



[Patient Name

Patient address Line 1

Patient address Line 2

Patient address Line 3]

1 August 2020

SHIELDING GUIDANCE EXTENDED. YOU ARE STRONGLY ADVISED TO CONTINUE STAYING AT HOME.

Your NHS number: [NHS NUMBER]

Dear [Patient],

IMPORTANT ADVICE ON CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care Health previously has announced local measures to tackle an increase in the number of Coronavirus cases in Luton.

Coronavirus levels are now falling in the area and advice for those shielding is changing soon. For now, you continue to be advised to follow the shielding guidance rigorously. This letter explains how the guidance is changing, why it is changing and what the change in advice means for you.

This letter now replaces previous Government letters and can be used as evidence for your employer to show that you cannot work outside your home until 17 August, including for Statutory Sick Pay purposes. More detailed guidance for your local area can be found on the council's [coronavirus support webpages](#).

What is the shielding guidance for the Luton area and why is it different?

The Government has always been clear that it will continually monitor the spread of the virus in our communities and if rates rise considerably, our advice to those who are shielding may change.

The latest scientific evidence shows that the risk of you coming into contact with the virus in your local area has dropped significantly. If you live in the Luton area and are clinically extremely vulnerable the Government is advising you to follow the shielding guidance set out below. All shielding guidance is advisory.

This means that you should continue to follow this guidance:

- you may, if you wish, meet in a group of up to 6 people outdoors, including people from different households, while maintaining strict social distancing;
- you no longer need to observe social distancing with other members of your household;
- If you are a single adult household (either an adult living alone or with dependent children under 18), you may from this date, if you wish, also form a 'support bubble'

with one other household. All those in a support bubble will be able to spend time together inside each other's homes, including overnight, without needing to socially distance.

From 17 August the advice to 'shield' will be paused. From this date, the Government is advising you to adopt strict social distancing rather than full shielding measures. Strict social distancing means you may wish to go out to more places and see more people but you should take particular care to minimise contact with others outside your household or support bubble.

In practice, this means from 17 August you are advised that you no longer need to shield and you should follow the national shielding guidance. This means that from 17 August:

- you can go to work as long as the workplace is Covid-Secure but should carry on working from home wherever possible;
- clinically extremely vulnerable children should attend education settings in line with the wider guidance on reopening of schools and Guidance for full opening: special schools and other specialist settings;
- you can go outside as much as you like but you should still try to keep your overall social interactions low;
- you can visit businesses, such as supermarkets, pubs and shops, whilst keeping 2 metres away from others wherever possible or 1 metre plus other precautions;
- you should continue to wash your hands carefully and more frequently than usual and that you maintain thorough cleaning of frequently touched areas in your home and/or workspace.

More detailed guidance for your local area can be found on the council's [coronavirus support webpages](#).

Support to stay at home

If you are currently in receipt of free government food boxes, medicine deliveries or care through the national shielding service, you will continue to receive this support until the end of July. Priority supermarket delivery slots provided by seven supermarkets will continue beyond the end of July for those already signed up for support.

If you are struggling as a result of Coronavirus, please visit gov.uk/find-coronavirus-support. If you urgently need food or care, please contact Luton Council by calling 01582 548955 (Monday to Friday between 09:00 and 17:00) or by visiting the council's [I'm self-isolating and need support webpage](#).

Patients who are considered clinically extremely vulnerable are encouraged in the first instance to see if their medicines can be collected from the pharmacy or dispensing practice and delivered by family, friends, a carer or a volunteer. Where this is not possible, free medicines delivery from your local pharmacy will continue whilst you are being advised to shield. Please contact them to let them know you would like this to continue.

You can also contact the NHS Volunteer Responder scheme for help collecting shopping, medicine or other essential supplies that you need delivered to your home, or for someone to check in with you if you would like a chat. You can call them for free on 0808 1963646.

Receiving a letter like this for the first time?

If you are receiving a letter like this for the first time, it is because you have been identified as someone who is considered clinically extremely vulnerable due to an underlying disease or health condition. This may put you at risk of severe illness if you catch Coronavirus and you have therefore been advised to shield. If you have not previously been advised to shield, you may want to discuss this with your GP and follow the guidance set out in this letter.

Throughout the epidemic we have been clear on the need to balance the risk of the disease to those who are clinically extremely vulnerable with the benefits of gradually returning to normal life. We know that the shielding guidance has been challenging to follow and that it will take time to adjust. We appreciate this is a difficult time for you and thank you for your continued efforts in keeping yourself safe.

Yours sincerely,



MATT HANCOCK
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care



ROBERT JENRICK
Secretary of State for Housing,
Communities and Local
Government