

## Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Ireland Update

### Latest figures

According to figures from Worldometer, there are 25,391 confirmed cases and there have been 1,720 deaths recorded in Ireland.

### Guidelines for re-opening restaurants and cafés

These sector guidelines are subject to revision to reflect new Government advice and changes to protocols when they emerge. Published by the Government of Ireland and Fáilte Ireland, the guidelines aim to prepare restaurants and cafes to re-open safely.

The document notes that physical distancing of 2 metres should be maintained. However, if this is not possible, this can be reduced to 1 metre in controlled environments if the risk mitigation requirements outlined in Appendix 1 have been met. As far as reasonably possible, a distance of 2 metres and a minimum of 1 metre should be maintained between employees. Where 2 metres is not possible all other measures to protect employees should be in place.

It also highlights that tourism businesses of all types need to adapt their operations, review employee practices and consider the design of their business to ensure physical distancing and the prevention of the spread of COVID-19.

Food business operators will be required to introduce COVID-19 safety management systems in the form of enhanced hygiene, cleaning and disinfection, employee training and health checks, as well as physical distancing.

The guidelines can be found **here**

[https://failtecdn.azureedge.net/failteireland/Guidelines-for-Re-opening-Restaurants-and-Cafes.pdf?utm\\_source=twitter&utm\\_medium=organic\\_social&utm\\_campaign=covid19-industry-support&utm\\_content=june19-tis-5](https://failtecdn.azureedge.net/failteireland/Guidelines-for-Re-opening-Restaurants-and-Cafes.pdf?utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=organic_social&utm_campaign=covid19-industry-support&utm_content=june19-tis-5)

### Guidelines for re-opening pubs

Fáilte Ireland has published guidelines around the reopening of pubs serving food. Measures to be followed include:

- customers restricted to spending a maximum of one hour and 45 minutes in a premises at any one time
- an additional 15 minutes will have to be put aside by the business for cleaning between and to allow customers leave without mixing with the next group coming in.
- pubs, gastro pubs and bars will also have to collect contact information for the lead person in a party, in order to facilitate contact tracing in the event of a positive case of Covid-19 later being identified
- where two-metre physical distancing is not possible, businesses are now allowed to implement a one-metre rule in controlled environments, once other risk mitigation requirements have been met
- if pubs exercise a one-metre physical distancing rule additional signage must be used to ask customers not to enter if they have symptoms.
- entry will have to be regulated so that premises do not become overcrowded, with pre-booking encouraged as much as possible

- customers should be seated at a table except when using the toilet, paying and departing, according to the document, while clear signage should indicate the location of and route to the bathrooms
- a strict queuing system and limitations on number of users of the toilets at any one time must be enforced to ensure physical distancing, according to the rules
- floor markings should be used to facilitate compliance with the social distancing advice particularly in the most crowded areas, like serving counters and tills
- plexiglass barriers should be placed at tills and counters if feasible, as an additional element of protection for workers and customers.

Fáilte Ireland stress that its guidelines are living documents which will evolve to reflect new Government advice and changes to protocols when they emerge.

The guidelines can be found **here**

<https://failtecdn.azureedge.net/failteireland/Guidelines-for-Re-opening-Pubs.pdf>

### **COVID-19 Shopping Centre Recovery and Protection Guide**

This document aims to consolidate practical guidance that is available at time of writing on how to manage business continuity of shopping centres during the COVID-19 pandemic. It addresses risks to both workers and the public. It draws from already published documents which are acknowledged in Section 7.

It aims to assist shopping centres to implement the mandatory Return to Work Safely Protocol for Employers and Workers that applies to all workplaces across the economy.

Retailers can refer to the NSAI COVID-19 Retail Protection and Improvement Guide at <https://www.nsaie.ie/covid-19/> for guidance on the implementation of the Return to Work Safely Protocol.

