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YouthLink
Scotland
The national agency for youth work

COVID-19: Guiding Framework to support the delivery of youth work services

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COVID-19: Guiding Framework to support the delivery of youth work services

Introduction

[Youth work: Supporting young people through and out of the pandemic](#) outlines how the Scottish youth work sector¹ will continue to strive to provide support and opportunities for children and young people as the Scottish Government moves the country through and out of the pandemic.

On 21 May 2021 Scottish Government published The Coronavirus (COVID 19): Framework for Decision making: [Scotland's route map through and out of the crisis](#). This sets out the strategic approach to reopening society and the economy and a return to normality.

This guiding framework to support the delivery of youth work services is intended to support youth work leaders² to make informed decisions regarding a risk-led approach to youth work delivery, in line with Scottish Government and Public Health Scotland advice; and to plan for the longer-term recommencement of full youth work services. It has been reviewed and updated regularly, in response to latest Scottish Government advice and restrictions. This version is dated 19 July 2021.

¹The youth work sector is diverse and includes statutory and third sector voluntary services (including national third sector organisations, uniformed local groups, community organisations), professionally qualified and volunteer youth workers/leaders and a wide range of approaches to the provision of 'youth work'. This includes universal and targeted interventions, outdoor learning, equalities, arts-based and youth voice. It is not possible for this guide to capture all nuanced types of practice, therefore, this document should be used as a guide to inform local decision making.

²A youth work leader is defined for the purposes of this framework, as employers, youth work managers, supervisors, volunteer leaders and trustees - the lead person responsible for authorising delivery

What defines a youth work group/activity?

Youth work takes many forms and operates in a wide variety of learning environments.

The **Statement on the Nature and Purpose of Youth Work** defines youth work as “an educational practice contributing to young people’s learning and development.”

Youth work engages young people within their communities: it acknowledges the wider networks of peers, community and culture, it supports the young person to realise their potential and to address life’s challenges critically and creatively, and it takes account of all strands of diversity.

Youth Work has three essential and definitive features:

1. Young people choose to participate.
2. The work must build from where young people are.
3. Youth Work recognises the young person and the youth worker as partners in a learning process

Youth work’s focus is on the 11-25 year age group with particular emphasis on 11-18 year olds. Youth work acknowledges that some provision focuses on children under 11 years e.g. in uniformed groups.

Because youth work is considered to be an educational activity it is therefore subject to specific guidance to support safe delivery within schools, community centres, buildings and facilities, in line with the permitted purposes allowed in the Scottish Government Route Map.

How to use this framework

This guiding framework has been developed with Scottish Government and Public Health Scotland and is based on the Scottish Government guidance for **Community Learning and Development (CLD) sector**. The framework is intended to provide practical support and guidance only and does not constitute legal advice.

At all times, the priority must be to safeguard the health and wellbeing of our children, young people, practitioners, their families and the wider community, and to minimise the spread of COVID-19. As such, you should use this framework in conjunction with:

- The latest **Health Protection Scotland guidance** and
- **Scotland’s Strategic Framework**.

The Scottish Government **postcode checker** can help people to identify which level is relevant to local providers of youth work activity.

Each youth work leader is responsible for translating this guidance and applying the specific actions required in order to reduce transmission of COVID-19.

This framework is structured into two parts.

1. Permitted approaches to delivery:

This outlines the youth work activities and approaches that are permitted. The **expectations before delivery** should continue to be in place when delivering through any permitted approach, including ongoing review of risk assessment and COVID-19 safeguarding measures that you have in place, in conjunction with the latest Scottish Government and other guidance and advice. These should be used to inform decisions regarding what is safe to deliver in an individual setting or local context at any one time, and any decision regarding the protection of young people, staff and volunteers during the delivery of youth work. Organisations may also wish to consider how their plans will enable them to continue to support the most vulnerable families and mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on all children and young people's mental health, learning and development.

2. Expectations before delivery:

This outlines the measures that you should be able to demonstrate are in place, before you implement any change to current approaches to work or delivery. **If you cannot meet these requirements, you should not progress.**

Permitted approaches to delivery

Scotland follows a COVID-19 levels system. There are 5 levels (0-4) and each has a different set of rules on what you can and cannot do.

