



The Grand Lodge of Antient Free and Accepted Masons of Scotland

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Brethren

11th September 2020

Further to my Update this morning, the following general advice has now been released from the Government which answers the question about allowing non-Masonic bodies to use Lodge premises. As can be seen below, this cannot now happen given the 6-person limit that becomes law from Monday. There is no likelihood of that being lifted soon albeit it will be reviewed on 5th October. The reference to public spaces would include Lodge premises where non-Masonic groups meet.

The following excerpt from the Government release states -

This deteriorating situation at home and abroad means that we have to take a very cautious approach to the further easing of restrictions. As set out below, we now need to delay further changes until it is safe to make them. We also need to make some changes that will reduce opportunities for the virus to spread. We have already put a range of extra measures in place to help keep the virus suppressed, our Test & Protect system and outbreak management approach have worked well, and we are today introducing our proximity app, Protect Scotland, which will support our Test and Protect system, but more measures are now required.

At this review point we will take the following steps to further reduce transmission of the virus: The limit on the number of people who can meet socially indoors or outdoors will be reduced to a maximum of six people, and they should come from no more than two households. This applies in people's homes and gardens as well as in hospitality and public spaces such as parks. It is not required to count children under 12, from within the two households, within the 6-person limit. The regulations and guidance will be updated to reflect these changes.

- *Face coverings will be mandated for customers and staff in indoor hospitality. There will be an exemption for when customers are eating and drinking. Staff in non-public facing roles, such as kitchen staff, will also be exempt where face coverings may present health and safety issues due to the nature of roles. Exemptions for vulnerable groups/individuals will also apply to hospitality settings. Regulations will take effect on Monday 14 September.*



Given the developing status of the epidemic - both in Scotland and internationally - we will also continue to take a cautious approach to any further opening up of economic or social activity.

As was noted at the 20th August review when setting the 14th September indicative date. It must be stressed that this indicative date is conditional on continued progress in suppressing the virus.

If the epidemic in Scotland deteriorates before this date, then the expectation must be that the date will be delayed.

Consistent with this, given the deterioration in the status of the epidemic over the past three weeks, those changes that were previously given an indicative date of 14 September will now be assigned a new indicative date of 5 October.

The full release is available at - <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-phase-3-scotlands-route-map-update-10th-september-2020/>

Could I also suggest that you give some consideration to using the new proximity app on your phones – it is easy to download by going into the App Store on your phone and searching for – Protect Scotland – thereafter follow the instructions. Many thanks.

Ramsay McGhee

Grand Master Mason