The document sets out guidelines for shopping centres restoring business operations following a disruption or closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This document can be used to implement, maintain and improve a shopping centres ability to protect against, prepare for, respond to and recover from COVID-19 related disruptions.

It is noted that the document focuses on activities related to shopping centres but does not address every possible scenario for all shopping centres.

The guidance can be found here [https://www.nsaie.ie/images/uploads/general/COVID\\_19\\_Shopping\\_Centre\\_Recovery.pdf](https://www.nsaie.ie/images/uploads/general/COVID_19_Shopping_Centre_Recovery.pdf)

**NSAI**  
**June 2020**

### **Guidelines for re-opening tourism published**

Fáilte Ireland, in collaboration with industry groups, has created a series of guidelines for re-opening tailored to the various sectors of the Irish tourism industry. The guidelines are designed to support business owners and management in every step as they tackle the challenges specific to their industry.

These sector-specific guidelines offer detailed advice on the systems that should be implemented to help instil public confidence and reboot business while adhering to public health advice and Government protocols.

The guidelines provide comprehensive advice on re-opening for business owners, with an emphasis placed on the safety and wellbeing of employers, employees and customers.

The guidelines for re-opening for the various tourism sectors can be found here :  
<https://covid19.failteireland.ie/industry-updates/guidelines-for-re-opening-published/>

They cover:

- all sectors
- hotels and guesthouses
- B&Bs and historic houses
- self-catering
- restaurants and cafes
- caravan and camping parks
- visitor attractions
- activity providers.

### **COVID-19 Templates and Checklists**

[Ireland]

The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) have issued several checklists and templates, aimed at helping employers, business owners and managers to get their business up and running again and to inform workers about what they need to do to help prevent the spread of Covid-19 in the workplace.

They have been drafted based on the Government's Return to Work Safely Protocol (see below) and should be read in conjunction with the Return to Work Safety Protocol.

The HSA stress that employers and workers must work together to keep workplaces safe - the checklists are designed to help do that.

The following documents are available:

#### **Templates**

Return to work form  
COVID response plan

#### **Employer Checklists**

Checklist 1: Planning and Preparing  
Checklist 2: Control Measures to Prevent Infection  
Checklist 3: COVID-19 Induction  
Checklist 4: Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19  
Checklist 5: Cleaning and Disinfection

#### **Employee Checklist**

Checklist 6: Workers

#### **Worker Representative(s) Checklist**

Checklist 7: Worker Representative(s) Checklist

### **Posters: COVID-19 Stay Safe Guidelines: At Work**

The Department of Health has issued COVID-19 stay safe at work posters and graphics. The can be found [here https://dbei.gov.ie/en/Publications/COVID-19-Stay-Safe-Guidelines-At-Work.html](https://dbei.gov.ie/en/Publications/COVID-19-Stay-Safe-Guidelines-At-Work.html)

### **Phase 1 of Ireland's Roadmap for reopening**

These measures are now in place. They are a part of the roadmap for reopening society and business.

- Public health measures
- Shops and other commercial businesses
- Education and childcare
- Work
- Sport and tourism
- Health and social care.

In terms of work, the measures state a phased return of outdoor workers (for example: construction workers, gardeners, including people working on allotments) has commenced. Social distancing requirements continue to apply.

Remote working is to continue for all workers or businesses that can do so.

The next phases of the Roadmap will be in place as follows:

- 8 June (phase 2)
- 29 June (phase 3)
- 20 July (phase 4).

Read more [here https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/ad5dd0-easing-the-covid-19-restrictions-on-may-18-phase-1/#shops-and-other-commercial-businesses](https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/ad5dd0-easing-the-covid-19-restrictions-on-may-18-phase-1/#shops-and-other-commercial-businesses)

### **Framework for Future Decision Making**

On 1 May 2020, the Government published a 'Roadmap for Reopening Society and Business' to ease the COVID-19 restrictions and reopen Ireland's economy and society in a phased manner.