Find out the level and rules for an area using the postcode checker. The following section outlines approaches to delivery across each protection level.

Level 0 - 2	Level 3	Level 4
Under 18 years		
<p>Youth work permitted indoors and outdoors.</p> <p>Following a risk assessment, a space-based approach should be taken in line with capacity guidance. Numbers permitted are to be based on the capacity of the venue provided physical distancing and other mitigations remain in place. Youth work leaders should make use of the range of Scottish Government and other national guidance available to support safe delivery of youth work e.g. Scottish Government events, or schools guidance, Sports Scotland guidance. This may support the use of specific activities within youth work delivery, or in determining capacity within outdoor spaces. In all cases, the guidance which offers the highest protection should be followed.</p> <p>Indoor and outdoor residential youth work activity can recommence subject to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The expectations before delivery are in place, including an appropriate risk assessment; • Only allowed when virus prevalence is equivalent to Covid-19 Protection Levels 0, 1 and 2 at both the originating authority and destination*. 	<p>The recommended method of learning is online or outdoors</p>	
	<p>Youth work permitted outdoors.</p> <p>Indoor youth work is permitted for the following purposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted youth work to support health and wellbeing with vulnerable groups. • Completion of youth qualifications or employment training. • Education recovery. <p>The maximum number of persons should not exceed 30 people in any space (including youth workers).</p>	<p>Learning permitted outdoors and should only be delivered indoors as part of support services for the purpose of essential intervention.</p> <p>Numbers should be kept as low as possible and should not exceed 15 persons at any time (including youth workers).</p>

Level 0 - 2	Level 3	Level 4
Under 18 years		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any travel arrangements follow latest guidance as set out on page 17. • Covid-19 protocols are maintained during the residential. <p>*Youth work groups may travel through areas subject to higher protection levels but should make every effort not to stop in a higher-level area.</p> <p>Level 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum of 50 individuals on site, where groups are outdoors only (this mirrors the outdoor sport and physical activity guidance) • 6 young people from 3 households occupancy for tents/rooms only • Single youth work organisation occupancy only • Washing and toilet facilities reserved for single person use at any one time • Enhanced cleaning in between visits <p>Level 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum of 100 individuals on site, where groups are outdoors only (this mirrors the outdoor sport and physical activity guidance). • 6 young people from 3 households occupancy for tents/rooms only • Multi-youth work organisation occupancy permitted on-site as long as the provider can demonstrate satisfactory measures to maintain the integrity of each group as a distinct 'bubble' throughout the stay. 		

Level 0 - 2	Level 3	Level 4
Under 18 years		
<p>Level 0:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum of 500 individuals on site, where groups are outdoors only (this mirrors the outdoor sport and physical activity guidance). • 8 young people from 4 households occupancy for tents/rooms only • Multi-youth work organisation occupancy permitted on-site as long as the provider can demonstrate satisfactory measures to maintain the integrity of each group as a distinct 'bubble' throughout the stay. 		

Level 0 - 2	Level 3	Level 4
18 years and over		
<p>Youth work indoors and outdoors is permitted.</p> <p>Following a risk assessment, a space-based approach should be taken in line with capacity guidance. Numbers permitted are to be based on the capacity of the venue provided physical distancing and other mitigations remain in place.</p> <p>Youth work leaders should make use of the range of Scottish Government and other national guidance available to support safe delivery of youth work e.g. Scottish Government events, or schools guidance, Sports Scotland guidance. This may support the use of specific activities within youth work delivery, or in determining capacity within outdoor spaces. In all cases, the guidance which provides the highest protection should be followed.</p> <p>Indoor and outdoor residential youth work activity can recommence subject to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The expectations before delivery are in place, including an appropriate risk assessment; • Only allowed when virus prevalence is equivalent to Covid-19 Protection Levels 0, 1 and 2 at both the originating authority and destination*. • Any travel arrangements follow latest guidance as set out on page 17. 	<p>The recommended method of learning is online or outdoors</p> <p>Face-to-face youth work should only take place where it cannot be delivered online and is essential to gaining a qualification or providing essential support to the most vulnerable learners.</p> <p>The maximum number of persons outdoors should be limited to 15 and indoors should be limited to 5 including youth workers.</p>	<p>Learning should only take place for the most vulnerable people who do not have other means of support and cannot access support remotely.</p> <p>The maximum number of persons indoors or outdoors should be limited to 5 including youth workers.</p>

