



Government of the Netherlands

Partial lockdown continues to apply during festive season

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Please note: this news item was published on 8 december. Read more about the [current approach to tackling coronavirus in the Netherlands](#).

The COVID-19 infection rate is still too high, as is the pressure on the healthcare sector. On average, 24 people are being admitted to intensive care units every day. So we have no choice but to prolong the partial lockdown, even during the festive season. We all wish it were different, but the virus does not allow us to drop our guard. By keeping enough distance and reducing our contact with others, we can protect ourselves and each other.

This means you can receive no more than three visitors a day at home. Restaurants, cafés and bars will remain closed. Adults must stay 1.5 metres apart when doing sports. Everyone is urgently advised to work at home if at all possible. All non-essential travel to other countries should be avoided.

Holiday celebrations

We will have to celebrate the holidays at home with only limited company. But people can still get together in creative or innovative ways, for instance by having a virtual dinner or spreading visits over several days.

It is extra important that everyone keeps following the basic rules during the festive season. This means staying 1.5 metres away from people who do not live with you – even at the dinner table and during celebrations. Hold your festivities in the largest possible space so that it's easier to maintain a safe distance. Wash your hands often, including when you arrive somewhere and before eating. And if you have symptoms, no matter how mild, stay at home and get tested. Do not go out and do not receive visitors. If you are infected, ask other people to do your shopping and other errands for you.

Following the basic rules is also important in the run-up to the holidays. Plan what you need to buy beforehand, shop in the mornings or on weekdays, and go alone. Local authorities and shop managers are taking measures to prevent crowds and help people comply with the rules.

Changes to measures

As of today, 8 December 2020, an orange travel advisory applies to Curaçao because of an increase in coronavirus infections there. This means people are advised not to travel to Curaçao. Anyone arriving in the Netherlands from Curaçao must self-quarantine immediately.

From Thursday 17 December 2020, elite athletes in top-level competitions will be able to resume training and competition. Competing at national level is important in order for them to keep up with their international competitors. The distancing rule and the group limit of 4 people do not apply to elite athletes during their sports activities. During training or competition they are also allowed to be in an indoor space with more than 30 people. Training and competition were already permitted for footballers in the Eredivisie and Eerste Divisie football leagues and elite athletes with a status at designated locations.

Looking ahead

The government is looking at ways of opening up society a bit more in the new year. From the middle of January the government wants to carry out a number of controlled trials with spectators at sports matches, larger audiences in theatres, and more participants at business conferences. The goal is to find out how these events can be organised safely as soon as the situation allows.

Vaccination

The government has made a provisional schedule, setting out which groups will receive which type of vaccine, and where vaccination centres will be set up. The first group to be called up for vaccination will be care professionals working at nursing homes. They will be able to get the vaccine at around 30 centres to be set up across the country by the municipal health service (GGD). The next group will be care professionals working in disability care homes and home care staff. At around the same time, a vaccination drive will be launched for residents of nursing homes and care homes for people with intellectual disabilities, allowing them to get the vaccine in their own care home. Everyone involved in setting up the vaccination programme is working hard so that vaccination can begin at the earliest possible date in January 2021.

Support measures and looking out for each other

The pandemic and the control measures have an enormous impact on society and on parts of the economy. That's why the government has a comprehensive recovery and support package in place for businesses and employees. The ministers of Economic Affairs & Climate Policy, Social Affairs & Employment, and Finance will provide more information on the latest changes to the support package tomorrow (9 December).

It is extra important during this festive season that we look out for each other. And that we make an extra effort to reach out to people who are lonely or who are having trouble coping, for instance by giving them a call, visiting them or sending a card. The public awareness campaign 'Aandacht voor elkaar' shares

information about initiatives across the country in order to inspire people to do something special for those around them. Go to www.aandachtvoorelkaar.nl for more information (in Dutch only).

See also

- › Coronavirus COVID-19
Topic

Ministry responsible

- › Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport
- › Ministry of Justice and Security