The decision-making framework under the Roadmap for Reopening Society and Business is as follows:

Before each Government consideration of the easing of restrictions, the Department of Health will provide a report to the Government regarding the following on/off trigger criteria:

- the latest data regarding the progression of the disease
- the capacity and resilience of the health service in terms of hospital and ICU occupancy
- the capacity of the programme of sampling, testing and contact tracing
- the ability to shield and care for at risk groups
- an assessment of the risk of secondary morbidity and mortality as a consequence of the restrictions.

## **Reopening Business Getting Ireland Back to Work - Safely**

This Government of Ireland information notes that it is looking ahead to a careful, phased reopening of the country. It outlines four pathways to help get businesses back up and running:

### **1 Phased Return to Business**

There is a guidance roadmap in place for gradual business reopening – in five phases – beginning on 18th May, with different starting dates for different business sectors and always subject to change based on health advice at the time:

1. Phased return of outdoor workers, more retail, construction and manufacturing.
2. Limited return to onsite working subject to compliance capability.
3. Return to low- interaction work.
4. Return to work, where employees cannot remote work.
5. Phased return to work across all sectors.

For all phases, remote working continues for all that can do so.

### **2 Staying Safe, Staying Healthy**

Employers and Employees should familiarise with the full advice contained in Return to Work, the National Return to Work Safely Protocol:

Employers must consider a number of things, for example:

- keep your workplace safe and clean
- provide training on new work practices and hygiene
- make sure your employees know how to reduce the risk of infection
- have a procedure in place to identify, isolate and safely transfer from the workplace a worker displaying symptoms of COVID-19
- make sure your customers are safe

Employees must consider several things also, for example:

- participate in training on new work practices and hygiene
- make yourself aware of the signs and symptoms of COVID-19
- monitor your own wellbeing
- report to managers if any symptoms develop at work

### 3 Financial Supports

There is a wide range of financial supports available through your Local Enterprise Office, Enterprise Ireland, Microfinance Ireland and other agencies to help with cashflow, payroll, working capital and long-term investment – for example: COVID-19 Trading Online Grants up to €5,000; Sustaining Enterprise Fund; COVID-19 Business Financial Planning Grant; etc

### 4 Advice and Guidance

If your business model needs to change, the national network of 31 Local Enterprise Offices and other relevant State agencies can help through:

- mentoring to help businesses identify immediate challenges and solutions. Mentors are business experts working alongside business owners and managers providing practical, useful advice and guidance
- online Training to develop the skills to steer your business through this challenging time.

### Government of Ireland May 2020

#### Supports for businesses impacted by COVID-19 – updated 22 June

This Guide contains detailed information on a huge range of supports from the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation, and other Government Departments and Agencies and advice on other practical steps businesses can take at this time.

The Guide is divided into 6 sections and also includes an Appendix which contains a COVID-19 Business Continuity Checklist which outlines some of the key risks to businesses as well as preparatory actions that can be taken to respond.

- Part 1 highlights a number of practical steps that businesses can initially take such as talking to your bank, checking your insurance details and engaging with Revenue.
- Part 2 sets out in detail the business supports that are available, ranging from loans to grants to vouchers to mentoring. These include the €450m Strategic Banking Corporation Ireland (SBCI) COVID-19 Working Capital Scheme, the €250m Restart Fund for Micro and Small businesses, Enterprise Ireland supports including the €2,500 Lean Business Continuity Voucher and the €5,000 Business Financial Planning Grant as well as supports from the Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) like the Trading Online Voucher and the Mentor Programme.
- Part 3 of the Guide outlines other Government supports that are available to businesses. Details are provided on the Pandemic Unemployment Payment, the Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme and short time work supports. In addition, links are provided to other important resources like the NSAI Workplace and Retail Protection and Improvement Guides, details on the commercial rates waiver and amendments to planning and development regulations to temporarily allow restaurants to operate as takeaways, etc.
- Part 4 this section highlights the Roadmap for Reopening Society and Business, the Return to Work Safely Protocol and the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) COVID-19 Templates and Checklists.
- Part 5 provides information on the COVID-19 Rapid Response Funding Call which was developed by the Government's research and innovation agencies to help respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. This Call was an agile and adaptive initiative to support development of innovative solutions (including STEM-based, social/behavioural science) that can have rapid demonstrable impact on the current COVID-19 crisis in Ireland.
- Part 6 of the Guide highlights those websites where up-to-date official information is available.