Level 0 - 2	Level 3	Level 4
18 years and over		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covid-19 protocols are maintained during the residential. <p>*Youth work groups may travel through areas subject to higher protection levels but should make every effort not to stop in a higher-level area.</p> <p>Level 2</p> <p>Maximum of 50 individuals on site, where groups are outdoors only (this mirrors the outdoor sport and physical activity guidance)</p> <p>6 young people from 3 households occupancy for tents/rooms only</p> <p>Single youth work organisation occupancy only</p> <p>Washing and toilet facilities reserved for single person use at any one time</p> <p>Enhanced cleaning in between visits</p> <p>Level 1</p> <p>Maximum of 100 individuals on site, where groups are outdoors only (this mirrors the outdoor sport and physical activity guidance).</p> <p>6 young people from 3 households occupancy for tents/rooms only</p> <p>Multi-youth work organisation occupancy permitted on-site as long as the provider can demonstrate satisfactory measures to maintain the integrity of each group as a distinct 'bubble' throughout the stay.</p>		

Level 0 - 2	Level 3	Level 4
18 years and over		
<p>Level 0</p> <p>Maximum of 500 individuals on site, where groups are outdoors only (this mirrors the outdoor sport and physical activity guidance).</p> <p>8 young people from 4 households occupancy for tents/rooms only</p> <p>Multi-youth work organisation occupancy permitted on-site as long as the provider can demonstrate satisfactory measures to maintain the integrity of each group as a distinct 'bubble' throughout the stay.</p>		

Additional permitted approaches across all levels:

Digital youth work delivery

Youth work at home is likely to continue to be an important route for some children and young people to engage with youth work. Resources, tips and ideas for digital youth work, shared by youth workers across Scotland, can be found [here](#). See [further support available from YouthLink Scotland](#).

Many youth workers use Youth Awards within their programmes. The [Awards Network](#) providers have developed a range of resources to support wider learning and achievement at home, including working towards accreditation/award.

Youth work in schools

As part of education recovery, including learning in the outdoors, youth work may be delivered as part of the school day/curriculum with school aged children and young people. Youth work taking place in partnership with schools should be delivered in line with [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance on reducing the risks in schools](#) and in agreement with schools and local authorities.

Detached youth work

Detached youth work should be delivered in response to local need. This may include continuing to support young people to make informed choices regarding transmission of the virus. Youth work organisations may wish to consider the role of detached youth work, particularly as an approach to re-engaging, or providing essential face-to-face support for at-risk young people.

Detached youth work is a specific youth work approach and youth work leaders should ensure their practitioners are confident and competent to deliver in this way. This may include how youth workers take responsibility for their own safety, including the ability to maintain physical distancing, when making decisions about whether to engage with groups. As with all approaches to delivery, the [expectations before delivery](#) should be met, including a specific risk assessment for detached work, and consideration given to the skills and experience of those delivering. Information and guidance, developed by YouthLink Scotland and Youth Scotland can be found [here](#).

Outdoor sports

It is recognised that organised outdoor youth work activities may include games and non-contact physical activity. Youth work leaders considering delivery of organised outdoor contact sports should consult Scottish Government guidelines and [SportScotland](#) advice.

Expectations before delivery

Before implementing any planned face-to-face delivery, or re-opening of youth work spaces, youth work leaders³ should be able to demonstrate the following:

EXPECTATIONS BEFORE DELIVERY

CAN YOU DEMONSTRATE?

