

Covid-19 update: What you need to know about Step 3

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Let's keep Covid in check

Collect self-test kits from libraries and pharmacies

By testing regularly before big days out or special moments in, we can protect ourselves, each other and the life we love. If everyone in Essex chooses to do the same, we keep Covid in check, together.

Pop into a [local library or pharmacy to collect self-test kits](#) for your family. No appointment needed.

Alternatively, you can [order self-test kits](#) to your home on GOV.UK.

Businesses with fewer than 50 employees can [set up workplace testing](#) for employees who can't work from home.



Chelmsford, get tested to keep Covid in check

Public Health experts are advising that, if you live in the Chelmsford City Council area, you should self-test as soon as possible. You can [pick up test kits from libraries and pharmacies](#) or [order test kits online](#).

7 households in the city have tested positive for a Covid-19 Variant of Concern. On the advice of Public Health England, enhanced testing is taking place to understand what, if any, further spread of the variant has taken place.

By self-testing as soon as possible, you can help keep Covid in check. If you test positive, please [self-isolate](#) and [book a follow-up test](#) on GOV.UK.

Read more about [the variant of concern detected in Chelmsford](#).



Hands, face, space — just in case

Let's not give Covid another chance. Keep washing your hands, wearing a face covering and keeping your distance when you can.

Aged 36 or over? You're up for the jab!

People aged 36 and over can now get the vaccine. The NHS or your GP will be in touch when it's your turn.

Find out about getting your vaccine, attending your appointment and more [vaccine information for Essex](#).

The easing of rules in Step 3

Key rules

You can meet with friends and family in groups of 6 or 2 households indoors, or groups of 30 outdoors.

You can make your own choices on close contact, such as hugging your friends and family.

If you live in a care home, you can have [up to 5 named visitors](#). 2 people can visit you at once, as long as they have tested negative and follow Covid-safe measures. You also have more freedoms to leave your home without having to self-isolate when you get back.

Travel

You can stay overnight with people outside of your household. You can stay at hotels, hostels and B&Bs, and self-catering accommodation is already open.

You can go on holiday to [green list countries](#). There are border control measures, including pre-departure tests and a PCR test on or before day two of your arrival back in the UK.

Activities and events

You can sit indoors at hospitality venues, following the rules on social contact.

You can take part in organised indoor adult sport.

You can go to support groups and parent and child groups in groups of 30 people. Children under 5 don't count.

You can visit indoor entertainment venues such as museums, cinemas and children's play areas.

All remaining outdoor entertainment and performances can restart.

Some larger events can go ahead, including conferences, theatre and concert performances, and sports events.

You can go to saunas and steam rooms.

Businesses and work

Keep working from home if you can.

Covid-secure rules remain for workplaces and businesses, such as in shops and hospitality.

Life events

30 people are allowed at weddings, receptions, wakes and standalone life-cycle events.

The number of people able to attend a funeral depends on how many can safely be in the venue while social distancing.

See our [births, ceremonies and deaths section](#) for the latest information for Essex.

Schools and education settings

Students in secondary schools and colleges no longer need to wear face coverings in communal areas. They should continue to follow their school's testing guidance.

Remaining university students can return to in-person learning. They should do self-tests or get tested twice a week.

Find out more about the [easing of restrictions from Monday 17 May](#), on GOV.UK

Changes to our services

Chelmer Valley Park and Ride reopens

If you've missed browsing the shops and dining out with friends, it's time to get back out there. You can now park and ride to Chelmsford city centre from Chelmer Valley, Anglia Ruskin University and Chelmsford Railway Station.

The Colchester and Sandon Park and Ride services restarted on Monday 12 April.

Check out the [route, fares and timetable for Chelmer Valley](#) on Essex Highways.



Book an adventure at Essex Outdoors



Fly through the trees, get out on the water or try your hand at archery. [Essex Outdoors](#) has reopened to day visitors and groups in Bradwell, Danbury, Harlow and Mersea from Monday.

You can book overnight stays at the Bradwell, Harlow and Mersea centres.

You can now [book School Holiday Activity Days](#) from 1 to 4 June at Danbury and from 1 to 3 June at Harlow.

Stop for a cream tea at Crossing Temple Barns

Soak up the atmosphere and discover the fascinating history of [Crossing Temple Barns](#).

[The Barns](#), [Tiptree Tea Rooms](#) and other indoor spaces at the venue have reopened.



Climb with friends at The Lock Climbing Wall

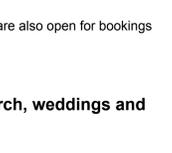


Reach new heights at Essex's largest indoor climbing centre. You can now visit [The Lock Climbing Wall](#) in Harlow with people outside of your household in groups of 6 or 2 households.

[Climbing courses](#) for adults are also open for bookings again.

The Essex Record Office reopens for research, weddings and business conferences

[The Essex Record Office](#) has reopened for research and weddings with restricted numbers. It is also available to hire for business conferences.



Jaywick Martello Tower reopens at weekends from 22 May



The renovated [Martello Tower in Jaywick](#) is a thriving arts, heritage and community venue on the beautiful Jaywick Sands coastline. Learn about its history and walk along the coast from Point Clear to Walton-on-the-Naze.

The tower reopens on Saturday 22 May and will be open to visitors at the weekends only.

Great Notley Country Park plans to reopen the Sky Ropes

Explore Essex is planning to reopen the [Sky Ropes at Great Notley Country Park](#) in late May.



Not feeling so good?

You're not alone. There are people and services that can help you.

Find [support and resources for your mental and physical health](#).

Businesses, get a grant to help you restart

The Essex County Council Business Adaptation Grant can help you make Covid-safe changes to your operations or premises. Discretionary grants are also available to many businesses.

[Apply to your city, district or borough council.](#)



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