

SUMMARY OF RESTRICTIONS FOR SELF-CONTAINED TOURIST ACCOMMODATION

30TH APRIL 2021

INTRODUCTION

This document summarises the restrictions as they apply to self-contained tourist accommodation, which is permitted to reopen from 30th April 2021.

The most up-to-date information on *The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021* can be found [here](#). Further guidance on all restrictions can be found on the [NI Direct website](#). There is also a wealth of information about the advice and support available to businesses on the [nibusinessinfo.co.uk](#) website.

Please note that businesses must stay up to date with regulations and how they impact their individual business.

This document contains some other key considerations and best practice for businesses. It should be read in conjunction with the full guidance document produced by Tourism NI and the Department for the Economy, which can be found [here](#).

It is important to note that the virus is still in circulation and everyone must continue to take precautions. For business owners, this means completing a risk assessment and implementing appropriate controls. These will include social distancing; restricting group sizes; the use of face coverings in certain settings; and good hygiene practices. For visitors this means following those controls when staying at self-contained tourist accommodation.

Failure to comply with legal requirements could result in enforcement action including premises improvement notices, fixed penalty notices and/or prosecution.

1: WHAT IS SELF-CONTAINED TOURIST ACCOMMODATION?

Self-Contained tourist accommodation is permitted to reopen from 30th April with mitigations.

It includes businesses certified by Tourism Northern Ireland in the '**Self-Catering**' and '**Guest Accommodation**' categories. If a business is unsure of its statutory category, it can be found on the tourist accommodation certificate which is required by law to be displayed at a prominent position inside the property. To check the category of accommodation, you can contact QA@tourismni.com or 028 9044 1545.

It also includes any other form of overnight tourist accommodation that is provided by way of a trade or business, which is not otherwise specified in the *Tourism (Northern Ireland) Order 1992*. This includes privately owned caravans, motorhomes, and can include non-traditional accommodation such as pods, teepees, bubble domes, horseboxes or yurts if meeting certain criteria.

These businesses can reopen as long as they are self-contained, with no shared facilities, and for the exclusive use of one household. If the occupier needs to leave their unit to gain access to amenities such as bathroom facilities, or if there are any shared indoor spaces - with the exception of areas for access and egress - then it is not self-contained.

Other forms of tourist accommodation must remain closed, unless for a permitted reason. This includes hotels, bed & breakfasts, guest houses, hotels, bunk houses and campus accommodation.

An indicative date of 24th May has been set for the reopening of all tourist accommodation, subjective to approval by the Northern Ireland Executive.

2: 'PERSON RESPONSIBLE':

A 'person responsible' in terms of a business is defined in regulations and can include the owner, proprietor and/or manager. Any of these persons can be held accountable for any non-compliances with regulations.

3: NUMBER OF GUESTS/HOUSEHOLDS

From 30th April, one household or bubble can stay overnight in self-contained accommodation. No more than one household or bubble is permitted, unless a legal exemption applies.

4: WHAT IS A BUBBLE?

You can form one bubble with one other household. The two households in the bubble can be of any size, however indoor meetings between households in the bubble are limited to a maximum of 10 people, including children, at any one time.

If your household is in a bubble, you are not permitted to have close contact with visitors from a third household. You should maintain social distancing from people outside of your bubble.

If a household wishes to change the household that they bubble with, the household must wait 10 days from the last visit of the original linked household before starting a new bubble with another household.

5: RISK ASSESSMENT:

As a business owner, you have a legal responsibility to protect workers, guests and others from risks to their health and safety. All businesses should complete a risk assessment for COVID-19. Details of what this is and how to complete it can be found within the main guidance document referenced above.

HSENI has produced an example risk assessment which shows the kind of approach that can be taken to reduce the risks posed by COVID-19. This can be found [here](#).

6: HYGIENE CONTROLS

Full advice on hygiene controls can be found in the overarching guidance document. This includes information about cleaning and disinfection; what to look for when choosing cleaning products; and cleaning after a case of COVID-19.

Hand hygiene is a vital component in ensuring that the risk of transferring the virus is minimised. Hand sanitisation will be identified in your risk assessment as an important control in reducing the spread of COVID-19. Controls can include:

- Making staff and visitors aware of the requirements for good hand hygiene.
- Providing hand sanitation facilities at all points of entry to the inside of the premises.

7: COLLECTION OF VISITOR INFORMATION

If you run a tourist accommodation business, you are required by law to keep a record of all guests over the age of 16. This can take the form of a registration form, or can be recorded electronically.

You must keep each guest's details for at least 12 months and have the register available for inspection by police or other authorised persons at all time. This includes the guests':

- Full name
- Address
- Nationality
- Arrival and departure dates

When keeping a guest register, even if it's just names and contact details, you must protect your guests' privacy under the Data Protection Act 2018. See [General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](#).

8: SOCIAL DISTANCING

A person responsible for the organisation or operation of the business must take reasonable measures to ensure that staff and visitors comply with social distancing measures at all times. This will apply in any interaction between staff and guests; as well as at premises with multiple units; or any additional on-site amenities permitted within the regulations.

Businesses should:

- Ensure that staff and visitors observe social distancing of 2m from each other, unless members of the same household or bubble.
- Provide information on how to minimise the risks of COVID-19
- Alter the layout to assist staff and guests in maintaining 2m social distancing. This can include the layout of the venue, visitor flow and entrance/exit points.
- Manage any queues to ensure that social distancing is maintained.
- Maintain good cleaning and hygiene procedures, in particular at high touch points.

Where it is not practicable to maintain social distance of 2m, the business must take reasonable steps to ensure that close face-to-face contact is limited and to follow the advice in the Face Coverings section.

9: FACE COVERINGS

In general, visitors are not required to wear face coverings whilst outdoors, or within their own household or bubble.

Face coverings are mandatory in certain indoor settings. If your business has any additional amenities such as a shop, food business, or outdoor hospitality, separate regulations and guidance will apply to these businesses.

Face coverings are expected to be worn in a relevant place such as a shops, shopping centres and hospitality settings. Businesses should actively manage this by ensuring that all visitors are aware of where face coverings must be worn. This can be achieved through signage, website information, information given at booking and information on arrival.

People who work in these indoor settings must also wear a face covering unless they are separated from members of the public by a partition. Businesses may wish to consider making face coverings available to staff in customer-facing roles.

Some circumstances make it difficult for some people to wear face coverings. In these circumstances people may have a 'reasonable excuse' not to wear a face covering. Further information about the use of face coverings can be found [here](#).