- **Scottish Government scientific and medical advice deems it safe to proceed.**
- **Ability to comply with Scottish Government and Public Health Scotland guidance**
- **Comprehensive risk assessment.**
- **Measures for infection prevention and control.**
- **Enhanced cleaning arrangements.**
- **Adequate ventilation and facilities, equipment and procedures for personal hygiene including the wearing of face coverings indoors.**
- **Measures are in place to comply with physical distancing requirements.**
- **Ability to adhere to the Scottish Government Test and Protect COVID-19 guidance.**
- **Specific measures to protect those who are at higher risk from COVID-19.**
- **Clear communication processes** - to ensure staff, volunteers, service users and parents understand the measures you have put in place to manage risk.
- **Appropriate insurance cover.**
- **That these measures are monitored and reviewed regularly.**

If you cannot demonstrate you have these expectations in place in a suitable and sufficient risk assessment, or feel your local situation cannot be managed in a safe way, **you should not progress.**

[Further details on risk assessments can be found on page 14.](#)

Youth work leaders may wish to undertake a readiness assessment or COVID-19 action plan, to help ensure you have considered all aspects in advance of any delivery³. This planned approach will also allow you to identify all the measures you need to put in place before delivery and ensure you have met the expectations required before delivery. Contingency planning should also be included within a readiness or action plan. This will ensure you are prepared to respond should Scottish Government advise that there is a change to the protection levels.

Examples of risk assessment and readiness checklist tools and templates can be found on [YouthLink Scotland's website](#). Organisations may also wish to seek support and advice from their national, regional or governing body/federation/association.

³ This includes any change to a staff member or volunteer's current place of work e.g. returning to the youth work setting to prepare for re-opening, to undertake administrative tasks or delivery digitally or remote

Compliance with Scottish Government and Public Health guidance and advice

Youth work leaders should work closely with their national, regional or governing body/federation/association to ensure compliance.

Activities that do not comply with Scottish Government and Public Health guidance put lives at risk, and may not be covered by insurance. Scottish Government Strategic Framework outlines current legal requirements regarding restrictions. Youth work leaders should work closely with their national, regional or governing body/federation/association to ensure compliance. They should also act in accordance with any local authority plans or guidance that are in place.

Those responsible for venues are those who own it and/or oversee its management. This may be a management body or committee such as a community group, third sector organisation or a local authority. Where premises are leased/rented from another organisation it is the organisation that owns the premises who will have overall responsibility for safe opening of the premises, including enforcing the mitigations applicable to that setting. They have discretion over whether they have a need to open and, if so, will need to exercise judgements on when they consider it safe to do so. This could apply to a single location or more than one community centre if these are run by a single organisation.

Risk assessment

All decisions regarding delivery should be informed by comprehensive COVID-19 risk assessment. Risk assessment should identify the specific risks and subsequent measures that are required to protect the health and safety of everyone within each setting to be used for delivery (this includes all service users, staff, volunteers, and any external partners or visitors). A separate risk assessment may be required for different approaches or sites for delivery. Risk assessment will also outline how safeguarding measures are to be implemented, communicated and reviewed. This will include how to respond should anyone develop symptoms whilst on the site for delivery (including staff/volunteers within the working environment), and identifying areas of the site the individual may have accessed or equipment used while symptomatic. Risk assessment should be reviewed on an ongoing basis, including in response to changes in public health advice, and should be publicly available⁴.

⁴ The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 requires employers to carry out suitable and sufficient risk assessment for employees and where this involves more than 5 employees, produce a written record of the risk assessment

Determining capacity

In assessing and managing risk, youth work leaders should assess the number of individuals (staff, volunteers, children and young people) that can safely be accommodated in a setting at any one time.

The following factors will be important to determine capacity:

- Scottish Government guidance on physical distancing.
- Ability to maintain physical distancing for all users of the site/space.
- Ability to manage enhanced cleaning and personal hygiene.
- The specific setting for delivery.
- Potential needs/behaviours of children/young people.
- The age of children/young people.
- The size and layout of space for staff and volunteers, including office space, kitchen and any corridors and entrances.
- Ventilation within buildings.

Advice on calculating capacity is available from [Scottish Government](#) and the [Scottish Community Development Centre](#).

