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Guidance

Making a support bubble with another household

How you can safely expand the group of people you have close contact with during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

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From:

Department of Health and Social Care (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-health-and-social-care>)

Applies to:

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It is better to limit all your social interactions at this time to help stop the spread of coronavirus. However, we recognise that this is difficult.

If you want to expand the group of people you can have close contact with during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, making a support bubble with another household is the safest way to do so.

What a support bubble is

A support bubble is a close support network between a household with only one adult in the home (known as a single-adult household) and one other household of any size.

This is called making a 'support bubble'.

Once you're in a support bubble, you can think of yourself as being in a single household with people from the other household. It means you can have close contact with that household as if they were members of your own household.

Once you make a support bubble, you should not change who is in your bubble.

Continue to follow social distancing guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-meeting-with-others-safely-social-distancing>) with people outside of your household or support bubble. This is critical to keeping you, your family and friends as safe as possible.

Who can make a support bubble

If you're in a single-adult household

You can form a support bubble with another household of any size that is not part of a support bubble with anyone else if you:

- live by yourself – even if carers visit you to provide support
- are a single parent living with children who were under 18 on 12 June 2020

If you live with other adults, including if your carer or carers live with you

You can form a support bubble with one single-adult household who are not part of a support bubble with anyone else.

If you share custody of your child with someone you do not live with

If you're a single-adult household, you can form a support bubble with another household other than the one that includes your child's other parent.

If you're not a single adult household, you can form a support bubble with a single-adult household other than the one that includes your child's other parent.

Try to limit travelling far to make a support bubble

The government recommends that you form a support bubble with a household that lives locally wherever possible. This will help to prevent the virus spreading from an area where there might be a higher rate of infection.

Do not change your support bubble

From 14 September, if you form or continue in a support bubble, you cannot then change your support bubble. It does not have to be the same support bubble you may have been in previously.

If someone in your support bubble develops coronavirus symptoms or tests positive

If anyone in your support bubble develops symptoms (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/>) or tests positive for coronavirus, follow the stay at home guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>).

If you share custody of your child, and you and your child's other parent are in separate bubbles, members of both bubbles should stay at home if someone develops symptoms.

This is critical to controlling the virus, as it will help to stop it spreading across multiple households.

If NHS Test and Trace contacts someone in your support bubble

If NHS Test and Trace (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works>) contacts you or someone in your support bubble, you should follow their guidance.

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1. 14 September 2020

Updated the guidance to say that support bubbles cannot be changed.

2. 9 September 2020

First published.

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(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-meeting-with-others-safely-social-distancing>)
- Greater Manchester: local restrictions (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/greater-manchester-local-restrictions>)
- Local restrictions: areas with an outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19)
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/local-restrictions-areas-with-an-outbreak-of-coronavirus-covid-19>)
- Coronavirus outbreak FAQs: what you can and can't do
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do>)
- Lancashire, Blackpool, and Blackburn with Darwen: local restrictions
(<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/north-west-england-local-restrictions>)

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