

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This document is applicable from 31 December 2020

Local authorities may take certain additional measures depending on the epidemiological situation.

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## GENERAL

The Consultative Committee of 30 December 2020 has decided to tighten travel restrictions. This has been done to minimise the risk of importing infections through travellers and to prevent the possible spread of the new variant of COVID-19. The increase in the number of confirmed cases is lower in our country than in other countries. Furthermore, there is a strong indication that a new variant of COVID-19, currently circulating in the United Kingdom, is much more contagious.

Respecting the six golden rules remains vital. As a reminder, the six golden rules are as follows:

1. the hygiene measures (e.g. washing hands, coughing and sneezing hygiene) remain essential;
2. outdoor activities should be prioritised wherever possible. Where necessary, indoor areas must be adequately ventilated;
3. additional precautions must be taken for people belonging to a high-risk group.
4. social distancing of 1.5 meters is the norm, except for people living under the same roof or between people who have close contact on a regular basis, for children mixing up to the age of 12 and between counsellors and their clients (people in need of counselling). People who are unable to respect social distancing must wear a face mask;
5. it is necessary for everyone to limit their close contacts as much as possible. "Closer contact" implies contact which lasts longer than 15 minutes, without respecting social distancing and without wearing a face mask. During this phase of the epidemic, it is recommended that each person limits themselves to close contact with 1 person (outside the household);
6. gatherings are limited to a maximum of 4 people (not including children up to the age of 12). Not including exceptions stipulated in the Ministerial Order.

These six golden rules are instructions and not recommendations. They must therefore be adhered to by everyone.

### 1. What does the declaration of a federal phase mean for the local authorities?

A federal phase means that the governors and mayors must apply the general measures.

Nevertheless, the Ministerial Order allows the local authorities to take additional measures imposed by the health situation, subject to the following conditions:

1. If the competent local authorities decide to take preventive measures, they will do so in consultation with the competent authorities of the federated entities. The mayor will consult with the governor on this matter.
2. If the mayor or the governor is informed by the health authority of the federated entity concerned of a local resurgence of the epidemic within their territory, or if they identify this themselves:
  - The mayor or governor must take the additional measures required by the situation;
  - The mayor must immediately inform the governor and the competent authorities of the federated entities of the additional measures taken at municipal level;
  - If the planned measures have an impact on federal resources or on neighbouring municipalities or at national level, consultation is required in accordance with the structures provided for in the Royal Decree of 22 May 2019 on local emergency planning.

The mayor is responsible for oral and visual communication of the specific measures taken on the territory of their municipality. The local government shall ensure correct communication for both residents and visitors. It is therefore recommended that citizens consult the communication channels of the municipality in which they live (or intend to visit) in order to find out about any specific measures that may apply.

The Minister of the Interior shall provide instructions regarding coordination.

**2. What are the consequences of non-compliance with the measures?**

Compliance with the announced measures is essential in order to avoid the further spread of the pandemic and additional reinforcement of the measures. We are counting on everyone's sense of civic duty and responsibility.

In the event of non-compliance with the measures (provided by the Ministerial Order), sanctions are possible under Article 187 of the law on Civil Security of 15 May 2007, among others.

Local authorities remain competent for public order in accordance with article 135 §2 of the new municipal law, without prejudice to the measures or the spirit of the measures taken at a higher level.

The police forces will carry out permanent checks to ensure strict compliance with the measures.

**3. Can protocols or guides deviate from the maximum number of persons admitted for an activity?**

No, provisions of a protocol or guide which are less strict than the rules laid down in the Ministerial Order are not applicable.

## ECONOMY

### WORK

The general principles are as follows:

- Teleworking is mandatory in all companies, associations and services for all staff unless this is not possible due to the nature of their role or because it would disrupt the continuity of business operations, activities and services.
- Where teleworking cannot be applied, companies must take the appropriate measures:
  - ensuring maximum compliance with social distancing rules, and in particular that a distance of 1.5 m is maintained between each person;
  - if the social distancing rules cannot be guaranteed, ensuring at least an equivalent level of protection.
  - the employer provides staff members who are unable to work from home with a certificate or any other evidence confirming the need for their presence at the workplace. This applies to all sectors and businesses. This certificate or other form of evidence may be an existing document or card (e.g. a badge) belonging to the staff member concerned.
- Face-to-face team building sessions are prohibited.

The application of these principles must be guaranteed at company level and developed by taking preventative measures as defined in the "Generic guide for combatting the spread of COVID-19 at work" (available at: <https://employment.belgium.be/sites/default/files/content/documents/Coronavirus/Genericguide.pdf>); possibly supplemented by:

- guidelines at sectoral level;
- and/or guidelines at company level;

and/or other appropriate measures offering at least an equivalent level of protection. Collective measures always take precedence over individual measures.

### Exceptions to the general principles:

For private and public companies and services necessary for the protection of the vital interests of the Nation and the needs of the public (see Annex to the Ministerial Order)

- Teleworking is mandatory in all companies for all staff unless this is not possible due to the nature of their role or because it would disrupt the continuity of business operations, activities and services.
- In addition, these companies and services are obliged to apply, to the extent possible, the social distancing rules.

This exception also applies to producers, suppliers, contractors and subcontractors of goods, works and services which are essential to the activity of those companies and to the provision of those services.

### Obligations with regards to temporary working of employees and self-employed people not residing in Belgium:

In the context of the current sanitary crisis, **all employers or users** in the construction, agricultural, horticultural, cleaning and meat sectors, **who temporarily employ employees or self-employed persons who do not live in Belgium, must check the following before the works commence:**

- whether the Passenger Locator Form has been completed if the employee or self-employed person is required to do so, and
- whether the employee or self-employed person can supply a negative test result which was presented to the air or sea carrier and which was conducted less than 72 hours prior to arrival on Belgian territory, if they are required to do so.

**The employee or self-employed person who does not reside in Belgium must:**

- complete the Passenger Locator Form, if they are required to do so;
- present a negative test result which has been conducted less than 72 hours prior to arrival on Belgian territory, if they are required to do so. If the employee or self-employed person has not travelled by air or sea, they must be able to present a negative test result. The test must have been conducted less than 72 hours before commencing work or activities in Belgium. This test can be conducted abroad before arriving in Belgium. The negative test result can be checked by the prevention advisor-occupational physicians and physicians-social inspector of the Directorate-General for Work of the Federal Public Service Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue.
- **Employees arriving in Belgium after a stay of at least 48 hours in a red zone must quarantine. Quarantine can only end after a negative PCR test on day 7 of quarantine. For people with critical roles in essential sectors, working on site may be permitted, subject to a certificate from the employer (in accordance with the decision of the Interministerial Conference on Public Health of 2 December 2020).**

If the Passenger Locator Form has not been completed, the employer or user shall ensure that the employee or self-employed person does so as soon as they start working in Belgium at the latest.

It is important to note that the natural person for whom the work is carried out for strictly personal purposes is not obliged to check this or to keep a register. For instance, a private individual who renovates his private home and calls upon the services of a self-employed person or a company whose employees do not reside in Belgium.

With the exception of the above-mentioned situation, the employer must **keep a register** containing the following information:

1. the identification details of the employee or self-employed person living or residing abroad:
  - name and first names;
  - date of birth;
  - the identification number referred to in Article 8(1) of the Law of 15 January 1990 establishing and organising a Crossroads Bank for Social Security;
2. the place of residence of the employee or self-employed person during his activities in Belgium;
3. the telephone number on which the employee or self-employed person can be contacted;
4. where applicable, an indication of the people with whom the employee or self-employed person works during their activities in Belgium;
5. a negative COVID-19 test result presented by the employee or self-employed person.

It is important to note that these data may only be used for the purpose of combating the spread of coronavirus, including the detection and investigation of clusters and group settings at the same address. The data shall be destroyed after 14 calendar days from the date on which the work in question ends.

**The following should not be entered in such a register:**

- frontier workers within the meaning of the Ministerial Order, i.e. any worker who pursues an activity as an employed person in a Member State but resides in another Member State to which they return daily or at least once a week;
- an employee or self-employed person who lives or stays abroad and whose stay in Belgium does not exceed 48 hours.

**1. Can company canteens stay open?**

Yes, company canteens are allowed to remain open and are included in the mass catering operations and canteens for business communities. They must comply with the hygiene and social distancing measures that apply to the authorised catering activities and that are described below under the Catering section.

**BUSINESSES AND ASSOCIATIONS OFFERING GOODS OR SERVICES TO CONSUMERS (B2C)**

Companies and associations offering goods or services to consumers and which may remain open to the public shall carry out their activities in accordance with the applicable sectoral protocol.

A guide for the reopening of businesses applies to all businesses under this chapter and is published on the website of the Federal Public Service Economy. To the extent possible, links to the available sectoral protocols will be published on the website <https://www.info-coronavirus.be/nl/protocollen/>.

In any event, the fourteen general minimum rules provided for in the Ministerial Order must be respected:

1. The company or association must visibly inform its consumers, employees and third parties in good time regarding the preventive measures in force and provide its staff with appropriate training;
2. A distance of 1.5 meters between each person must be ensured;
3. Consumers are admitted for a maximum of 30 minutes, but the visit may take longer if the company or association works by appointment only;
4. One consumer is allowed per 10m<sup>2</sup> of accessible floor space to the public.
5. Two consumers are allowed simultaneously if the accessible floor space is less than 20 m<sup>2</sup> and provided a distance of 1.5 m between each person is guaranteed;
6. If the accessible floor space to the public exceeds 400 m<sup>2</sup>, adequate access control must be provided. For more information, please refer to the question relating to access controls;
7. In the companies or associations, it is mandatory to cover mouth and nose with a face mask in those areas that are accessible to the public. If the rules of social distancing cannot be complied with due to the nature of the activity performed, it is advised to use alternative personal protective equipment;
8. The activity must be organised in accordance with the directives issued by the competent authority and in such a way as to avoid gatherings and that the social distancing rules can be respected, in particular with regard to people waiting outside the establishment;

9. The company or association must provide staff and consumers with the means to ensure the necessary hand hygiene;
10. The company or association must take the appropriate hygiene measures to regularly disinfect the establishment and the material used;
11. The company or association must ensure good ventilation;
12. A contact person must be designated and announced so that consumers and staff can report a possible coronavirus infection, in order to facilitate contact tracing;
13. Terraces and public spaces must be organised in accordance with the rules laid down by the local authorities and in compliance with the same rules as those that apply indoors.
14. Shopping must be done individually, with the exception of minors living under the same roof or people in need of an escort, who can be accompanied by one adult. There is also an exception for visits by appointment.