Organisations should consider:

- How can indoor and outdoor spaces be utilised and re-designed to minimise risks.
- What staffing ratios will we need to supervise each space and building requirements.
- What alternative settings/spaces could we use and manage safely.
- What insurance or permissions need to be in place for alternative private spaces.
- Where could you work with outdoor learning providers or other youth work colleagues.
- Which cohorts of children/young people might benefit most from access to face-to-face youth work, in helping to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on health and wellbeing and to continue to close the poverty related attainment gap.
- Gradual, phased re-introduction of a specific and managed number of children or young people safely in line with guidance.
- What measures to manage numbers and movement around the workspaces will help ensure the health and safety of any staff and volunteers returning to the workplace.

Equality

When using this framework and planning delivery organisations should consider the particular needs of different groups of staff, volunteers and individuals. It is against the law to discriminate, directly or indirectly, against anyone because of a protected characteristic, such as age, sex, race or disability. Employers and organisations also have additional legal responsibilities towards disabled individuals and those who are new or expectant mothers.

Youth work is a rights respecting and rights promoting practice. Taking a rights based approach will be crucially important when addressing inequality in children's realisation of their rights, especially those disproportionately affected during the crisis. Information and resources on protecting the human rights of children and young people are available from the [Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland](#). Where necessary, groups should also signpost to relevant specialist organisations.

Health and hygiene

This guiding framework is intended to support youth work leaders to follow and reinforce the FACTS protective measures within the context of youth work delivery and with young people.

The gradual and phased recommencement of face-to-face youth work activities⁵ will be dependent on procedures and measures being in place for infection prevention and control. This includes:

- Physical distancing.
- Enhanced cleaning arrangements⁶ and building ventilation.
- Guidance on, and provision of equipment, where appropriate, for respiratory hygiene, e.g. face coverings and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) where required.
- Guidance on and facilities to aid personal hygiene, including frequent handwashing, or sanitising with alcohol gel⁶.
- Measures such as a contact/groupwork log to support contact tracing in line with the [Scottish Government Test and Protect COVID-19](#) guidance.
- Clear signage and communication for staff, volunteers and young people.
- Guidance for staff and volunteers about the procedure if someone becomes unwell on-site or one or more COVID-19 cases occur, including post activity/attendance within the facility.

Before any delivery is undertaken, measures to ensure physical distancing should be in place.

As of 19 July when all of Scotland moves to Level 0, the following physical distancing measures apply:

- No physical distancing required in outdoor settings
- Physical distancing of one metre in indoor settings

Providers of Youth Work services, staff and volunteers must take all reasonable measures to ensure:

- A distance of one metre is maintained between any persons in indoor settings (except between

⁵and any work associated with preparing for recommencement, where staff or volunteers are returning to the workplace

⁶<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-re-opening-schools-guide/pages/hygiene-health-and-safety/> may be helpful

members of the same household or a carer and the person assisted by the carer)

- That they only admit people to indoor settings in sufficiently small numbers to make it possible to maintain that distance
- That a distance of one metre is maintained between any person waiting to enter the premises (except between members of the same household or a carer and the person assisted by the carer)

Youth Work providers must take a responsible attitude to these vital health protection rules and should look critically at their operations to ensure they take all reasonable measures so that workers and anyone else on the premises maintain a one metre distance from each other.

Organisations should consider:

- How you will manage and control the number of individuals in spaces and settings, to maintain physical distancing e.g. one-way systems in buildings or where your setting may be a public space.
- How to ensure physical distancing is maintained between all youth workers and young people.
- Scrutiny of indoor facilities, layout and equipment to ensure physical distancing.
- Clear signage throughout the setting.
- Structure and timing of youth work activities or sessions to decrease opportunity for interaction.
- What measures are needed to support cleaning of any equipment or materials to be used and to facilitate personal hygiene, including where food is being provided as part of delivery?

Youth work organisations working with children and young people with additional support needs may wish to refer to [Scottish Government guidance for physical distancing in education and childcare settings](#), regarding appropriate management of physical distancing and hygiene measures.

