**Important: New COVID-19 legislation affecting your organisation**

**The Rule of Six and NHS Test and Trace App**

Over the past few months, venues and businesses across Kingston have worked incredibly hard to make themselves COVID-secure in order to protect their customers and staff.

You have drafted COVID risk assessments, put systems in place to ensure social distancing, including enhanced hygiene measures and use of PPE, along with a range of other precautions and we would like to thank you for your ongoing commitment to protecting the public.

**Rule of Six**

Despite these efforts, rates of coronavirus have started to increase once more in Kingston, as in other areas in the UK. In response the Government has now implemented new [regulations](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2020/1008/contents/made) and [guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-meeting-with-others-safely-social-distancing/coronavirus-covid-19-meeting-with-others-safely-social-distancing) for residents and businesses to reduce the spread of the virus.

The guidance - called the Rule of Six - limits the number of people who can meet together in and out of their homes, or in hospitality settings, to six.

There may be implications for your organisation as you will not be able to take bookings for groups of more than six people or allow groups of more than six to sit or mingle together.

There are some exceptions to the rule, such as where the household is larger than six people in total or where it is a support bubble, but it will not be possible to book events such as Christmas lunches for groups larger than six people.

You should also be aware that businesses and event holders will now be breaking the law if they do not comply with the regulations and could face prosecution and a fine or a fixed penalty notice of £1,000.

**NHS Test and Trace App**

From 18 September specific venues are now legally required to collect contact information from their customers, visitors and staff for NHS Test and Trace. The new law covers venues where people are likely to congregate for more than 15 minutes at a distance of less than 2 metres - including hospitality venues, community centres, libraries and places of worship.

[**Find out which venues and businesses the law applies to.**](https://faq.covid19.nhs.uk/article/KA-01183/en-us?parentid=CAT-01043&rootid=CAT-01027)

Businesses and venues must ensure that these details are collected, stored securely and retained for 21 days.

To support the collection of this data, the Government’s NHS Test and Trace App will launch on 24 September. Businesses and venues in England and Wales will be legally required to create, download and display a poster containing a unique QR code on their premises.

**You can create your QR code at** [**www.gov.uk/create-coronavirus-qr-poster**](https://www.gov.uk/create-coronavirus-qr-poster)

Venues not displaying a QR code may be fined £1,000.

The NHS App will enable your customers and visitors to register their details and log that they have visited a specific venue. For those customers who do not have smartphones or who do not wish to use the QR code, a written record of their personal details must still be retained by the business or venue.

The more people who use the NHS Test and Trace App, the more the NHS will be able to track the virus and send alerts to businesses and customers who may have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID.

Those people who receive the alerts will then be asked to self isolate for 14 days. In this way, it is hoped that we can avoid a large outbreak of Coronavirus in Kingston. The Government has now announced that those on low income who are unable to work whilst isolating can claim financial support. More information on this will be soon be available on our website.

Kingston Council will provide more detailed information about the NHS App when we receive it at [www.kingston.gov.uk/COVID-19](https://www.kingston.gov.uk/COVID-19)

In the meantime, the NHS has compiled a [FAQ](https://faq.covid19.nhs.uk/category/?id=CAT-01027) page of questions about the use of the QR codes and the App and a [resource pack](https://covid19.nhs.uk/information-and-resources.html) for you to use.

If you have any questions concerning this letter or your responsibilities under the COVID legislation, please contact communications@kingston.gov.uk

 Thank you for your support to keep Kingston safe.