Companies can follow the instructions set out in the 'Generic guide for combatting the spread of COVID-19 at work'. Employers must inform workers in good time regarding the prevention measures in force and provide appropriate training.

The rules that apply are further specified in this chapter, but the general principles can be summarised as follows:

- A. Companies and associations offering goods to consumers can do so, including in their establishments, subject to strict compliance with the fourteen minimum conditions listed above.
- B. Regarding the provision of services:

The provision of services where a distance of 1.5 metres between the service provider and the consumer cannot be guaranteed remains, at this stage, prohibited. Only those professions considered necessary for the protection of the vital interests of the Nation and the needs of the population (as listed in the Annex to the Ministerial Order) may continue their activities, even if a distance of 1.5 metres cannot be guaranteed. This concerns, for example, medical, paramedical or care-related contact professions, as well as home care for those in need of help.

For those service providers who are able to resume their activities, the rules applicable vary according to the place where the service is provided:

- On site: service providers may offer their services to consumers in the areas of the company or association that are accessible to the public, subject to strict compliance with the fourteen minimum rules listed above.
- At home: only businesses, private and public companies and services considered necessary for the protection of the vital interests of the Nation and the needs of the population (as listed in the Annex to the Ministerial Order) may offer their services at home.
- In public spaces: if an authorised service were to be offered in public spaces, the rules on gatherings and social distancing must also be respected. The service provider is taken into account when determining the maximum number of persons allowed.

### **Offering goods to consumers**

All companies and associations offering goods to consumers can resume their activities.

The Consultative Committee has decided that they will be able to receive consumers again in their establishment, subject to compliance with the fourteen minimum rules described above.

Offering goods at and in a home is prohibited (e.g. demonstrations of household products). However, goods ordered in advance can be delivered to and installed in a home.

A number of specific conditions apply to receiving visitors in shopping centres:

- the fourteen minimum rules described above;
- one visitor will be permitted per 10m<sup>2</sup>;
- means to ensure necessary hand hygiene must be made available at the entrance and exit;
- markers to indicate 1.5 metres distance must be applied to the floor and/or with signs;
- visitors must travel alone, with the exception of adults who may accompany minors living under the same roof or a person in need of an escort.
- adequate access control must be provided. See the additional question on access controls.

## **2. What does adequate access control mean for shops with a floor area of more than 400 m<sup>2</sup> accessible to the public and shopping centres?**

Adequate access control implies compliance with the specific measures imposed on shops and shopping centres is monitored in an organised manner. This includes monitoring whether the number of permitted customers is not exceeded, face masks are worn, there are no gatherings and the measures regarding individual shopping and social distancing are respected.

In principle, refusing access is a surveillance activity covered by the Law of 2 October 2017 regulating private and special security. This means that it must be carried out by a licensed private security company whose staff is trained for this activity and has the appropriate profile. Others, such as own staff, can inform customers, disinfect shopping carts and hand them over, verify reservations, etc.

Digital devices or signs can be an aid to control access.

### **Wearing a face mask**

Everyone from the age of 13 (customers, staff, etc.) is obliged to wear a face mask or any other fabric alternative in shopping streets, shops and shopping centres, and any private or public place with significant footfall. If this is not possible for medical reasons, a face shield can be worn.

The mayors are responsible for determining the shopping streets and the frequently visited private and public spaces in their municipality. These spaces will be clearly defined by a notice specifying the times during which the obligation applies.

### **Local authorities**

Local authorities will organise access to shopping centres, shopping streets and car parks in accordance with the ministerial letter of the Minister for Home Affairs of 29 November 2020 on the management of public space when reopening shops and shopping centres, so that social distancing measures can be respected.

Where the competent local authority considers that the requirements set out above cannot be met, it shall defer or suspend the reopening or opening of non-essential companies and associations in all or part of its territory.

## **3. Are there any specific restrictions on the sale of alcoholic beverages?**

Yes, from 8pm to 5am the sale of alcoholic beverages is prohibited in all establishments (including vending machines). Outside this period, catering establishments can only sell and/or supply alcoholic beverages in combination with a takeaway meal.

#### **4. Are there any specific restrictions for night shops?**

Night shops are defined as: any establishment whose net sales area does not exceed 150 m<sup>2</sup>, which does not carry out any activities other than the sale of general food and household goods and which has an obvious and permanent "Night shop" sign.

Night shops may be open between their usual opening hours and 10.00pm.

Petrol stations with in-house shops are not considered as night shops and therefore do not have to close at 10.00pm.

The sale of alcoholic beverages is prohibited in all establishments (including vending machines) from 8pm to 5am.

#### **Provision of services to consumers**

The provision of services where a distance of 1.5 metres between the service provider and the consumer cannot be guaranteed remains, at this stage, prohibited. Consequently, the following companies (or parts of companies) will in any event remain closed:

- beauty salons;
- non-medical pedicure salons;
- nail salons;
- massage parlours;
- hairdressers and barbers;
- tattoo parlours and piercing salons;

Medical or paramedical close-contact professions and occupations regarded as 'necessary for the protection of the vital interests of the Nation' (included in the Annex to the Ministerial Decree, JC 330) may be carried out, even at home, such as dentists, psychologists, physiotherapy, home nursing, maternity care, family care, palliative home care and essential hair care for people with a medical condition. Podiatrists may still provide foot care. In addition, foot care that is urgent due to medical reasons can be provided by professionals other than podiatrists.

For those service providers who are able to resume their activities, the rules applicable vary according to the place or the type of service provided:

#### **A. On site**

Service providers may offer their services to consumers in the areas of the company or association that are accessible to the public, subject to compliance with the fourteen minimum rules listed above.

#### **B. At home**

Only businesses, private and public companies and services considered necessary for the protection of the vital interests of the Nation and the needs of the population (as listed in the Annex to the Ministerial Order) may offer their services at the consumer's home (e.g. lawyers, architects, plumbers and heating engineers), provided they respect the social distancing measures.

#### **C. In public spaces;**

If an authorised service were to be offered in public spaces, both the rules on gatherings and those on social distancing must be respected. The service provider can therefore only offer their services to a maximum of three other people (older than 12 years) at the same time.

For example, a private coach can train with three clients outside and a photographer can organise a photo shoot with three clients outside.

**5. Are the driving test centres open and are driving lessons allowed?**

Theoretical exams can be resumed for individuals as long as the fourteen minimum rules are respected. However, it is not possible to respect the social distancing measures in a car. This is why practical driving tests and driving lessons given by a driving school to private individuals have been suspended.

**6. Are domestic cleaners still permitted? Can I continue to work as a domestic cleaner?**

Yes, this is permitted. Ironing services are also still allowed.

**7. Is it possible to deviate from individual shopping by appointment?**

In principle not. In highly exceptional circumstances, it is possible to deviate from this, e.g. when purchasing large goods where a thorough discussion is necessary in view of the impact on the household or the dwelling. This can be done by prior appointment in companies or associations that only work by appointment and where two persons can be present: 1 extra member of the household or, in the case of a single person, the 'cuddle' contact.

**8. May renovation and construction works continue in private homes?**

Yes, activities such as renovation, painting, electrical works, plumbing or the installation of domestic appliances are listed in the Annex to the Ministerial Order and can continue to take place in the consumer's home, provided that social distancing measures are respected.

**9. Can estate agents continue their activities?**

Estate agents may receive private individuals individually in their office, provided that the fourteen minimum rules are respected. People who want to rent or buy a property, however, are only allowed to visit the property if no one else is present at that time. The estate agent, sellers, landlords or current occupants are therefore not allowed to be present inside during the visit. Fulfilling legal obligations, such as drawing up a place description at the start of a tenancy agreement, remains possible.

**10. Are notaries, lawyers and bailiffs allowed to continue their activities?**

These professions are listed in the Annex to the Ministerial Order. Face-to-face client meetings are possible when necessary (e.g. to sign deeds), including at the client's home, with respect for social distancing measures. As far as possible, all tasks should be performed remotely.

**11. May accredited mediators, curators and other judicial representatives continue their activities?**

Yes. These fall within the "judicial services and related professions" listed in the Annex to the Ministerial order and may therefore continue their activities, this includes activities inside the home.

**BUSINESSES AND ASSOCIATIONS OFFERING GOODS OR SERVICES TO PROFESSIONALS (B2B)**

The provision of services between professionals remains possible, provided that the social distancing rules are respected and according to the preventative measures adopted by the company.

### **ITINERANT ACTIVITIES**

The competent municipal authority may allow for markets under certain terms.

Fun fairs, flea markets, bric-a-brac markets, year markets, Christmas markets and winter villages remain prohibited.

The necessary measures must be taken at all markets permitted by the local authorities to protect everyone from the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19), including the application of the social distancing rules, in particular maintaining a distance of 1.5 metres between each person. Where the local authorities do permit a market, they will establish the conditions for this. Appropriate and timely preventative measures will be taken, as recommended in the "General guide for re-opening shops to combat the spread of COVID-19", which is available on the FPS Economy's website.

Each market must satisfy the following conditions:

- The conditions determined by the local authorities;
- The social distancing rules are being respected;
- The maximum number of visitors permitted at a market is one per 1.5 running metres at the stall;
- Market vendors are required to cover their mouth and nose with a mask or any other fabric alternative (if this is not possible for medical reasons, a face shield can be worn);
- Customers are required to wear a face mask when the local authorities impose it or in all situations where it is impossible to ensure compliance with the rules of social distancing;
- Means for guaranteeing the necessary hand hygiene must be made available at the entrance and exit of the market by the competent municipal authorities. The market vendors will also make hand gels available to their customers;
- The consumption of food and drinks on the spot is forbidden, takeaways are still permitted;
- An organisation or system will be introduced to check how many customers are present at the market;
- A one-way traffic plan will be drawn up for the market with separate entrances and exits, unless a justified deviation from this is permitted by the local authorities in exceptional circumstances that provides for an alternative solution;
- In addition, shopping is done individually and for a maximum period of 30 minutes. An adult can accompany minors living under the same roof or a person in need of an escort.

Door-to-door activities of any kind are prohibited. Goods ordered in advance can still be delivered to and installed in a home.

#### **12. Are food trucks still allowed to sell food and drinks?**

Yes, however, they may only sell them as takeaway meals until 10 p.m. at the latest and they may not be consumed on the spot. The sale of alcoholic beverages is prohibited from 8pm to 5am.

### **THE HOTEL, RESTAURANT, AND CATERING (HORECA) SECTOR**

Establishments belonging to the catering sector and other food and drinking establishments will be closed until 15 January 2021, except for takeaways and food delivery and non-alcoholic beverages to

take away until 10pm at the latest. Takeaway meals can be sold together and/or delivered with alcoholic beverages until 8.00pm.