Face coverings

For the purposes of youth work activity, face coverings should be worn indoors by all participants, staff and volunteers aged 12 years and over. This mitigation should be put in place as well as having a minimum of 1m physical distancing within an indoor learning environment. Face coverings should also be worn indoors when people are not engaged in a youth work activity. This is especially important where 1m distance cannot be guaranteed, where people are moving about in corridors, confined communal areas (including toilets), and other areas of buildings where physical distancing is particularly difficult to maintain. Some individuals are exempt from wearing face coverings. [See further information on exemptions from the Scottish Government](#). You must by law (unless an exemption applies) wear a face covering in public spaces, such as community centres, shops, libraries and public transport, as set out in the [face coverings guidance](#).

Youth work leaders may wish to consider strengthening the use of face coverings to address specific local circumstances e.g. where increased community transmission is being seen. Further advice on this is available within the [CLD Guidance \(Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): community learning and development sector](#).

It is important to note the difference between face masks and face coverings. Face coverings are not intended to help the wearer, but to protect against inadvertent transmission of the disease to others if you have it asymptotically. Face coverings are not classed as PPE. On dedicated transport, all youth workers and all children/young people aged five and over are required to wear face coverings, in line with guidance for public transport unless they have a condition for which a face covering would be inappropriate.

COVID-19 symptoms, test and protect

Youth work leaders, staff, volunteers and service users have a responsibility to ensure they adhere to the Scottish Government Test and Protect COVID-19 guidance which says people with symptoms should stay at home and self-isolate (including household members). Employees and volunteers should be supported to stay at home for the duration of the isolation period.

You should have clearly communicated guidance in place for your youth work site. Individual health factors should be considered when making decisions regarding a return to face-to-face delivery and/or return to the workplace.

Organisations should have measures in place, such as a contact/groupwork log to support contact tracing in line with the [Scottish Government Test and Protect COVID-19 guidance](#). These should comply with GDPR requirements.

Youth work leaders should ensure there is a clear procedure in place to deal with situations if a member of staff, volunteer or service user falls ill with symptoms of COVID-19 while in the site for delivery, or advises you of a positive test result. Scottish Government advice for employers may be helpful for youth work leaders in implementing the “[test, trace, isolate, support](#)” strategy and can be found by following [this link](#).

Free, regular testing for people who do not have symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) is available to everyone in Scotland. More information can be found at [NHS Inform](#).

Special considerations for people who are clinically vulnerable or shielding

Shielding was paused on 1 August 2020. Since then, the Scottish Government has been advising those who are at highest risk should they contract coronavirus, including those who were formerly asked to shield, to follow the same guidance as the rest of the population stringently and with extra care.

The Strategic Framework introduces enhanced advice at each protection level to protect people with the highest clinical risk, setting out clearly how advice will change depending on the rates of infection in local areas. People at highest risk should still follow the advice for the general public as a minimum, but these levels provide additional advice for areas like work, schools, shopping and contact with others.

Organisations should also consider measures to mitigate risk to those with protected characteristics, and to respond to concerns expressed by any staff or volunteer who considers themselves to be at higher risk.

Accidents, security and other incidents

The COVID-19 virus is expected to remain in the population even after lockdown restrictions are lifted. It is therefore essential that youth work leaders ensure that the COVID-19 safeguarding measures are reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis and remain in place until Scottish Government advises otherwise.

Using [public health advice](#), organisations should develop a clear procedure for and guidance to support staff and volunteers, regarding what to do if there is an accident, incident or safety concern, for example if:

- An individual or individuals are not adhering to the safeguarding measures.
- Someone becomes unwell on-site or one or more COVID-19 cases occur.

- A staff member or volunteer would have to break physical distancing restrictions, for example to administer first aid, or to de-escalate a potentially volatile situation.

Communications

It is important that your plans for a gradual phased recommencement of face-to-face youth work activities, and the policies, procedures and measures you have in place to protect individuals and manage risk are clearly communicated to all staff, volunteers and service users. You may wish to consult with young people to develop guidelines for attending, including safe and staggered arrival/leaving.

Some children, young people, parents, staff and volunteers may understandably feel anxious or uncertain about face-to-face delivery and their views should be considered within the decision making process regarding approaches to delivery. It is important to clearly communicate your plans and protection measures to your workforce, service users, parents and external partners, and where possible and appropriate work with them as part of the process.

