

Christmas bubbles

With Christmas fast approaching, ensure you know the rules about creating a Christmas Bubble before you make plans. You can meet with people from no more than 3 households in total from 23-27 December only. From 28 December, Tier 2 arrangements will continue which means you can't mix with other households in any indoor setting. You can meet with up to 6 people in an outdoor setting ('rule of six'). <https://www.knowsleynews.co.uk/christmas-bubbles-what-you-need-to-know/>

Changes to self-isolation

From Monday 14 December, if you test positive for COVID you only need to self isolate for 10 days (previously 14 days). People in your household, support bubble or close contacts will need to self-isolate for 10 days too. <https://www.knowsleynews.co.uk/changes-to-self-isolation-period-announced/>

Support line

The Knowsley Volunteer & Support Line is still available for people needing help and support with shopping, medication, dog walking or just someone to chat to. If you don't have family and friends and you're self-isolating, call the team on 0800 073 0043 or complete an online form on the council's website. <https://www.knowsleynews.co.uk/remember-were-still-here-to-help/>

Christmas opening times for SMART test centres

Residents are being encouraged to visit one of the borough's testing facilities if you don't have any symptoms. It can identify people with the virus who are unknowingly passing it on to others. In particular, get after the festive break and before you return to school or work. Testing centres are open at Volair Leisure Centres in Halewood, Huyton and Kirkby for people who are not displaying

symptoms. People can pass on the virus without knowing they have COVID, so getting tested can identify people who need to self-isolate. Centres are open 9am-6pm Monday to Friday and 10am-4pm at weekends. <https://www.knowsleynews.co.uk/lets-get-tested-knowsley-2/> The opening hours for the test centres have now been confirmed – no appointment is needed. <https://www.knowsleynews.co.uk/get-tested-and-start-2021-covid-safe/>

Important advice about New Year

Can you meet up with family and friends at New Year? The answer is no. The restrictions have only been relaxed for 5 days to allow family and friends to see each other for Christmas from 23-27 December. From 28 December, restrictions come back into force which mean you can't mix with other households in any indoor setting. If you meet outside, the rule of six applies. <https://www.knowsleynews.co.uk/important-information-about-new-year/>

Travel over the festive period

If travel is part of your festive plans, plan your journeys in advance. Bus services will continue to Christmas Day from 12pm until 6pm covering most hospital routes, Mersey Tunnel tolls will be free from 10pm on Christmas Eve until 6am on Boxing Day. Some transport services will finish earlier than usual so please check before you travel and remember to wear a face covering on public transport. <https://www.knowsleynews.co.uk/travel-advice-for-the-festive-season/>

Communication of a positive case.

Schools will only need to know of a positive test result for your child in the following two situations only:

a) Your child was in school for any period within the two school days (48 hours) before the school broke up and they developed symptoms (a new persistent cough; a high temperature or a loss of smell and taste) OR

b) Your child was in school for any period within the two school days (48 hours) before the school broke up and they returned a positive COVID-19 test from one of the Liverpool City Regions mass asymptomatic testing sites and has received a confirmatory PCR test

To inform school in the cases above follow the school's procedures for reporting cases:

Ring the school office on 0151 477 8290 during school hours 8:00am -4:00pm. Out of school hrs including weekends call or text details to 07825117502 (only to be used for COVID 19 communication)

In cases of emergency, when you are unable to follow the school's procedures, and strictly only to report possible school contact in the 48 hour window mentioned above you can contact 0151 443 4712 or email COVID19.SPOC@knowsley.gov.uk

This number is not a helpline and cannot be used for any other reason or for advice.

If you require any other advice over the Christmas period or for cases that do not overlap the period of your child being in school and the school breaking up please contact <https://www.knowsleynews.co.uk/coronavirus-what-you-need-to-know/>

The council has also set up a Community Support and Volunteer Line. It is helping Knowsley residents who need additional support during the outbreak and coordinating offers of help for those who are wanting to volunteer their time or services to help those in need in their local community.

Public Health Self isolation Guidance:

Key summary points in relation to the new isolation guidance:

New self-isolation guidance for close contacts of COVID-19 came into force on Monday 14th December 2020. As of Monday 14th December 2020, the isolation period will reduce to 10 days.

If you have been asked to isolate by an NHS T&T staff member or on the advice of Public Health England before Monday 14th December 2020, you will only need to isolate for 10 days but this must include Monday 14th December 2020. For example, if you were told to isolate until 16th December 2020, you will be able to stop isolating on the 14th December 2020. If you were told to isolate until the Sunday 13th December 2020, you must continue with the full isolation period until Sunday 13th December 2020.

The NHS T&T App will not update with the new isolation periods until Thursday 17th December 2020. If you are told to isolate by the App from now until Thursday 17th December 2020, you can stop isolating when the countdown says "3 days remain". After Thursday 17th December 2020, you will need to isolate for the full period notified by the App.

Isolation periods will take the day contact occurred as Day 0 of the isolation period. You must remain in isolation until Day 11. For example, contact on 11th December 2020 = Day 0; last day of self-isolation is 21st December 2020 = Day 10; able to resume normal activities on 22nd December 2020 = Day 11.