The following establishments can remain open:

- All types of accommodation, not including their restaurant, drinking establishments and other communal facilities. Holiday parks, bungalow parks and campsites are closed;
- mass catering operations and canteens for school, migrant, residential and business communities. This includes, company, hospital, prison, school and care home restaurants.
- Shared facilities for the homeless;
- Food and drink outlets in airport transit zones;
- Sanitary facilities in the service areas along the motorways.

For those catering activities that remain authorised, the following modalities must be respected:

- the tables must be positioned in such a way that a distance of at least 1.5 meters between dinner parties is guaranteed, unless the tables are separated by a plexiglass wall or an equivalent alternative with a minimum height of 1.8 meters;
- a maximum of four people per table is allowed; An entire household can share a table, regardless of size;
- only seats at tables are allowed;
- each person must remain at their own table;
- every person, with the exception of children up to the age of 12, is obliged to cover their mouth and nose with a face mask or any alternative in fabric, except when sitting at their own table. When it is not possible to wear a face mask or any fabric alternative due to medical reasons, a face shield can be worn;
- wearing a face mask is mandatory for all staff (if this is not possible for medical reasons, a face shield can be worn);
- no bar service is allowed;
- the contact details of one customer per table, which may be limited to a telephone number or an email address, must be recorded on arrival and kept for 14 calendar days, while respecting the protection of personal data, to facilitate any subsequent contact tracing. Customers who refuse to complete their details will be refused entry to the establishment. These contact details may only be used for the purposes of tackling COVID-19 and they must be destroyed after 14 calendar days.

In addition, the individual and collective use of hookahs is prohibited in places accessible to the public.

### **ANIMAL CARE**

Companies or associations providing animal care services (veterinary and comfort care) and rescue services may resume their activities. Nevertheless, the logic as described above in the section "services to consumers" continues to apply. For example, veterinary care is included in the Annex to the Ministerial Order. This means that vets can work in their practice as well as in the home of the animal's owner. Dog groomers (comfort care), however, who are not listed in the Annex, may carry out their activity on site but not at the consumer's home.

### **13. Can dog groomers remain open?**

Yes, dog groomers may be opened subject to compliance with the fourteen minimum rules and, in particular, with the social distancing rules of 1.5 metres between the service provider and the consumer. Home services are not allowed.

#### 14. Can dog training centres stay open?

Yes, they may open and offer their services but must ensure that there is no physical contact between the instructor and the owner of the dog and that the fourteen minimum rules are respected. If the training takes place in a public area, the rules regarding gatherings apply (a maximum of 4 people older than 12 years, instructor included). Dog training at home is not allowed.

#### 15. Are animal shelters allowed to stay open?

Animal shelters are now open to the public, provided that the fourteen minimum rules are respected.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

#### **Federal:**

- FPS Economy:
  - <https://economie.fgov.be/nl/themas/ondernemingen/coronavirus/coronavirus-versterkte>
  - <https://economie.fgov.be/nl/themas/ondernemingen/het-coronavirus-en-zijn>

Generic guides on the opening of shops to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus:

  - <https://economie.fgov.be/nl/themas/ondernemingen/coronavirus/versterkte-maatregelen/coronavirus-tips-voor-het>
  - <https://economie.fgov.be/nl/publicaties/gids-voor-eeen-veilige>
  - <https://economie.fgov.be/nl/themas/ondernemingen/coronavirus/toegelaten-economische/coronavirus-tips-voor-het>

Generic guide for the reopening of the catering industry:

  - <https://economie.fgov.be/nl/themas/ondernemingen/coronavirus/toegelaten-economische/coronavirus-raadgevingen-voor>
- FASFC:
  - <http://www.favv.be/professionelen/publicaties/mededelingen/coronavirus.asp>
- FPS Finance:
  - [https://financien.belgium.be/nl/douane\\_accijnzen/ondernemingen/corona-informatie-en-maatregelen/faq-covid-19](https://financien.belgium.be/nl/douane_accijnzen/ondernemingen/corona-informatie-en-maatregelen/faq-covid-19)
- FPS Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue:
  - <https://werk.belgie.be/nl/faqs/vragen-en-antwoorden-coronavirus>
  - Generic guide for combatting the spread of COVID-19 at work: <https://werk.belgie.be/nl/themas/coronavirus/veilig-aan-het-werk-tijdens-de-coronacrisis-generieke-gids-versie-2-en>
- NEO:
  - [https://www.rva.be/sites/default/files/coronavirus/Faq\\_Corona\\_NL\\_20200423\\_0.pdf](https://www.rva.be/sites/default/files/coronavirus/Faq_Corona_NL_20200423_0.pdf)

#### **Regional:**

- Flemish Region:  
<https://www.vlaio.be/nl/begeleiding-advies/moeilijkhedencoronavirus/specifieke-maatregelen-mbt-het-coronavirus-0>  
<https://www.vlaanderen.be/vlaamse-maatregelen-tijdens-de-coronacrisis/vlaamse-coronamaatregelen-rond-ondernemen-en-werk>
- Walloon Region:  
<https://www.1890.be/article/faq-coronavirus>
- Brussels Region:  
<https://1819.brussels/nl/blog/faq-coronavirus-en-ondernemingen-antwoord-op-uw-meest-gestelde-vragen>

## HEALTH

### **INFECTION AND PROTECTION**

The hygiene measures are adapted over time, according to the evolution of the pandemic, scientific knowledge and insight.

The most up-to-date information is available at the following address: <https://covid-19.sciensano.be/nl>

#### **1. What are the recommendations for wearing face masks and gloves in public places?**

Everyone, with the exception of children up to the age of 12, is obliged to cover their mouth and nose with a face mask or any other fabric alternative in all situations where it is impossible to ensure compliance with the rules of social distancing. This last obligation does not apply to:

- people living under the same roof;
- children mixing up to the age of 12;
- people meeting each who have close contact on a regular basis;
- counsellors and their clients (people in need of counselling).

In addition, wearing a face mask is compulsory in a number of places, regardless of the number of people present there:

- On public transport from entering the airport, the station, on the platform or a bus, (pre-)metro, tram, train stop or any other means of transport organised by a public authority. Public transport drivers are not required to cover their nose and mouth, insofar as the driver is well-isolated in a cabin on the one hand, and a poster and/or sticker indicates to users the reason why the driver is not wearing a mask on the other;
- For supervisors of camps, training sessions and activities that are allowed;
- The establishments and places where catering activities are permitted, both for customers and staff, unless whilst eating, drinking or sitting at a table;
- In shops and shopping centres;
- In shopping streets, at markets and in any private or public area with significant footfall, which is determined by the competent local authority and demarcated by a notice specifying the times at which the obligation applies;
- In conference rooms, auditoriums and places of worship & reflection;
- In libraries, game and multimedia libraries;
- In museums;
- In places of worship and buildings intended for the public practice of non-denominational moral services
- When moving around in public and non-public parts of courthouses and courtrooms and, in other cases, in accordance with the guidelines laid down by the Chairman.

When it is not possible to wear a face mask or any fabric alternative due to medical reasons, a face shield can be worn.

People who are unable to wear a face mask, a fabric alternative or a face shield due to a disability, substantiated by a medical certificate, do not have to comply with this obligation.

It should be noted, once again, that wearing a face mask is an additional protection that does not exempt people from applying the six golden rules for individual behaviour.

1. respect hygiene measures;
2. perform activities outside where possible ;
3. be considerate to vulnerable people ;
4. keep 1.5 metres distance ;
5. limit your close contacts ;
6. follow the rules concerning gatherings.

For more information about fabric face masks, please visit:

<https://www.info-coronavirus.be/nl/mondmasker/>

However, wearing gloves is not recommended, as it gives a false sense of security, people still touch their nose, mouth and eyes if they are wearing gloves, whereby they can still get infected. It is much better to regularly wash hands with soap and water.

## 2. Are there special arrangements for wearing masks for people who are deaf or hard of hearing?

Yes, in such cases, the interlocutor of a deaf or hard of hearing person can temporarily remove their mask so that the person can lip read. This is only possible for the time strictly necessary for the conversation, subject to social distancing.

## 3. Who is currently being tested?

Detailed information regarding the procedures can be found on the Sciensano website: [https://epidemiologie.wiv-isp.be/ID/Pages/2019-nCoV\\_procedures.aspx](https://epidemiologie.wiv-isp.be/ID/Pages/2019-nCoV_procedures.aspx)

## 4. Which quarantine rules should be followed?

It is necessary to set clear priorities for sample collection and laboratory analysis, which will serve public health and the containment of the epidemic in the best possible way. The priorities were identified at the Interministerial Conference on Public Health on 16 November 2020.

All high-risk contacts have been tested via PCR since 23 November 2020. **All stays in a red zone are defined as high-risk events.**

The following rules apply with regard to self-isolation and quarantine:

1. **Self-isolation period for people with a positive PCR test:**
  - For patients with a positive PCR test with symptoms, self-isolation shall be lifted not earlier than 7 days after onset of symptoms AND up to at least 3 days without fever AND with improvement of respiratory symptoms.
  - For people with a positive PCR test who have no symptoms, the 7-day self-isolation period starts from the date the sample was collected.
2. **The period of quarantine for high-risk contacts** is a minimum of 7 days. This quarantine period starts from the moment the high-risk contact took place until the negative PCR test. The PCR test must be carried out on the 7<sup>th</sup> day following the start of quarantine.
3. **The quarantine period for people returning from a red zone:** Please refer to the "International" section of this FAQ.

## USE OF TELECOMS DATA

## 5. Is the government using my personal telecoms data in the fight against the coronavirus?

No, the government only has access to anonymous data, and carries out analyses that help in the fight against the coronavirus on the basis of this data. The government does not process any address, telephone number or name. It is ensured that the data cannot in any way be traced back to an individual. At the level of aggregation used, members of the public are completely anonymous and their identity is protected.

**6. Why are telecoms data used?**

The government uses the anonymised and aggregated telecoms data to help make decisions regarding the control of the pandemic. Using this data, the government can ascertain various useful elements, such as: has the mobility of Belgians decreased since the measures were adopted by the National Security Council? In which geographical areas is mobility higher than in others?

**7. Does this mean that all my movements are now being monitored?**

No, no new data is being collected in the context of these analyses. The data does not leave the premises of the telecoms operators. They are anonymised (i.e., it is not possible to know which individual is behind which data point) and aggregated (i.e., there is no analysis of a single individual's behaviour).

