

Hotel quarantine initiative now live

From Monday 15 February, people arriving into England from a “red list” country have to quarantine in a hotel. We explore what employers should know below:

- The Government has now introduced mandatory hotel quarantine for British and Irish nationals who pass through, or arrive into England from, any of 33 countries that are on the UK's travel ban list – the “red list”.
- This applies to British and Irish nationals that have been in any of the “red list” countries within the last 10 days.
- They are required to quarantine in a managed quarantine hotel for 10 days at their own cost – £1,750 per adult.
- Non-British/Irish nationals, or those without residence rights in the UK, are now not allowed into the country if they have travelled from or passed through one of the “red list” countries in the last 10 days.
- Arrivals into England from countries not on the “red list” are still required to quarantine for 10 days and can do so at home.
- Travellers from the Common Travel Area – Britain, Ireland, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands – do not need to quarantine on their arrival.
- However, in Scotland, arrivals from outside the Common Travel Area must quarantine in a hotel for 10 days regardless of where they have travelled from.
- Wales is not currently receiving flights from “red list” countries and will assess its quarantine rules at a later date.

Restriction on public sector exit payments lifted

In October 2020, the Government announced that there would be a limit of £95,000 on the total pre-tax aggregate value of exit payments made to most types of public sector employees. The move met strong resistance from trade unions who argued that it would adversely affect long-serving public servants earning relatively-low salaries. Now, with unions seeking a judicial review, the Treasury has announced that it will revoke the cap.

Did you know?

In light of this, eligible employers are encouraged to pay any former employees affected by the cap, the additional sums that would have been paid if the cap had not been applied.

Gender pay gap reporting allegedly under review

The Guardian newspaper has stated that Gender Pay Gap reporting for 2021 is ‘under review’. The report's 2021 return, after it was paused last year, was thought to have been confirmed by the Government in December 2020 but the article by the Guardian sets some doubt as to whether this return will go ahead. However, as we await government confirmation on this, it can be assumed that the 2021 reports will be going ahead as planned for eligible employers.

Did you know?

Private sector employers who had at least 250 employees on 4 April 2020 will need to produce a report, regardless of whether they have lost staff since that date.

Phased return of Scottish schools confirmed

First Minister Nicola Sturgeon has confirmed that Scottish schools will begin a phased return from 22 February 2021. Children in P1 to P3 as well as preschool children can return but other pupils will continue to learn from home, except for secondary pupils who must complete coursework. It has also been confirmed that lockdown rules in Scotland will remain until at least the beginning of March 2021.

Did you know?

Currently in Scotland, employers should allow their staff to work from home where possible; despite the schools update, Ms Sturgeon has urged employers to continue to facilitate this.

If staff are required to travel abroad on business, employers can deal with this hotel quarantine period as they would if a staff were required to quarantine at home – e.g. by implementing remote working. For further advice contact our 24-hour Advisory Service for up-to-date guidance on this and more.

Please contact the 24 Hour Advice Service for advice on your specific situation before acting on the information in this publication.