

Written Ministerial Statement

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Department of Health

COVID-19 DECISIONS

Published on Thursday 19 November 2020.

Mr Swann (The Minister of Health): As Members will be aware, the Executive met today to discuss the course of the epidemic and to consider options to maintain the position at manageable levels in the immediate run up to the Christmas period.

After extensive consideration the Executive has agreed that the below measures will apply with effect from 00.01 am, 27 November, for a period of two weeks:

- Closure of all retail except essential retail that was permitted to stay open in March
- Off licences will remain open, with an 8pm closing
- Closure of close contact services, and driving instruction (not motorcycles), except close contact for Film and TV production; those ancillary to medical, health and social care services; and elite-sports therapeutic services - i.e. – as 13 October- 19 November
- Closure of all hospitality (except for accommodation for essential travel). Takeaway and delivery, and food and drink in motorway services, airports and harbour terminals remain open.
- Closure of all leisure and entertainment (to include all soft play areas, gyms, swimming pools etc)
- Sporting events only permitted for elite sports. Individual/household outdoor exercise and school PE to continue.
- Elite sports events behind closed doors without spectators
- No household gatherings of more than one household, other than current arrangements for linked households (bubbles), with current exceptions for caring, maintenance, house moves, *etc.*
- Closure of places of worship, except for weddings, civil partnerships and funerals. Remain with 25 max for weddings and funerals

- Stay at home, work from home if at all possible, otherwise only leave for essential purposes such as education, healthcare needs, to care for others or outdoor exercise.
- Schools and childcare to remain open
- Universities / FE to provide learning at distance except where it is essential to provide it face to face.
- Public parks and outdoor play areas remain open
- Stay at home in guidance, with liaison with PSNI on policing and police visibility
- Financial support package to be developed over next few days