**8. Will my data be stored or reused?**

No, the data processed in the context of this project are only being used to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic. Irrelevant data is immediately and continuously deleted. Once the corona crisis is over, all data will be deleted so that they can never be stolen or used against members of the public.

**9. Why is it relevant to use telecoms data in the context of a COVID-19 pandemic?**

Using mobile phone data (aggregated and anonymised) to manage epidemiological crises has already been done and has proven its effectiveness. For example, technologies similar to those currently being used were implemented during the Ebola epidemic in West Africa in 2013-2015.

The coronavirus is transmitted due to physical proximity between individuals. As such, the use of data regarding population movements can provide health authorities with essential information for managing the pandemic.

**10. Can this data be used against me?**

Absolutely not. The data processed are completely anonymous and cannot be traced back to individuals. Analyses are only carried out to inform policymakers and the public. Under no circumstances will the data be used for repressive or punitive ends against individual members of the public.

**11. Are there similar initiatives in other European countries?**

Yes, governments and mobile operators in other European countries, as well as the European Commission, are working on similar initiatives. The Belgian government is in contact with some of these countries to share expertise and, to the extent possible, also measure cross-border movements.

**12. Do these practices comply with national and European privacy regulations?**

Absolutely. In Belgium, special attention is given to scrupulously respecting privacy regulations, unlike in some other regions of the world. The government's approach is "privacy first". Not only is compliance with applicable legislation continually monitored, data privacy experts and an ethics committee are also involved in analysing the data. The approach and working methods have been approved by the Data Protection Authority.

### 13. Who analyses and uses the data?

The government decides which analyses will be applied to the anonymised and aggregated data, and for which purposes these analyses can be used. This is in close consultation with the Data Protection Authority. The telecoms operators only supply anonymised and aggregated data to Sciensano, which then sends the requested analyses to the government.

### 14. Can I choose not to provide location data in the context of the 'data against Corona' project?

No, your location data are not supplied individually. The government only receives an overview of anonymised and aggregated data. This is never individually traceable and completely anonymous. This supply of data has been coordinated with the Data Protection Authority.

## **SUPPORT FOR OLDER PERSONS, DISABLED PERSONS AND VULNERABLE PERSONS**

### 15. Are visits allowed in residential care centres or residential care institutions?

Please consult the website of the competent authorities for the terms of the visit:

Flemish Region: <https://www.zorg-en-gezondheid.be/corona-richtlijnen-voor-zorgprofessionals>

Wallon Region: <https://www.wallonie.be/fr/maisons-de-repos>

Brussels-Capital Region: [https://coronavirus.brussels/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/FAQ\\_Re%CC%81sidentiel\\_DEF-1.pdf](https://coronavirus.brussels/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/FAQ_Re%CC%81sidentiel_DEF-1.pdf)

### 16. Can local care initiatives for people in an urgent, problematic housing situation continue their activities?

People in an urgent, problematic housing situation due to unfavourable family circumstances (divorce/breakup, domestic or sexual abuse) or due to the uninhabitable nature of the current home, can get support from local shelter initiatives.

If necessary, a house visit can also take place provided that the general preventive measures are observed. A house visit cannot take place if the occupant refuses it. Given that the social rental market is considered as an essential service to implement the general social policy, house visits may take place subject to compliance with general preventive measures.

### 17. Will call centres for people in need (suicide risk, domestic violence, etc.) remain available?

Yes, subject to social distancing measures by the call takers. Useful numbers and websites can be found below:

#### **Dutch-speaking:**

The most important websites are as follows:

1. <https://www.vlaanderen.be/hulp-zoeken-bij-psychische-problemen>
2. <https://www.geestelijkgezondvlaanderen.be>

For more specific information: [www.tele-onthaal.be](http://www.tele-onthaal.be); [www.awel.be](http://www.awel.be); [www.1712.be](http://www.1712.be); [www.caw.be](http://www.caw.be); [www.jac.be](http://www.jac.be); [www.zelfmoord1813.be](http://www.zelfmoord1813.be); [www.nupraatikerover.be](http://www.nupraatikerover.be); Education line 078/15 00 10

#### **German-speaking:**

1. In the event of intra-family and partner violence where there is a need for protection and counselling:
  - a. Prisma ASBL (Frauenzentrum, Refuge des femmes): +32 (0)87 554 077
  - b. Telefonhilfe (Helpline): 108 – 24/7 (Also for people with suicidal thoughts)
2. If people need to talk: telefonhilfe (helpline): 108
3. Suicidal thoughts, psychotherapeutic consultation, psychotherapeutic referral: BTZ (Beratungs- und Therapiezentrum, centre for counselling and therapy)  
Eupen: +32 (0)87 140 180  
St.Vith: 080/650065

### French-speaking

Centre de prévention du suicide	0800 32 123	
Ecoute violences conjugales	0800 30 030	Ecouteviolencesconjugales.be
Comportements violents	Praxis	Asblpraxis.be
Télé-Accueil	107	
SOS Parents	0471 414 333	
Ecoute -Enfants	103	
SOS Viol	0800 98 100	
SOS Enfants FWB		<a href="https://www.one.be/public/1-3ans/maltraitance/equipe-sos-enfants/">https://www.one.be/public/1-3ans/maltraitance/equipe-sos-enfants/</a>

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

#### Federal:

- FPS Public Health:  
[https://www.health.belgium.be/nl/covid-19-Ambulante\\_zorgverstrekking\\_in\\_een\\_prive-praktijk](https://www.health.belgium.be/nl/covid-19-Ambulante_zorgverstrekking_in_een_prive-praktijk)
- VBS GBS:  
<http://www.vbs-gbs.org>
- Sciensano:  
<https://covid-19.sciensano.be/nl>
- FASFC:  
<http://www.favv.be/professionelen/publicaties/mededelingen/coronavirus.asp>
- FPS Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue:  
<https://werk.belgie.be/nl/faqs/vragen-en-antwoorden-coronavirus>

#### Regional:

- Flemish Community:
  - <https://www.vlaanderen.be/hulp-zoeken-bij-psychische-problemen>
  - <https://www.geestelijkgezondvlaanderen.be/>
  - [www.tele-onthaal.be](http://www.tele-onthaal.be)
  - [www.awel.be](http://www.awel.be)
  - [www.1712.be](http://www.1712.be)
  - [www.caw.be](http://www.caw.be)
  - [www.jac.be](http://www.jac.be)
  - [www.zelfmoord1813.be](http://www.zelfmoord1813.be)
  - [www.nupraatikerover.be](http://www.nupraatikerover.be)
  
- Wallonia-Brussels Federation:
  - <https://www.ecouteviolencesconjugales.be/>
  - [www.asblpraxis.be](http://www.asblpraxis.be)
  - <https://www.one.be/public/1-3ans/maltraitance/equipe-sos-enfants/>
  - <https://www.one.be/public/coronavirus/>

## EDUCATION & CHILDCARE

### **CHILDREN AND CHILDCARE**

#### **1. Will crèches and child minders remain open?**

Childcare is included in the Annex to the Ministerial Decree and may therefore remain open.

For more information on childcare:

##### **Flanders:**

<https://www.kindengezin.be/gezondheid-en-vaccineren/ziek/coronavirus/#Kinderopvang>

##### **Wallonia-Brussels Federation:**

<https://www.one.be/public/detailarticle/news/coronavirus-les-conditions-dacces-pour-mettre-votre-enfant-en-creche/>

##### **German-Speaking Community:**

[www.ostbelgienfamilie.be/coronavirus](http://www.ostbelgienfamilie.be/coronavirus)

### **EDUCATION**

The hybrid system of a maximum of 50% contact education from the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of secondary education and the code 'red' in higher education will be extended until at least 15 January 2021.

Please consult the website of the competent authorities for the terms of the organisation of education.

- Flanders: <https://onderwijs.vlaanderen.be/nl/nl/coronavirus>
- Wallonia-Brussels Federation: <http://www.enseignement.be/index.php?page=28291>
- German-Speaking Community: <http://ostbelgienbildung.be/coronavirus>

#### **2. What about children of (possibly) infected parents?**

For more information regarding the quarantine measures, please refer to the question “Which quarantine rules should be followed?” in the Health Section.

#### **3. Can courses take place outside regular education?**

The necessary training of staff is permitted within the working community, if possible through distance learning and, in any case, in compliance with the sanitary rules applicable to the workplace. For example, public transport operators may continue to offer internal driver training.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **Childcare:**

- Flemish Community:
  - o <https://www.kindengezin.be/gezondheid-en-vaccineren/ziek/coronavirus/#Kinderopvang>
  - o <https://www.kindengezin.be/img/draaiboek-kinderopvang-coronacrisis.pdf>
- Wallonia-Brussels Federation:
  - o <https://www.one.be/public/detailarticle/news/coronavirus-les-conditions-dacces-pour-mettre-votre-enfant-en-creche/>
- German-Speaking Community:
  - o <http://www.ostbelgienfamilie.be/coronavirus/>

### **Education:**

- Flemish Community:
  - o <https://onderwijs.vlaanderen.be/nl/nl/coronavirus>
  - o <https://onderwijs.vlaanderen.be/nl/coronavirus-voor-ouders>
  - o <https://examencommissiesecundaironderwijs.be/>
  - o <https://onderwijs.vlaanderen.be/nl/coronavirus-richtlijnen-voor-scholen-en-clbs>
  - o HIGHER EDUCATION:  
<https://onderwijs.vlaanderen.be/nl/draaiboek-2020-2021-universiteiten>  
<https://onderwijs.vlaanderen.be/nl/draaiboek-2020-2021-hogescholen>
  - o ADULT EDUCATION:  
<https://onderwijs.vlaanderen.be/nl/coronavirus-informatie-voor-volwassenenonderwijs>
  - o PART-TIME ARTS EDUCATION:  
<https://onderwijs.vlaanderen.be/nl/coronavirus-informatie-voor-deeltijds-kunstonderwijs>
- Wallonia-Brussels Federation:
  - o <http://enseignement.be/index.php?page=28291>
  - o HIGHER EDUCATION : [http://enseignement.be/index.php?page=26823&do\\_id=8060](http://enseignement.be/index.php?page=26823&do_id=8060)
  - o ADULT EDUCATION:  
[http://enseignement.be/index.php?page=26823&do\\_id=8061](http://enseignement.be/index.php?page=26823&do_id=8061)
- German-Speaking Community:
  - o <http://ostbelgienbildung.be/coronavirus>
  - o [http://www.ostbelgienbildung.be/PortalData/21/Resources/downloads/coronavirus/20200430\\_FAQ\\_Covid19\\_Bildung\\_und\\_Kinderbetreuung.pdf](http://www.ostbelgienbildung.be/PortalData/21/Resources/downloads/coronavirus/20200430_FAQ_Covid19_Bildung_und_Kinderbetreuung.pdf)

## PUBLIC LIFE

The current epidemiological situation does not allow any relaxation of the measures for the time being. This means that certain activities cannot yet be resumed and that contact should still be avoided in certain places, in particular in institutions belonging to the cultural, festive, sports, recreational and events sectors.