Youth work organisations may wish to consider how they use social media. Social media communication can provide opportunity to promote positive messages to young people and communities. It can also be useful in supporting young people to make safe and informed decisions regarding their face-to-face interactions. Careful consideration should be given to potential unintended impacts of social media communication, for example reputational risks of images with young people who may be exempt from wearing a face covering, or who may appear not to be observing physical distancing.

Travel

Scottish Government guidelines continue to state that if individuals can work from home, they must do so, where possible. Where this is not possible, youth work leaders should consider how their staff and volunteers need to travel to any site for delivery (including those who may be undertaking administrative work, preparing for the re-opening of youth work buildings or spaces, or using youth work spaces to deliver digital or remote support and activities). Those using public transport should adhere to the latest Scottish Government legislation and/or guidelines around the wearing of face coverings and physical distancing. Organisations should also consider the appropriateness of travel for those with protected characteristics, and respond to concerns expressed by any staff or volunteers who consider themselves to be at higher risk. Staff and volunteers who are clinically vulnerable or shielding should not be asked to leave their home unless advised otherwise by Scottish Government or their healthcare professional.

As an essential part of the education system in Scotland, travel to and from youth work activity is permitted. At protection levels 3 and 4, youth work leaders should consider how service users would travel to the setting for delivery and where possible deliver within their locality.

Although individual travel is permitted across local authorities in Level 2 and lower, organisations providing youth work activity are asked to limit travel as far as possible while providing services. Check the level for your area using the [postcode tool](#).

Youth group trips, outings, excursions and residentials

Travel as part of a youth work activity can recommence. Youth group trips, outings, excursions and residentials can take place subject to the following conditions (and those set out in page 6 of this guidance, for residential experiences):

- The **expectations before delivery** are in place, including an appropriate risk assessment;

- Adherence to COVID protocols at the destination.
- On dedicated youth work transport, face coverings should be worn by anyone aged 5 years and over (unless exemptions apply).
- Maintaining distance between young people on dedicated youth work transport is not necessary, but any adults travelling by dedicated transport should conform with the requirements for public transport (1 metre distancing with appropriate mitigation measures in place and the wearing of face coverings, at the time of writing).
- An effective enhanced cleaning regime is in place. This includes cleaning of frequently touched surfaces after each journey.
- Measures to protect drivers and youth workers who are accompanying young people on dedicated youth work transport should be informed by a risk assessment before any transport is considered. This may include leaving seats behind/beside the driver empty or fitting a physical barrier or screen.
- It does not involve travel out of or into a Level 3 area (* Youth work groups may travel through areas subject to higher protection levels but should make every effort not to stop in a higher level area).

The following precautionary approaches may help further minimise risk:

- Assigning the same seats for the out/in journey.
- Where possible, distancing between individual passengers, particularly secondary pupils or those in the senior phase.
- All individuals should be encouraged to sanitise hands prior to boarding the transport and on arrival/return.
- Good respiratory hygiene should be reinforced, such as encouraging young people to carry tissues
- The consumption and sharing of food and drink should not be allowed.
- Windows on dedicated youth work transport should be kept open, where possible, and ensure that mechanical ventilation uses fresh rather than recirculated air; or use air conditioning with attention paid to the appropriate frequency for changes of filters.

Travel to some parts of England may be restricted and youth work leaders should consult Scottish Government advice on travel and transport (<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-travel-and-transport/>).

Where food is being provided as part of a youth group trip, outing or residential the following advice may be helpful [Food safety for community cooking and food banks - Food Standards Agency](#).

Youth work leaders planning residential experiences may also find [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance to support the reintroduction of school residential visits](#) and [Outdoor learning protection levels and guidance](#) helpful. They may also wish to make sure they are familiar with the residential provider's procedures for 'test, trace, isolate and support' as part of their risk assessment.

Youth work events

Youth work leaders considering organising community youth work events may wish to consult [Scottish Government advice for events](#) which contains an operational guide and checklist.

Workforce support and training

Youth work leaders should work closely with staff and volunteers in planning a gradual, phased recommencement of face-to-face youth work services. They should consider the support and training needs of staff and volunteers to deliver services safely through the blend of remote/digital and face-to-face youth work being planned.

