

CORE NARRATIVE

- There are around 2.2 million clinically extremely vulnerable people in England with underlying severe health conditions who must be protected from coronavirus and have been advised to follow shielding guidance.
- These are people of all ages –with specific medical conditions identified by the NHS – who are at greater risk of severe illness from coronavirus.
- From 1 June, the government advised those shielding in England they can safely spend time outdoors with members of their immediate household. Those shielding and living alone can meet outside with one other person from another household.
- These changes reflected the latest evidence, which showed that there is a lower risk of transmission outdoors as well as a significantly reduced prevalence of covid-19 in the community.
- Now latest scientific evidence shows that the chance of encountering coronavirus in the community has continued to decline. On average less than 1 in 1,700 in our communities are estimated to have the virus, down from 1 in 500 four weeks ago.
- The government is relaxing advice to those shielding in two stages. From Monday 6 July, those shielding can spend time outdoors in a group of up to six people (including those outside of their household). Extra care should be taken to minimise contact with others by maintaining social distancing. This can be in a public outdoor space, or in a private garden or uncovered yard or terrace.
- All adults, including the clinically extremely vulnerable, who live alone or with dependent children only can form a ‘support bubble’ with one other household. All those in a support bubble can spend time together inside each other’s homes, including overnight.
- From Saturday 1 August, advice to those shielding will be further relaxed.
- The clinically extremely vulnerable should then stay at home as much as possible, and if people do go out, take particular care to minimise contact with others outside their household (unless they are in a support bubble) and robustly practising good, frequent hand washing.
- However, the relaxation of the guidance will mean people who are clinically extremely vulnerable will be advised they can go to work or to the shops, as long as they are able to maintain social distancing.

- Support for those shielding will be extended to the end of July – this includes the delivery of food and medicines.
- The NHS will continue to maintain the Shielded Patient List allowing us to continue to maintain targeted advice and support to this cohort and to change advice and support if incidence rises.

After the end of July, the government will continue to review the risks for the clinically extremely vulnerable as they review social distancing advice for the general population.

- Updated advice will continue to be reflected in the guidance for clinically extremely vulnerable people.
- We can confirm that seven supermarkets have given you access to priority supermarket delivery slots, and these will continue beyond the end of July for those already signed up for support.
- From 1 August, NHS Volunteer Responders will also continue to offer support to those who need it, including collecting and delivering food and medicines.
- If you are vulnerable or at risk and need help with shopping, medication or other essential supplies, please call 0808 196 3646 (8am to 8pm).