The following establishments, or parts of them, are, among others, closed to the public:

- casinos, fruit machine halls and bookmakers;
- wellness centres, including saunas, sunbeds, jacuzzis, steam rooms and hammams;
- night clubs and dance halls;
- party and reception venues;
- amusement parks;
- indoor playgrounds;
- zoos and animal parks;
- bowling alleys;
- fun fairs, year markets, flea markets, bric-a-brac markets, Christmas markets and winter villages;
- trade fairs including exhibitions;
- cinemas;
- fitness centres;
- ski slopes, cross-country ski trails and ski centres.

The following establishments (or parts of them), however, may remain open:

- outdoor playgrounds;
- museums;
- outdoor areas of animal parks, including entrances, exits, sanitary facilities and emergency buildings;
- swimming pools, excluding the recreational areas and subtropical swimming pools;
- libraries, game and multimedia libraries;
- places of worship and buildings intended for the public practice of non-denominational moral services
- outdoor areas of sports infrastructures;
- indoor horse arenas in equestrian centres and racecourses for the sole purpose of animal welfare;
- cultural sites (other than those described above), but only for:
  - groups of children up to the age of 12, as part of compulsory school or extracurricular activities;
  - courses and activities for children up to the age of 12;
- sports halls and facilities (other than those described above), but only for:
  - groups of children up to the age of 12, as part of compulsory school or extracurricular activities;
  - sports activities, courses and camps organised or authorised by the local authorities for children up to the age of 12;
  - training for professional athletes;
  - professional competitions;
  - activities other than sports activities, in so far as these are permitted under the Ministerial Order and the protocols in force.

For those establishments that remain open, the following 7 minimum rules must be respected:

1. the operator or organiser must visibly inform its customers, employees and third parties in good time regarding the preventive measures in force and provide its staff with appropriate training;
2. a distance of 1.5 meters between each person must be ensured;
3. it is always strongly recommended to cover mouth and nose with a face mask and to wear other personal protective equipment inside the establishment and must be used if the rules of social distancing cannot be complied with, due to the nature of the activity performed; Nevertheless, it is mandatory to wear a face mask in those places where the Ministerial Order states that mouth and nose must be covered;
4. the activity must be organised in such a way so as to avoid gatherings;
5. the operator or organiser must provide staff and customers with the means to ensure the necessary hand hygiene;
6. the operator or organiser must take the appropriate hygiene measures to regularly disinfect the establishment and the material used;
7. the operator or organiser must ensure good ventilation.

In order to reduce parties, gatherings and alcohol consumption in public areas and thus reduce the number of infections and the transmission of the virus, it is prohibited to be on public roads and in public areas between midnight and 5am, except for essential journeys which cannot be delayed, such as:

- for access to urgent medical care, social services and the police;
- to provide assistance and care for elderly people, minors, disabled people and vulnerable people;
- escaping from a situation of intrafamily violence;
- work-related travel, including commuting;
- movements in the context of wild boar hunting for population control and nuisance;
- taking someone to or picking someone up from the airport;

Except in the case of an urgent medical reason, the reason for presence or movement on public roads or in public areas must be justified at the first request of the police services.

### **SOCIAL CONTACT**

In order to prevent the spread of the virus, it is important to respect the six golden rules in all social contacts.

In addition, a number of restrictions apply:

- It is advisable not to have close contact with more than one person who does not belong to your own household. "Close contact" implies contact which lasts longer than 15 minutes, without respecting the six golden rules such as social distancing and wearing a face mask. It is not recommended that grandparents have close contact with their grandchildren.
- Each member of a household can meet one close contact on a regular basis every 6 weeks at home or in a tourist accommodation.
- A single person can meet one additional person, on top of the close contact he/she meets on a regular basis, at home or in a tourist accommodation and at a different moment in time. Social distancing measures must be respected with this additional person. It is recommended not to change this additional person too often. The close contact is considered to be "permanent". As an exception, single people may simultaneously receive the close contact they meet on a regular basis and the aforementioned additional person at home or in a tourist accommodation on 24 or 25 December 2020.

Apart from the exceptions mentioned in the Ministerial Order, gatherings are limited to a maximum of 4 people, excluding children younger than 12. However, members of the same household may travel together.

Social distancing of 1.5 meters and wearing a face mask continue to be mandatory, except:

- for people living under the same roof;
- for people meeting each other as part of the "closer contact" rule;
- for children mixing up to the age of 12,
- between counsellors and their clients (people in need of counselling).

#### **1. Can I move house?**

This is permitted, but the rules for gatherings and private meetings at home apply. Removal companies that fall under the Joint Committee 140.05 are allowed to offer their services to private individuals.

### **TRANSPORT**

#### **2. Are there any specific measures for public transport?**

Public transport users, with the exception of children up to the age of 12, are obliged to cover their mouths and noses by wearing a face mask or any other fabric alternative. This applies from the moment they enter the airport, station, at stops or on the platform, train or other means of transport organised by a public authority. If it is not possible to wear a face mask for medical reasons, a face shield can be worn.

Public transport drivers are not required to cover their nose and mouth, insofar as the driver is well-isolated in a cabin on the one hand, and a poster and/or sticker indicates to users the reason why the driver is not wearing a mask on the other. This exception also applies, under the same conditions, to drivers of organised collective transport (e.g. school bus).

Please consult the relevant websites for the available services of transport companies.

#### **3. Are private buses and coaches allowed to organise passenger transport?**

Yes, buses and coaches may arrange organised transport, subject to the application of the necessary hygiene and preventive measures by passengers and transport companies.

Passengers, with the exception of children up to the age of 12, must cover their mouth and nose by wearing a face mask or any other fabric alternative and, where possible, keep a distance of 1.5 metres. If it is not possible to wear a face mask for medical reasons, a face shield can be worn.

#### **4. What about taxis (and other on-demand transport services)?**

Taxis are allowed to transport customers. A minimum distance of 1.5 metres must be maintained between each person. The number of persons that can be transported therefore varies according to the type of vehicle.

A household or people who belong to "the closer contacts" can travel in 1 car. In this case, the social distancing rule does not apply. It is recommended to regularly ventilate and clean the vehicle.

It is mandatory to wear a face mask to cover your nose and mouth, if the social distancing measures cannot be respected.

#### **5. Can professional competence in-service training for professional drivers (code 95) take place?**

The professional competence in-service training for professional drivers (Code 95) can take place as it is an essential service in support of the logistics and passenger transport sectors.

The Annex to the Ministerial Order states that "*taxi services, public transport services, rail passenger and freight transport, other modes of passenger and freight transport and logistics*" are essential services supporting these modes of transport.

**6. What measures have been taken with regard to carpooling? How many people are allowed to travel in a private car?**

As is the case for taxis a minimum distance of 1.5 metres between each person must be respected during transport. The number of persons that can be transported therefore varies according to the type of vehicle. This rule does not apply to people belonging to the same household or "the closer contacts". It is recommended to ventilate and clean the car regularly.

It is mandatory to wear a face mask to cover your nose and mouth, if the social distancing measures cannot be respected.

### **TOURISM**

All types of accommodation (including hotels, apart-hotels, gîtes, B&Bs) with the exception of their restaurant, drinking establishments and other communal facilities (e.g. shared bathroom and fitness room).

Holiday parks, bungalow parks and campsites are closed from 3 November 2020, with the exception of holiday residences, bungalows, chalets and camping equipment intended for use by the owner and/or his household, or by a household which has its habitual residence there and solely for this purpose.

As regards the number of visitors per accommodation unit, the same rules apply as to private meetings at home. This means that every household is allowed to rent a residential unit with each other or with a maximum of one close contact. As an exception, single people may simultaneously receive the close contact they meet on a regular basis and the aforementioned additional person in a tourist accommodation on 24 or 25 December 2020.

Travelling abroad is strongly discouraged, however, borders will remain open in accordance with European guidelines.

**7. Can I travel to my second home?**

Yes, you can always go to your second home, even if it is situated on a campsite or in a holiday or bungalow park.

**8. Are picnic areas authorised?**

Visitors are allowed to bring their own food and eat it in a family setting at picnic sites (in the open air, of course). Of course, the whole family can sit at the same table.

### **SPORTS**

#### **Sports infrastructure and facilities**

Facilities (or parts of them) belonging to the sports sector are closed to the public. With the exception of fitness centres, indoor sports halls and sports infrastructures remain open to the public:

- groups of children up to the age of 12, as part of compulsory school or extracurricular activities;

- sports activities, courses and camps organised or authorised by the local authorities for children up to the age of 12;
- training for professional athletes;
- professional competitions;
- activities other than sports activities, in so far as these are permitted under the provisions of the Ministerial Order of 28 October and the protocols in force.

Swimming pools (with the exception of the recreational areas and subtropical swimming pools) and outdoor areas of sports infrastructures (e.g. football pitch) remain accessible. Outdoor sports are not allowed in groups larger than 4 people (coach included), in compliance with the social distancing rules.

Indoor horse arenas in equestrian centres and racecourses also remain open, however, this is for the sole purpose of animal welfare;

Canteens and drinking establishments must be closed.

The following minimum rules apply in sports infrastructures and facilities that remain open:

1. the operator or organiser must visibly inform its customers, employees and third parties in good time regarding the preventive measures in force and provide its staff with appropriate training;
2. a distance of 1.5 meters between each person must be ensured;
3. it is always strongly recommended to cover mouth and nose with a face mask and to wear other personal protective equipment inside the establishment and must be used if the rules of social distancing cannot be complied with, due to the nature of the activity performed; Nevertheless, it is mandatory to wear a face mask in those places where the Ministerial Order states that mouth and nose must be covered;
4. the activity must be organised in such a way so as to avoid gatherings;
5. the operator or organiser must provide staff and customers with the means to ensure the necessary hand hygiene;
6. the operator or organiser must take the appropriate hygiene measures to regularly disinfect the establishment and the material used;
7. the operator or organiser must ensure good ventilation.

