

Guidance for those at high risk regarding COVID-19

Being identified as clinically high risk means you are considered to have a higher chance of severe illness as a result of Coronavirus (COVID-19) and more likely to need hospital treatment if you're infected.

This guidance, along with the activity risk guidance document also enclosed with your letter, is designed to help you balance risk and make decisions that are right for you and your individual circumstances.

You may have noticed that we are shifting away from using the term 'vulnerable' towards language around 'risk'. This is to emphasise that with current low levels of COVID-19 you are more empowered to make your own choices about the activities you chose to engage in.

Advice for high risk groups is constantly under review. It currently reflects the very low levels of virus in Jersey, but if the level increases, guidance may change for Islanders considered high risk.

Outdoor activity, shopping, dining and leisure

Careful time outside in the fresh air is likely to make you feel better and exercise and physical activity are known to boost wellbeing and physical and mental health.

In light of the current very low levels of COVID-19 in Jersey, if you are at high risk you can undertake outdoor leisure or recreational activities as long as you can carefully follow key public health guidance. This includes being careful to:

- wash your hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds or use sanitising gel
- avoid touching your face
- maintain appropriate physical distancing between you and anyone you don't live with (Government of Jersey advice is currently to keep a distance of 2 metres).

Wearing a cloth mask when outside is recommended, particularly if you have to go inside, for example to attend a medical appointment.

Guidance on shopping, dining out, and other leisure activities for Islanders at high risk is included in the accompanying activity risk guide.

It is vital that you still attend any medical appointments you have and seek medical advice where needed, whether this is COVID-related or not.

Work and business

You should continue to undertake work from home where this is possible but going out to work is currently not recommended, unless for example, you work alone and do not need to take public transport to your work place.

Children and young people

Children and young people who are high risk are not expected to attend school. Parents are advised to contact their child's specialist doctor to discuss their situation if they feel this is not in their child's best interest. If it is decided following this discussion that the level of risk means a child is likely to

benefit more from returning to school than staying at home, then they are advised to return to school, whilst maintaining physical distancing and other key public health messages as far as they are able to understand and follow these.

Avoiding contact with those displaying Coronavirus symptoms

You should strictly avoid contact with someone who is displaying Coronavirus symptoms.

Coronavirus symptoms are:

A new continuous cough and/or fever which may be accompanied by one or more of the following:

- headaches
- tiredness
- muscle ache
- respiratory symptoms besides cough such as a sore throat, blocked or runny nose
- gastro-intestinal symptoms can also be a feature of COVID 19 and these are more common in children than adults
- loss of smell and taste (common and in some cases this may be the only symptom present).

Our understanding of COVID-19 is growing all the time. For the most up to date information on symptoms and other public health guidance you can visit: www.gov.je/coronavirussymptoms or phone the Coronavirus Help Line on +44 (0) 1534 445566.

Visitors and carers in your home

It is strongly advised that you do not have any visitors into your home at this time, unless they are providing essential care for you. Essential care includes things like health or social care, and help with washing, dressing or eating.

Carers, or anyone providing essential support, must stay away if they have any of the symptoms of Coronavirus. They should wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds on entering your home, and then often while they are there. They should also try to observe physical distancing guidelines wherever practical while delivering your care.

You should have an alternative list of people who can help you with your care if your main carer becomes unwell.

Providing care for someone who is high risk, including children and young people

If you are caring for someone who is high risk ensure you carefully follow key public health messages throughout your daily routine and whether you are with the high risk person or not. This will reduce the chance of you being infected with and passing on COVID-19. This includes the following simple steps:

- follow physical distancing guidance in your daily routine and also when delivering care wherever this is possible
- wash your hands often using soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser
- keep your distance if you are unwell and make alternative arrangements for care.

Further advice for carers is available by at: www.gov.je/PPEForEssentialWorkers

If you have someone else living with you

Those you live with can continue with their routine or go to work if they cannot work from home. They should be careful to follow physical distancing and other public health guidance measures, to reduce the chance of them passing on an infection to you.

Children and young people living with someone who is high risk can go to school but should follow physical distancing guidance and other key public health guidance measures where they are able to understand this.

If you develop symptoms of Coronavirus

If you develop symptoms of Coronavirus you should stay at home and immediately call the Coronavirus Help Line on +44 (0) 1534 445566 for advice.

In an emergency, call 999 if you are seriously ill. Do not visit your doctor, pharmacy, or a hospital.

To help the health service provide you with the best care if you need to go to hospital you can prepare a single hospital bag. This should include:

- your emergency contact
- a list of the medications you take (including dose and frequency)
- any information on your planned care appointments and things you would need for an overnight stay (snacks, pyjamas, toothbrush, medication and so on)
- an advanced care plan, if you have one

Support with food and medicines delivery to your home, or any other needs.

The 'Connect Me' service offers help around many areas you may need extra support with at this time, such as finances and accommodation, family and domestic concerns, health and wellbeing.

You can also get help with delivery of essential supplies to your home, such as food or medicine.

To find out more you can:

- Phone the Coronavirus Help Line on +44 (0) 1534 445566,
- Call your Parish Hall and ask about 'Connect Me'
- Go online and visit www.gov.je/connectme

Looking after your mental and physical wellbeing

Reducing exercise and physical activity, and changes in your routine can all contribute to increasing stress and anxiety. If you are struggling with your mental or emotional wellbeing there are free and confidential services available to you:

- Call the Listening Lounge on +44 (0) 1534 866793 from 10am to 10pm daily.
- Call MIND Jersey on +44 (0) 800 7359404, who are running a free hotline from 8am to 6pm every day, to support people through these difficult times.
- Access 'Every Mind Matters', an online resource which provides simple tips and advice to take care of your mental health. This can be accessed for free online at: www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/
- Phone the Coronavirus Help Line on: +44 (0) 1534 445566
- Phone 999 in an emergency

There are also simple things you can do that may help:

- Look for ideas of exercises you can do at home or in the fresh air, being careful to maintain physical distance with those you don't live with
- Spend time doing things you enjoy – this might include reading, cooking, listening to radio programmes or music, watching TV, engaging in on-line classes, on-line choirs, or on-line social groups
- Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, drink enough water, exercise regularly, and try to avoid smoking, alcohol and drugs
- Try to focus on the things you can control, such as your behaviour, who you speak to and who you get information from.