This includes supporting staff and volunteers who may be anxious about a return to the workplace, providing effective training regarding the use different approaches (including digital platforms) and safe working practices.

Organisations should seek support and advice from their local authority, partners, or national, regional or governing body/federation/association. Links to some of the resources available to support youth work delivery can be found on [YouthLink Scotland's](#) website.

Coronavirus regulations provide an exception for gatherings for the purpose of education or training. However, at this time, wherever possible, delivery of training for youth work practitioners should be online to reduce the risk of further transmission of infection. When planning for recommencement of any face-to-face training for youth work practitioners, youth work organisations may wish to consider the following guidance and principles:

- [CLD sector specific guidance](#) in relation to providing a safe working environment. As more workers gradually return to the workplace, greater consideration of the safe delivery of work-based training will be necessary.
- The youth work [expectations before delivery](#) are in place.
- If delivery is planned in a privately hired space and if the venue continues to be available for training, youth work organisations may also wish to consider the relevant sector guidance set out in the [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Tourism and Hospitality Sector Guidance](#).
- Dependent on the number of attendees, a checklist on events is available here and may be helpful - [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): events sector guidance - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#).
- Risk assessments should be carried out in advance of any delivery, in respect of both the venue and delivery or training itself, with all action taken to ensure safe delivery of the training;
- [The Health and Safety Executive's short guide](#) on working safely during the coronavirus outbreak.

Working with external partners/agencies

Youth work leaders should ensure that any external partners or agencies, working within the site they are responsible for, are aware of and follow the policies and procedures you have put in place to keep everyone safe. Any of your staff or volunteers delivering within an external setting should follow the risk assessment and procedures of the lead provider.

Delivery in spaces managed by others

Where youth work is delivered in spaces managed by others, including community halls, church halls and private outdoor settings, the organisation responsible for the setting should ensure they have a **venue risk assessment**, procedures and facilities for infection prevention and control, and measures to support physical distancing. This includes calculating the maximum physical distance based capacity (PDBC) limit for their premises. A youth work group or organisation using these premises or settings should undertake a risk assessment for the activity they will be delivering and ensure the other expectations before delivery are in place. They should comply with the mitigations put in place by the person responsible for the premises and ensure they understand and adhere to the maximum physical distance based capacity limit.

Links to relevant guidance

Scottish Government

<https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Scottish Government CLD Guidelines

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-community-learning-and-development-sector/pages/using-this-guidance/>

Scottish Government Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance on reducing the risks in schools.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-reducing-the-risks-in-schools/>

Scottish Government Coronavirus (COVID-19): multi-purpose community facilities guidance

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-multi-purpose-community-facilities---guidance/>

Scottish Government Coronavirus (COVID-19): calculating physical distancing capacity in public settings

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-calculating-physical-distancing-capacity-in-public-settings/pages/non-domestic-premises/>

Scottish Government Postcode Checker

<https://www.gov.scot/check-local-covid-level/>

School Visits guidance

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-school-visits-and-trips/>

Scottish Government guidance on face coverings

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-public-use-of-face-coverings/>

Scottish Government events sector guidance

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): events sector guidance - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19-events-sector-guidance/)

List of **suite of guidance** available from the Scottish Government

Guidance about coronavirus (COVID-19), including business, health, education and housing

The latest **Health Protection Scotland** guidance

A range of guidance for different approaches to youth work can be found on YouthLink Scotland's dedicated COVID-19 site

<https://www.youthlinkscotland.org/covid-19-guidance/>

Youth Scotland COVID-19 website – contains information and the latest toolkit to support current youth work delivery

<https://www.youthscotland.org.uk/covid-19/>

Health Protection (Coronavirus Additional Temporary Measures) Regulations 2020 (Scotland)

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2020/318/contents>

Hygiene and allergy advice for individuals and groups preparing meals to share in their community.

[Food safety for community cooking and food banks - Food Standards Agency](https://www.food.gov.uk/news/news-detail/107)

Guidance to support residential youth work experiences

<https://www.goingoutthere.co.uk/appendix/coronavirus-covid-19-reopening-and-operation-of-outdoor-education-centres-and-reintroducing-visits-by-schools/>

