 4444 (option 9)**
- Visit **nhs.uk/coronavirus** for advice on symptoms, testing and self-isolation. If you're worried about your health or COVID-19 symptoms call **NHS 111**

How can I keep my employees safe to prevent them from developing COVID-19 symptoms?

You can keep your employees safe by making sure they understand public health advice, which is:

- Where possible, staying 2 metres away from others
- Regularly washing hands for 20 seconds with warm soapy water
- Taking other precautions – e.g. wearing a face covering and using hand sanitiser

Anyone who does develop symptoms must be encouraged to self-isolate immediately to prevent further spread.

What should I do if a staff member tests positive for COVID-19?

If one employee tests positive for COVID-19, they need to self-isolate for 7 days and anyone they live with will need to self-isolate for 14 days. This means they can't leave the house at all so please consider checking whether they need any support to isolate. If this is support you can't provide, the council is here to help.

If two or more staff or customers test positive for coronavirus, call PHE (Public Health England) London's COVID-19 Response Cell (LCRC) on **0300 303 0450** who will advise you on next steps. Camden Council is also here to support you so please call us on **020 7974 4444 (option 9)** if you have any concerns or questions.

What should I do if a staff member has COVID-19 symptoms but hasn't had a test?

As workplaces reopen, please remind your employees that if they develop COVID-19 symptoms, they should get tested and isolate with their household straight away. If they are unsure or worried about getting a test or haven't updated you on the result, please get in touch with us for advice: **CIPHAdmin@islington.gov.uk**. This inbox is monitored during working hours and on weekends.

If they're worried about self-isolating for whatever reason, the Council is here to help them so please ask them to call us on **020 7974 4444 (option 9)**.

nhs.uk/coronavirus **OR CALL 119**

NHS Test and Trace

KEEP CAMDEN SAFE

Preparing for staff absence

There may be times when staff members are asked to self-isolate because they've been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 symptoms. This might be from contact with a household member, a colleague, a friend or someone that they know.

You can prepare for this by making sure your Business Continuity Plans are up to date. For example, there may be times when several staff members are required to self-isolate at the same time so you might want to consider how this would impact your capacity and staffing levels so that you can plan for it. However, you can prevent staff needing to self-isolate as a result of being in close contact with colleagues by ensuring that staff stay 2 metres apart from each other at all times and that anyone who gets symptoms isolates at home immediately.

Where can I go to find out more information?

- NHS Test and Trace – a guide for local businesses
- The Council's Local Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan
- National guidance on working safely during COVID-19

We are here to support you – Get in touch

It is a difficult time for businesses, so we are here to help you reopen safely.

Our on-streets team is out across Camden offering support and advice to residents and businesses on safe social distancing. They make sure local businesses are maintaining 2 metre distancing, where possible, or keeping a safe distance, to protect customers and their work-force. Their aim is to keep everyone safe.

If you need additional advice to reopen your business safely and make it COVID-secure, you can find the latest information on support available to businesses in Camden on our **website** or call our dedicated COVID-19 helpline on: **020 7974 4444 (option 9)**.

If you'd like to receive this toolkit in another language, please get in touch by emailing **economicdevelopment@camden.gov.uk**

Useful links

Advice from the Government about premises that can and can't open

Working safely guidance for employers and businesses

Use the risk assessment tool to help you understand how to reopen your business safely

COVID-19 outbreak FAQs: what you can and can't do after 4 July

Support and resources for businesses from the London Growth Hub

Hand washing

Risk Assessments

Camden business support

Making travel safer in Camden

Planning and licensing guidance for businesses

Last updated on 24th July 2020