### **Sports activities and training**

- Amateur athletes who are 13 or older can only train outdoors. They can use the outside areas of sports infrastructures (e.g. a football field or basketball court) to train together with a maximum of 4 people, subject to social distancing measures.
- Professional athletes can continue to train, both indoors and outdoors, but these sessions should take place without an audience;
- Children up to 12 years of age can do sports activities or camps, both indoors and outdoors, provided they take place:
  - with a maximum of 50 children;
  - in an organised context, more specifically in a club or an association;
  - in the context of an indoor sport activity or camp organised or authorised by the local authorities;
  - always in the presence of a trainer, coach or adult supervisor;
  - in the presence of not more than one household member per participant.
- Children up to the age of 12 may participate in school or extra-curricular sports activities of compulsory school education and according to the rules of the applicable protocol.

### **Sports competitions**

Professional sports competitions can only take place without spectators. Non-professional sporting competitions can only take place for participants up to the age of 12. These competitions may only be attended by one member of the participants' household.

If a sporting competition is organised on public roads, the prior authorisation of the competent municipal authority is required. Before submitting the application, the organiser must complete the online COVID Event Risk Model (CERM) application ([www.covideventriskmodel.be](http://www.covideventriskmodel.be)) and attach the obtained certificate to the application file for the competent municipal authority.

Canteens must be closed.

#### **9. Can non-professional sports training take place for participants older than 12?**

Yes, training for participants older than 12 can take place, but only outside or in a swimming pool. In this case, the general rules apply such as the ban on gatherings (a maximum of four people, not including children up to the age of 12) and the social distancing measures (a minimum distance of 1.5m between each participant, with the exception of members of the same household or 'cuddle' contacts). A trainer/coach forms part of this group of four people.

#### **10. Are skateparks open?**

Outdoor sports infrastructures such as skateparks can remain open. The ban on meetings must be respected.

#### **11. Can I go skiing?**

It is forbidden to open ski slopes, cross-country ski trails and ski centres.

### **CULTURE AND RECREATION**

Facilities (or parts of them) belonging to the cultural, festive and leisure sector are closed to the public. Casinos, amusement arcades, amusement parks, zoos, wellness centres, party and reception venues, indoor playgrounds, night clubs and dance halls, bowling alleys, fun fairs, cinemas, theatres and concert halls are therefore closed.

There are a few exceptions to this principle. Can remain open:

- outdoor playgrounds;
- the outdoor areas of animal parks, including entrances, exits, sanitary facilities and emergency buildings;
- museums;
- libraries, game and multimedia libraries;
- cultural sites (other than those described above), but only for:
  - groups of children up to the age of 12, as part of compulsory school or extracurricular activities;
  - courses and activities for children up to the age of 12;

In any case, the following 7 minimum rules must be respected in these establishments:

1. the operator or organiser must visibly inform its customers, employees and third parties in good time regarding the preventive measures in force and provide its staff with appropriate training;
2. a distance of 1.5 meters between each person must be ensured;

3. it is always strongly recommended to cover mouth and nose with a face mask and to wear other personal protective equipment inside the establishment and must be used if the rules of social distancing cannot be complied with, due to the nature of the activity performed; Nevertheless, it is mandatory to wear a face mask in those places where the Ministerial Order states that mouth and nose must be covered;
4. the activity must be organised in such a way so as to avoid gatherings;
5. the operator or organiser must provide staff and customers with the means to ensure the necessary hand hygiene;
6. the operator or organiser must take the appropriate hygiene measures to regularly disinfect the establishment and the material used;
7. the operator or organiser must ensure good ventilation.

## **12. Can I rehearse with my amateur theatre company, dance group, orchestra, choir, etc.?**

The only activities still allowed in the non-professional cultural and creative sector are those organised within the framework of camps and activities for children up to the age of 12, and within the framework of compulsory school or extra-curricular activities.

- activities in the context of camps must be organised in accordance with the rules set out in the "Youth" section below.
- school and extra-curricular activities follow the protocol in force for education;
- activities for children organised outside camps and compulsory education always take place
  - with a maximum of 50 children;
  - in an organised context, more specifically in a club or an association;
  - always in the presence of an adult trainer, coach or supervisor;

In addition, the above-mentioned 7 minimum rules must be respected.

## **13. Can professional artists (such as musicians, actors and comedians) rehearse, record, etc.?**

Teleworking is mandatory for all artists, unless this is not feasible. For activities where teleworking is not possible, compliance with social distancing measures must be guaranteed and a certificate must be provided by the employer.

## **14. Are cultural performances with an audience allowed?**

No, cultural performances with an audience are no longer permitted.

## **15. Can general meetings or other meetings of clubs or associations, as well as co-owner meetings take place?**

These meetings can no longer be held face-to-face. They must be postponed or carried out remotely (e.g. via video conference).

With regards co-owner meetings, an evolutionary interpretation of Section 577-6 of the Civil Code allows co-owners to participate remotely in the general meeting (e.g. via video link).

## **16. Can hunting continue?**

Hunting can continue, but according to the rules that apply to gatherings, i.e. a maximum of four people and with respect for social distancing rules.

However, this activity is subject to the curfew rules and, as a result, hunting is not allowed between midnight and 5am. An exception is made for wild boar to limit wild boar population growth.

## **EVENTS**

With the exception of sports competitions that are still allowed (see Sports section), all events are suspended.

### **17. Can a conference be organised?**

Conference rooms are currently not closed, however, as cultural events with an audience are currently suspended, conference rooms cannot, for example, be used for debates or gatherings with an audience.

On the other hand, conference rooms can be used as meeting rooms by companies, public services, etc. to organise professional meetings which cannot be organised remotely.

In addition, everyone is obliged to wear a face mask or any other fabric alternative in conference rooms.

### **18. When should the COVID Event Risk Model be used?**

This application must be used to take a decision relating to the organisation of activities authorised by Article 15 of the Ministerial Decree of 28 October 2020 (e.g. a demonstration or a professional sports competition or a non-professional sports competition for children up to the age of 12) concerning urgent measures to prevent the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

## **DEMONSTRATIONS**

Demonstrations on public roads are allowed with a maximum of 100 participants. For demonstrations, permission must always be requested from the competent municipal authority. Before submitting the application, the organiser fills in the online COVID Event Risk Model (CERM) application ([www.covideventriskmodel.be](http://www.covideventriskmodel.be)) and attaches the complete obtained certificate to the application file for the competent municipal authority.

In any case, the demonstrations must always be static and take place in a place where the safety distances can be respected. It is compulsory to wear a face mask in all situations where it is impossible to ensure compliance with social distancing rules.

## **FIREWORK**

The use of the following pyrotechnic articles is prohibited, both on private property and in public spaces:

- category F2, F3 and F4 fireworks as referred to in Article 5 of the Royal Decree of 20 October 2015 on making pyrotechnic articles available on the market;
- category T1 and T2 theatrical pyrotechnic articles as referred to in the aforementioned Royal Decree;
- other pyrotechnic articles of categories P1 and P2 as referred to in the aforementioned Royal Decree;

In addition, it is forbidden to use sound or carbide cannons.

## **RECEPTIONS AND BANQUETS**

Receptions and banquets, including funeral receptions, are prohibited.

## **YOUTH**

### **19. Can indoor play areas open?**

No, they have to close. Outdoor playgrounds remain open.

### **20. Are camps, courses and activities as well as activity clubs allowed?**

Camps, courses and activities without an overnight stay, as well as activity clubs, are permitted for children up to the age of 12, in accordance with the applicable protocol.

These camps, courses and activities may be organised for one or more groups of up to 50 children up to the age of 12, consisting of participants and supervisors. People gathering in the context of these camps, courses and activities must remain in the same group. Groups are not allowed to mix.

Where possible, the supervisors must comply with the social distancing rules, in particular keeping a distance of 1.5m between each person and covering their mouth and nose with a face mask or any other fabric alternative.

Specifically for the youth sector there are protocols that can be consulted via the following link: <https://ambrassade.be/nl/kennis/artikel/jeugdwerkregels-werkjaar>

### **MUNICIPAL SERVICES, WORSHIP SERVICES AND CEREMONIES**

Places of worship and buildings intended for the public practice of non-denominational moral services remain open.

A maximum of 15 people, excluding children up to the age of 12 as well as the civil registrar and the minister of religion, may attend the following activities in the buildings provided for this purpose:

- civil marriages;
- funerals and cremations without the possibility of the body being exposed;
- congregational worship and the collective practice of non-denominational moral services and of activities within a philosophical association.

The following minimum rules apply:

1. the operator or organiser must visibly inform those present and its employees in good time regarding the preventive measures in force and provide its staff with appropriate training;
2. a distance of 1.5 meters between each person must be ensured and one person per 10 m<sup>2</sup> is allowed;
3. it is mandatory to cover mouth and nose with a face mask and it is strongly recommended to wear other personal protective equipment;
4. the activity must be organised in such a way so as to avoid gatherings and to ensure that social distancing rules can be respected, in particular with regard to people waiting outside the establishment, in accordance with the directives issued by the competent authority;
5. the operator or organiser must provide staff and those present with the means to ensure the necessary hand hygiene;
6. the operator or organiser must take the appropriate hygiene measures to regularly disinfect the establishment and the material used;
7. the operator or organiser must ensure good ventilation;
8. physical contact between people is prohibited, except between members of the same household;
9. physical contact with objects by different people is prohibited.

### **21. What rules apply to funerals and cremations?**

These can take place but always with respect for the social distancing measures (1.5 meters between individuals) and with a maximum of 15 people (excluding children up to the age of 12), not including the minister of religions, and without the possibility of exposing the body.

The following minimum rules apply:

1. the operator or organiser must visibly inform those present and its employees in good time regarding the preventive measures in force and provide its staff with appropriate training;
2. a distance of 1.5 meters between each person must be ensured and one person per 10 m<sup>2</sup> is allowed;
3. it is mandatory to cover mouth and nose with a face mask and it is strongly recommended to wear other personal protective equipment;
4. the activity must be organised in such a way so as to avoid gatherings and to ensure that social distancing rules can be respected, in particular with regard to people waiting outside the establishment, in accordance with the directives issued by the competent authority;
5. the operator or organiser must provide staff and those present with the means to ensure the necessary hand hygiene;
6. the operator or organiser must take the appropriate hygiene measures to regularly disinfect the establishment and the material used;
7. the operator or organiser must ensure good ventilation;
8. physical contact between people is prohibited, except between members of the same household;
9. physical contact with objects by different people is prohibited.

Organising a light lunch after the ceremony is not permitted.