As the COVID-19 situation changes, Government supports also change to address new difficulties and provide solutions and guidance.

**Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation  
May 2020**

**Return to Work Safely Protocol**

Published by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation, this Return to Work Safely Protocol is designed to support employers and workers to put measures in place that will prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace, when the economy begins to slowly open up, following the temporary closure of most businesses during the worst phase of the current pandemic.

Key messages include:

- strong communication and a shared collaborative approach between employers and workers is key to protecting against the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace
- information and guidance should be provided by employers to workers, which should include the signs and symptoms of COVID-19, how it spreads, cleaning routines and waste disposal as well as advice on hand and respiratory hygiene, physical distancing, use of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) and work equipment where relevant
- employers and workers should have a shared responsibility to implement the measures contained in this protocol in their place of work
- each workplace will appoint at least one lead worker representative charged with ensuring that COVID-19 measures are strictly adhered to in their place of work
- employers will provide a COVID-19 induction training for all workers
- a high-level consultative stakeholder forum, under the aegis of LEEF, will be established. This forum will include membership from the various bodies with responsibility for health and safety at work and for public health more generally.

The document notes that:

- employers must: provide for physical distancing across all work activities and this may be achieved in a number of ways; implement a no hand shaking policy
- workers must: not share objects that touch their mouth, for example, bottles or cups; use own pens for signing in.

Businesses will also have to carry out a survey for workers to see if anyone is displaying Covid-19 symptoms before they can return to work; ensure adequate supplies of items such as hand sanitiser; and implement the induction training so workers are “up to speed” on public health advice.

Among others, requirements also include the following:

- employers will issue a pre-return to work form for workers to complete at least three days in advance of the return to work

- employers are also required to update their safety plans before reopening, in consultation with, and with the agreement of, workers
- employers will keep a log of any group work in order to facilitate contact tracing
- if a worker displays any symptoms of the virus during work hours, the designated manager must direct that person to a designated isolation area, along a designated route, all the time maintaining a two-metre distance, and arrange for that person to remain in isolation before arranging for them to be transported home, or to a medical facility, avoiding public transport
- the employer must also carry out a full risk assessment of the incident to see what, if any, further action needs to be taken
- breaks and rest periods should be organised so as to facilitate social distancing
- in settings where two-metre separation is not possible, alternative protective measures such as installation of physical barriers/plastic sneeze guards should be put in place.

The HSA can order a business to shut down operations if it doesn't comply with the measures.

### **Health and safety**

Separately, the Department of the Taoiseach says that a National Protocol to protect the health and safety of workers is being developed by Government, employers and trade unions, with the assistance of the Health and Safety Authority and the HSE.

### **Ireland: Construction Sector C-19 Pandemic Standard Operating Procedures**

The Construction Industry Federation has devised a plan which intends to provide a standardised approach to commencing construction projects in Ireland which incorporates the COVID-19 public health requirements

This guidance document is intended to introduce standardisation on sites of all sizes in line with the Government's and HSE recommendations on the management of COVID-19. Every project should devise a plan considering this guidance, for implementation on site in consultation with all affected parties.

The normal health and safety requirements of any construction activity must not be compromised at this time – there is no derogation to the usual health and safety legislative requirements, it stresses.

Key control measures are set out which are required for managing the spread of the virus on construction projects.