

Coronavirus: Weekly update from Camden Council

For the latest information and support from Camden Council and its partners, including updates to services:

- Visit camden.gov.uk/coronavirus – includes information in different languages
- Check the rolling news pages at news.camden.gov.uk
- Follow Twitter [@CamdenCouncil](https://twitter.com/CamdenCouncil) and Facebook facebook.com/LBCamden
- Speak to someone at the Council directly by calling **020 7974 4444 (option 9)**.



SIGN UP to the Council's coronavirus newsletter for regular service updates, news and support at camden.gov.uk/coronavirus-updates



This week marks the first step in the Government's plan to ease lockdown, which includes schools and colleges reopening for face-to-face learning. It's brilliant to see so many children going back to school and I want to say a huge thank you to all the school staff working so hard to make sure this happens safely.

While this brings a great deal of hope, there is still a long way to go. There are still restrictions in place, and we need to follow them carefully to ensure the timeline for lifting lockdown stays on track. If we all do our bit, we'll keep each other safe and give ourselves the best chance of things beginning to look more like normal.

I know that many of us will be feeling anxious after all the difficulty and pain of the last year, and about what lies ahead. Please remember there is support for you – including additional financial support for individuals and businesses, some of which is detailed below. There is also free, rapid testing available for anyone who needs to leave home for work, care and for parents and carers of school children.

Councillor Georgia Gould, Leader of Camden Council

Changes to restrictions

Lockdown restrictions are still in place and you should still only leave home where necessary. However, since 8 March:

- You can now socialise – as well as exercise – outdoors with your household, support bubble, **or one** person from another household.
- Care home residents are allowed one regular visitor – with conditions.
- Schools and colleges have reopened for face-to-face classes.

To keep yourself safe, please keep following the rules, including those below. For more information, go to gov.uk/coronavirus

Please use Camden's parks and open spaces safely

To keep yourself and others safe, please keep following the rules, and be considerate in parks and open spaces:



Keep a safe distance from anyone outside your household or bubble



Avoid areas if busy



Stay local



Always wash your hands as soon as you are indoors



Wear a face covering in busy outdoor spaces, unless exempt



Help to look after the spaces. Please put rubbish in bins or take home with you

Please do not leave home if you have symptoms.

Find out more about parks at camden.gov.uk/parks

Extension to financial support

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (known as the furlough scheme) and the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme have been extended until 30 September 2021. The £20-a-week top-up to Universal Credit has also been extended for another six months.

For more information, visit gov.uk/coronavirus

Rapid testing for pupils and parents



Pupils have been returning to school for face-to-face classes this week. To help keep everyone safe, rapid testing is taking place on secondary school and college sites to help identify pupils and staff with COVID-19 who don't have symptoms but are still infectious. This will help prevent further spread of infection.

Pupils will be offered three rapid lateral flow tests, three to five days apart – and will then be given kits to regularly test themselves at home. Parents and carers of primary and secondary school, and college-age children, can also get free rapid tests or pick up a home test kit – as can people who need to leave home for work, or care or volunteering responsibilities.

Find out more at camden.gov.uk/rapidtest

COVID-19 vaccine

The vaccine is safe, effective and gives the best protection against coronavirus. To help you make an informed choice about the vaccine when it's your turn to have it, you can find a variety of information on Camden Council's website including answers to frequently asked questions, stories from local people about why they're choosing to be vaccinated, and downloadable resources.



Find out more at camden.gov.uk/covid19vaccine

Funding available to support businesses

Grants available

Local Restriction Support Grants are available for businesses in non-essential retail, hospitality, leisure and cultural sectors that have been impacted by 2020 and 2021 lockdown restrictions. The deadline for applications is 31 March 2021.

Find out how to apply at camden.gov.uk/business-support
If you have any questions, email businessgrants@camden.gov.uk