**22. Is it allowed to organise a ceremony somewhere else (for example, outdoors)?**

No. Ceremonies may only take place in buildings intended for this purpose.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

**Federal:**

- FPS Mobility:
  - [https://mobilit.belgium.be/nl/scheepvaart/covid\\_19\\_coronavirus](https://mobilit.belgium.be/nl/scheepvaart/covid_19_coronavirus)
  - [https://mobilit.belgium.be/nl/luchtvaart/drones/dronevluchten\\_covid19](https://mobilit.belgium.be/nl/luchtvaart/drones/dronevluchten_covid19)

**Regional:**

- Flemish Region:
  - 
  - <https://www.natuurenbos.be/wildbeheer>
  - <https://ovam.be/corona-impact#inzameling>
- Flemish Community:
  - <https://www.vlaanderen.be/musea-in-vlaanderen-en-brussel>
- Walloon Region:
  - <http://mobilite.wallonie.be/news/mesures-de-lutte-contre-le-covid-19>
  - <https://www.wallonie.be/fr/peche-et-chasse>
  - <http://environnement.wallonie.be>
- Wallonia-Brussels Federation:
  - <http://www.culture.be>
- Brussels Region:
  - <https://mobilite-mobiliteit.brussels/fr>
  - <https://www.arp-gan.be/fr/Recypark.html>
- German-Speaking Community:

- <https://www.ostbelgienlive.be/desktopdefault.aspx/tabid-327/>

## INTERNATIONAL

### GENERAL

COVID-19 has seriously disrupted international travel. When travelling, you must therefore take the following into account:

- Is travelling permitted?
- What travel-related measures are in place (forms, quarantine, testing)?

### IS TRAVELLING PERMITTED?

#### Travelling from Belgium abroad

Travelling is **strongly discouraged**. For those who do travel, the rules will be tightened. Anyone staying in a red zone for more than 48 hours is considered a high-risk contact.

However, entry into the country of destination also depends on the consent of the country in question. All the information for travellers is compiled on the website of the FPS Foreign Affairs on a map supplemented with travel advice for each country: <https://diplomatie.belgium.be/en>

The FPS Foreign Affairs uses colour codes on its home page to indicate whether travel to a particular country or zone is possible. On this website, you will find a map and a table, showing the same information, as well as detailed information about each country.

Below are the COVID-19 colours, based on information from CELEVAL and the FPS Public Health:

Select and click on a country or region. The corresponding measures appear.

Then click on the country name for detailed travel advice. Please consult this advice before and during your trip.

Travel advice is highly subject to change and travel to a destination may be discouraged at any time. If you are planning to make an essential journey abroad, it is highly recommended to consult the travel advice from Foreign Affairs, which is continually updated: [https://diplomatie.belgium.be/en/services/travelling\\_abroad/travel\\_advice\\_by\\_country](https://diplomatie.belgium.be/en/services/travelling_abroad/travel_advice_by_country)

People travelling abroad should be aware that new COVID-19 breeding grounds abroad can greatly affect their trip and that repatriation cannot be guaranteed if commercial flights are cancelled or borders closed.

#### Travelling to Belgium from abroad

*a. Do you have Belgian nationality or are you a citizen of the EU, the Schengen Area or the UK or resident in Belgium, the EU, the Schengen Area or a relative of any of the above-mentioned individuals?*

You may always travel or return to Belgium, regardless of the country of departure.

**Please note:** Brexit and COVID-19:

From 1 January, the UK is subject to the recommendations of the Council in terms of external travel restrictions, a system which only allows non-essential EU travel from a handful of non-EU countries. The countries currently on the exemption list generally have a very low number of COVID-19 cases, which is not the case in the UK. **Non-essential travel from the UK to Belgium is prohibited as from 01/01/21.** See question c. *“You do not have Belgian nationality but you are resident of a country outside the EU*

*and the Schengen Area and you are travelling to Belgium from countries **NOT** mentioned on the FPS Foreign Affairs website, including the UK?"*

*b. You do not have Belgian nationality but you are resident of a country outside the EU and the Schengen Area and you are travelling to Belgium from countries **mentioned** on the FPS Foreign Affairs website?*

It is possible to **travel from these countries to Belgium**. Please consult the list at: [https://diplomatie.belgium.be/en/services/travel to belgium](https://diplomatie.belgium.be/en/services/travel%20to%20belgium)  
The list is reviewed every two weeks and published thereafter.

*c. You do not have Belgian nationality but you are resident of a country outside the EU and the Schengen Area and you are travelling to Belgium from countries **NOT** mentioned on the FPS Foreign Affairs website, including the UK?*

**Non-essential travel from these countries to Belgium is prohibited**. Please consult the list at: [https://diplomatie.belgium.be/en/services/travel to belgium](https://diplomatie.belgium.be/en/services/travel%20to%20belgium)

The temporary travel restrictions do not apply to **key workers** or people travelling for **compelling reasons** such as **those** published on <https://dofi.ibz.be/sites/dvzoe/NL/Gidsvandeprocedures/Pages/Reizen%20naar%20Belgi%C3%AB.aspx>

These **specific conditions** are in addition to the normal conditions of access to Belgium. It is, for instance, important to always take into account which **visa procedures** are in force. For passengers requiring a visa to come to Belgium, it should be noted that, due to COVID-19, some visa procedures have not (yet) resumed in all places. Finally, passengers can only enter Belgium or the EU if they comply with **existing EU and national regulations**, which determine the conditions under which third-country nationals can enter the territory. This is independent of the specific restrictions or measures temporarily in place for public health reasons within the COVID-19 context.

For citizens of **countries not requiring a visa**, the following rules apply: the person must travel with an **essential journey certificate**. This certificate is issued by the competent Belgian embassy or consulate if it is proven that the journey is essential. An essential journey certificate is not mandatory if the essential nature of the journey is evidenced by the traveller's documents. For example: seamen (Seaman's Discharge Book), transit passengers (airline ticket) and diplomats (diplomatic passport). For more information about this procedure, please go to: <https://dofi.ibz.be/sites/dvzoe/EN/Pages/Travel-to-Belgium.aspx>

**Visiting a partner who does not live under the same roof** is considered an essential journey. However, it is **subject to a number of** additional conditions: prior to the application (citizens of countries requiring a visa) or the planned travel date (citizens of countries not requiring a visa), you must:

- either provide evidence of having lived together for 6 months in Belgium or another country;
- or provide evidence of having a relationship of at least 1 year during which the partners have seen each other physically at least twice and for a minimum duration of 20 days. If a visit had to be postponed due to the COVID-19 measures, providing evidence of a planned visit can count for the second visit;
- or have a child together.

The partner abroad must apply for a visa or proof of essential travel (if not subject to visa requirements) via the Belgian diplomatic post. Where possible, the diplomatic post will issue these visas or proofs. The file will be handed over to the immigration service should this not be the case.

## WHAT TRAVEL-RELATED MEASURES ARE IN PLACE?

### Measures when travelling from Belgium abroad

From a Belgian perspective, there are no measures in place for travelling abroad. However, some countries may adopt restrictive measures. It is therefore extremely important to check the travel advice for each country on the FPS Foreign Affairs website **before departure** in order to know the situation and the measures taken in the country of destination. See: <https://diplomatie.belgium.be/en>

What to do if the country of destination requests a negative COVID-19 test before entry into its territory?

- You can ask to be tested in a laboratory, but not in the test centres that collaborate with the federal platform (the government asks to avoid these preventive tests as much as possible). Laboratories have the possibility to refuse the analysis of the test in order to give priority to the mandatory testing. These tests (on a voluntary basis) are at your own expense.
- You can ask to be tested at Brussels Airport by registering in advance via "<https://www.brusselsairport.be/nl/passengers/the-impact-of-the-coronavirus/covid-19-test-centre-at-brussels-airport>" and by clicking on "Register here for a test without activation code".

### Measures when travelling to Belgium from abroad

The Belgian approach for people returning from abroad depends on whether they are returning from a red, orange or green zone. Depending on the country or region you are travelling from, different measures apply after your return to Belgium.

- **Red zones** are regions or countries where people are at a high risk of infection or which have been placed back into *lockdown* by the country in question. Upon your return, you must quarantine. If it appears that you were staying in a red zone upon your return, you will receive a text message after completion of the PLF. You must then quarantine and get tested. See below "*Which travellers should go into quarantine and undergo testing*"
- **Orange zones** are regions or countries for which a moderately elevated risk of infection has been identified. Upon your return, you must complete the PLF and the self-assessment.
- **Green zones** are regions or countries for which a low risk of infection has been identified. Upon your return, you must complete the PLF and the self-assessment. No further measures should be followed.

When returning from orange or green zones, there are no quarantine conditions upon arrival in Belgium.

The zones and measures are published on a map on the Foreign Affairs website: <https://diplomatie.belgium.be>.

- Please note: the colour on the map is the colour of the Belgian travel advice to that country. You must click on the region to see which return conditions apply.

The Coronalert app is available since 1 October. For more information, please go to: <https://coronalert.be/en/faq/>

### Negative Test non-residents arriving from a red zone

**Non-residents** from the age of 12 **must have a negative test result** as from 25 December 2020. The test should be conducted at the earliest 72 hours before departure to Belgian territory.

• **Exceptions:**

- People not travelling to Belgium via an air or sea carrier and who have been abroad for a maximum of 48 hours, or will remain in Belgium for a maximum of 48 hours, do not have to present a negative test result.
- Travellers who only transit by air and who only enter the transit zone without entering Belgian territory do not have to present a negative test result either.

In the event of an organised trip, the carrier is obliged to check that these passengers submit a negative test result before boarding the organised transport. In the absence of a negative test result, the carrier is obliged to refuse boarding.

Presenting a negative test result does **not constitute an** exception to the mandatory completion of the PLF and any further consequences, i.e. quarantine and a mandatory test on day 7 after arrival in Belgium.

**Please note:**

The document must be immediately available for inspection on paper or in electronic form.

This document must be drawn up in Dutch, French, German, or English.

The document drawn up by the passenger for the carrier or for the attention of intermediaries must specify the following:

- A **negative** test result.
- The date the sample was collected must be clearly indicated: the document is valid for 72 hours from that date.
- Only **PCR tests for SARS CoV-2** with PCR approval are accepted.
  - The rapid antigen test should be included in the following list: **Listes des tests antigéniques autorisés par les autorités françaises pour (...) - France in the United Kingdom - La France au Royaume-Uni (ambafrance.org)**
- The analysis must have been carried out in an official laboratory in the traveller's country of origin and certified by a physician or pharmacist-biologist (equivalent to the NIHDI).

**The following costs shall not be accepted:**

- RT-LAMP;
- Serological tests.

The test result must be checked before the carrier leaves the country of departure (when the carrier is not the passenger): if the document is not available, the passenger will not be admitted.

For people arriving in Belgium with their own vehicle, random checks may be carried out at the borders.

**The Passenger Locator Form (PLF)**

**A. When should I fill in a Passenger Locator Form (PLF)?**

**ALL travellers to Belgium**, regardless of the means of transport chosen, must complete the Passenger Locator Form no earlier than 48 hours before arriving in Belgium.

- Exception: People not travelling to Belgium via an air or sea carrier and who have been abroad for a maximum of 48 hours, or will remain in Belgium for a maximum of 48 hours, do not have to fill in a PLF.

A separate form must be completed for each passenger aged 16 years and over. The details of children under the age of 16 must be filled in on the form of an accompanying adult, if this is the case. If children under the age of 16 are travelling alone, they must also fill in a form.

It is mandatory to fill in the Passenger Locator Form completely and truthfully. Failure to complete this form may result in criminal prosecution, refusal of boarding by the carrier and refusal of entry into the territory.

## B. How should I fill in a Passenger Locator Form (PLF)?

The PLF should be completed **electronically** where possible. The form can be found here: <https://travel.info-coronavirus.be/>

- After the passenger has submitted the form, he/she will receive a **receipt with a QR code** via e-mail. Where applicable, the passenger must show this to the carrier on departure and at the border check on arrival.
- The electronic form contains a mandatory Coronavirus Infection Risk Self-Assessment Questionnaire. Based on the result, a text message will be sent with the measures to be taken.

If it is not possible for the passenger to use the electronic *Passenger Locator Form (e-PLF)*, a **paper version** of the Passenger Locator Form can be used. The PLF can be found here: [https://dofi.ibz.be/sites/dvzoe/FR/Documents/BELGIUM\\_PassengerLocatorForm.PDF](https://dofi.ibz.be/sites/dvzoe/FR/Documents/BELGIUM_PassengerLocatorForm.PDF)

Travellers must download, complete and sign this document before arriving in Belgium. You must be able to hand over the original to the enforcement authorities each time an inspection is carried out.

- Passengers travelling from a country within the Schengen Area will have to show their form and hand it over to the carrier when boarding.
- Passengers travelling from a country outside the Schengen Area must hand in their form upon arrival at the border control.
- People not travelling by plane or boat should submit the PLF within 12 hours of their arrival in Belgium. This can be done by e-mailing it to [PLFBelgium@health.fgov.be](mailto:PLFBelgium@health.fgov.be) or by copying the data from the paper version into the electronic version of the *Passenger Locator Form*.

If the information entered on the form changes within 14 days of arrival, you must report this preferably by filling in a new e-PLF via <https://travel.info-coronavirus.be/> with the complete and updated details. If you are using the paper version, please e-mail the modified version to [PLFBelgium@health.fgov.be](mailto:PLFBelgium@health.fgov.be).

## Which travellers should go into quarantine and undergo testing?

### A. Quarantine

**Travellers (both residents and non-residents) returning from a red zone**, who have been abroad for more than 48 hours and who will stay in Belgium for more than 48 hours, are considered "high-risk contacts". This means that **they must quarantine**.

This measure will be in force until at least 15 January, unless specified otherwise. Strict exemptions are allowable in only a limited number of cases:

(1) For people with critical roles in essential sectors, working on site may be permitted, subject to a certificate from the employer or self-employed person (in accordance with the decision of the Interministerial Conference on Public Health of 2 December 2020);

(2) Students are allowed to interrupt quarantine in order to take an exam (only to take the exam);

(3) For residents/travellers who were abroad for professional reasons, an exemption from quarantine is possible until 4 January, if it concerns professional travel abroad certified by the employer or self-employed person. Applying for a certificate is possible as from 1 January 2021.

**As from 4 January 2021, the assessment of the Passenger Locator Form will take into account professional travel certified by the employer when completing the self-assessment tool.**

Children under the age of 6 should not be tested, but they must respect quarantine.

For people who are considered to be high-risk contacts, the quarantine period **starts** on the day they leave the red zone, provided that it is clearly and objectively specified on the PLF. If not, quarantine will commence as soon as the traveller arrives in Belgium, after a stay in a red zone, unless stipulated otherwise by the treating physician/decreed of the federated entities.

For members of the public who return from a red zone abroad, this implies a quarantine **of** at least 7 days, followed by 7 days of being extra vigilant (i.e. 7 + 7).

- The specification of the applicable rules for each community/region can be found here:
  - Wallonia: [http://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/eli/decreet/2020/07/16/2020042369/staat\\_sblad](http://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/eli/decreet/2020/07/16/2020042369/staat_sblad)
  - Flanders: <http://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/cgi/api2.pl?lg=nl&pd=2020-07-13&numac=2020010414#top>
  - German-speaking Community: [http://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/cgi\\_loi/change\\_lg.pl?language=nl&la=N&cn=2020072014&table\\_name=wet](http://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/cgi_loi/change_lg.pl?language=nl&la=N&cn=2020072014&table_name=wet)
  - Brussels-Capital: [http://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/cgi\\_loi/loi\\_a1.pl?language=nl&la=N&table\\_name=wet&cn=%202007071968&&caller=list&N&fromtab=wet&tri=dd+AS+RANK&rech=1&numero=1&sql=\(text+contains+\(%27%27\)\)#top](http://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/cgi_loi/loi_a1.pl?language=nl&la=N&table_name=wet&cn=%202007071968&&caller=list&N&fromtab=wet&tri=dd+AS+RANK&rech=1&numero=1&sql=(text+contains+(%27%27))#top)

The **obligation** to go into quarantine can be **temporarily lifted in order to fulfil** an essential activity but only if this activity cannot be postponed.

- For example: a foreign student must stay in quarantine for two weeks before starting his/her studies, a person travelling to a funeral can attend the funeral, however, he/she must stay in quarantine for the remainder of his/her stay.
- During these activities, social distancing and other protective measures must be respected at all times.
- For any other reasons not linked to the essential activity or **essential travel**, quarantine must be respected.

For short-stay travel (less than 48 hours) in Belgium or abroad, please tick the relevant box on the *Passenger Locator Form* and no text message will be sent. In this case, quarantine is not mandatory.

## B. Test

**Residents returning from a red zone after a stay of more than 48 hours must undergo a mandatory test on day 1 and day 7 of quarantine. Non-residents returning from a red zone after a stay of more than 48 hours must undergo a mandatory test on day 7 of quarantine.**

- Exception: People not travelling to Belgium via an air or sea carrier and who have been abroad for a maximum of 48 hours, or will remain in Belgium for a maximum of 48 hours, do not have to fill in a PLF and therefore do not have to get tested.

They will receive a text message upon their return with which they can register at a test centre where the sampling for a PCR test will be done. To this end, they can make an appointment via the appointment tool which can be found on [mijngezondheid.belgie.be](https://mijngezondheid.belgie.be).

- If **the test** is positive, the high-risk contact will be placed in isolation for at least 7 days from the day the test was taken.
- If a resident tests negative on day 1, they will receive a new invitation via text message on day 5 in order to be tested again on day 7. Despite the negative test on day 1, quarantine must be respected.
- If the test is negative **on day 7**, the high-risk contact can come out of quarantine, but we stress the importance of being extra vigilant up to a total of 14 days from the day of the last high-risk contact (taking into account applicable exceptions for care workers).

Children under the age of 6 should not be tested, but they must respect quarantine.

If no test is taken (e.g. child under 6 years of age), or if the test result is not available in time, asymptomatic high-risk contacts can come out of quarantine after 10 days, commencing the day of the last high-risk contact. This quarantine must then be followed by a period of 4 days of being extra vigilant.

### What does 'quarantine' mean?

**Quarantine** means staying indoors (including garden or terrace) in a single place, which must be specified in advance via the *Passenger Locator Form*. This can be a private address (with family or with friends), or another place to stay, such as a hotel. If the person falls ill, all members of the same household are close contacts.

During this period, **contact with other people, including people in the same house, must be completely avoided (always keep a distance of 1.5m).**

- Towels, bed linen and eating or drinking utensils should not be shared with the other members of the same household and, if possible, the person should use a separate toilet and bathroom.
- Quarantine in an environment with people at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19 is not recommended (e.g. people older than 65, people with a serious underlying medical condition such as severe heart, lung or kidney disease, people with decreased immunity).
- No visits are allowed.
- Working and going to school is not allowed, with the exclusion of the exceptions mentioned below. Teleworking is permitted.
- For all journeys (from the time of arrival in Belgium) the use of public transport must be avoided.
- The health situation must be closely monitored. If symptoms of COVID-19 appear, the local GP must be contacted immediately. If symptoms of COVID-19 appear, you must self-isolate and contact your local GP immediately.

- It is mandatory to be reachable and cooperate with the health authorities throughout the quarantine period.
- **Going outside is only allowed** for the following essential activities, as long as particular attention is paid to social distancing and hygienic measures and a (fabric) face mask is worn:
  - Urgent medical attention;
  - Purchase of basic necessities, such as food and medicines, but only if no one else can provide them and by exception;
  - Settling urgent legal/financial issues;

#### Quarantine versus isolation: the difference

If you are required to go into **isolation**, it is for a period of **7 days**. That's what happens when you're ill or have tested positive.

The obligation of self-isolation is waived when the following 3 conditions are met:

- not earlier than 7 days after the onset of symptoms and
- at least 3 days without a temperature and
- an improvement of respiratory symptoms.
- Additional measures to be taken in case of self-isolation:
  - Wear a face mask at home to protect your housemates
  - Stay as much as possible in a well-ventilated separate room to control the spread of the virus
  - Ask others for help with your shopping
  - You do not have to wait to be contacted by the call centre for contact tracing, instead you can contact them yourself.

#### What happens if the travel advice is ignored? What about travel insurance if these people fall ill while travelling?

The general terms and conditions of a specific travel insurance policy determine the cases in which the travel insurance intervenes. If you ignore the advice not to travel and fall ill at your holiday destination, the general terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy will stipulate whether there will be cover for medical and/or repatriation costs. In the majority of the cases, there will be no cover. With regard to hospitalisation insurance, the general terms and conditions will also specify the conditions under which the hospitalisation insurer intervenes abroad.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **FPS Foreign Affairs:**

<https://diplomatie.belgium.be/nl>

### **FPS Mobility:**

- [https://mobilit.belgium.be/nl/luchtvaart/covid\\_19\\_coronavirus](https://mobilit.belgium.be/nl/luchtvaart/covid_19_coronavirus)
- [https://mobilit.belgium.be/nl/wegverkeer/covid\\_19\\_coronavirus](https://mobilit.belgium.be/nl/wegverkeer/covid_19_coronavirus)

[https://mobilit.belgium.be/nl/scheepvaart/covid\\_19\\_coronavirus](https://mobilit.belgium.be/nl/scheepvaart/covid_19_coronavirus)