

Guidance Sought on Public health measures in place right now

Additional Questions, Answers and Clarifications received *Previous questions and responses can be found [HERE](#).*

The reference to 'we' throughout this document relates to the Dept. of Tourism and Fáilte Ireland.

Q.76 Can pre-match meals for sports teams be accommodated provided the Covid-19 guidelines from the relevant sporting authority are followed? (e.g. as was the case with Q. 73)

[Response from DTTAS *] *At the outset just to say that our focus is on the training and competitive arrangements for sport and we have to comply with public health guidelines and limits on gathering sizes indoors and outdoors which have been set by the public health authorities. As independent, autonomous organisations, the sporting bodies develop their own protocols for training and competition, with advice from Sport Ireland and the Expert Group on Return to Sport.*

For international teams and athletes, we have published guidelines to our website:

<https://assets.gov.ie/86267/8a1a9675-9e01-4f3b-b3ac-4a3230b4891a.pdf>

On the subjects of domestic travel and meals for sports teams, at every stage we have been encouraging sports to minimise social contact adjacent to sporting activity by, e.g. not permitting access to changing rooms, recommending against shared transport etc. As part of this, the protocols developed by the sports would seek to minimise group travel and team meals insofar as is possible, and this would in line with our guidance to the sector.

***the IHF are sought clarification as to whether this information was still current or if it has been superseded by new guidance since the 5-Level Plan for living with Covid-19 was introduced.**

RESPONSE: *We can confirm that the guidance on international travel is unchanged in the current situation.*

As per the Resilience and Recovery Plan, exemptions from the public health restrictions apply in respect of elite/high performance athletes and teams, as well as professional sportspeople. The below is our current advice in this regard:

“High Performance is defined by Sport Ireland as covering those who are:

- *Professional Sports People or Sports people who participate within professional competition.*
- *A Member of a high performance team funded by Sport Ireland.*
- *Those who compete at major international events including European and World Champions, Olympic and Paralympic Games. Specifically, the athletes and players associated with the below list:*
 - *Athletes on the 2020 International Carding Scheme*
 - *Players on the 2020 Team Ireland Golf Scheme*
 - *Senior riders in Show-Jumping, Eventing & Dressage*
 - *Senior team players in Hockey, Cricket, and Rugby Sevens.”*

Q.80 We have received a query from a hotel which deals with many sporting groups, both Domestic and International. They would like to check if they can have an exempt status to accept these sporting groups. All the necessary government guidelines and precautions are in place along with the UEFA, IRFU and public health guidelines. Currently they have the Monaghan GAA team, IRFU and Football Association of Wales wanting to stay in October. Would it be possible to get confirmation from the Department of Health on this?

See response to Q.76*

Q.85 Under the above government measures it states that up to 50 people are permitted to attend a wedding. Does this now replace the previous measures under which employees were counted as part of the total number, therefore 50 guests plus staff are now permitted? Per S.I. No. 352 of 2020 can you confirm that calculation of guests attending a wedding no longer includes staff?

Fáilte Ireland & the Department of Tourism have confirmed that, as per Statutory Instrument 352 of 2020, those present in a professional capacity, such as staff, are not counted in the numbers for weddings. At Level 2 a hotel can facilitate a wedding with up to 50 guests in attendance. Previously it did include staff in the total numbers permitted to attend an event, but has since been amended.

Q.88 The guidelines no longer restrict the sale of alcohol to 11.30, can you confirm that this has been removed as a requirement?

A closing time of 11.30pm applies to all licenced premises serving alcohol for consumption on the premises, including hotel bars. This is a penal provision, contained in the Health Act 1947 (Section 31A – Temporary Restrictions)(COVID-19)(No.45) Regulations 2020 and remains in effect.

Regulation 10 of the Health Act 1947 (Section 31A – Temporary Restrictions)(COVID-19)(No.5) Regulations 2020 [SI 352] which was inserted by the Health Act 1947 (Section 31A – Temporary Restrictions)(COVID-19)(No.5)(Amendment) Regulations 2020 [SI 353] provides that all premises that serve intoxicating liquor for consumption on the premises shall not do so after 11:30 p.m.

[Received when only Dublin was at Level 3]

Regulation 19 and Schedule 2 Paragraph 16 of SI 352 applies the arrangements to Dublin – on-license (incl. hotels) premises are allowed to serve up to 15 persons outdoors; hotels can provide service to residents indoors; but all licensed premises are subject to the 11:30 p.m. closing time.

The 11:30 p.m. closing also applies to weddings.

Q.90 [Under Level 3 restrictions] A hotelier has received an enquiry for the use of a meeting room for up to 6 people to view a video link live from a court case that is ongoing at the moment. The original venue has revised the number of people which they can cater for. The hotelier understands that at present, under Level 3 restrictions, meetings and non-social events should not take place however does this apply to legal proceedings? Can the hotel facilitate this booking?

It can proceed if it is a legal request from the Courts and all physical distancing including pods of a maximum of 6 and all other guidance as outlined in the Hotel and Guesthouse guidelines (meetings section) are adhered to.

Q.91 For properties with Self-Catering accommodation on site:

Can they take a booking for a 3 bedroom self-catering house if it is known that the individuals booking the accommodation are from more than 3 households (e.g. 6 households)?

There is currently no specific advice for self-catering properties however Government public health advice states in level 2 states that Outside private homes the maximum is 6 people indoors and 15 outdoors from 1,2 or 3 households (to be determined by prevailing Public

Health Advice). In level 3 no social/family gatherings should take place. www.gov.ie

All businesses must ensure that they take every precaution possible to avoid the spread of the virus.

Q.92 Under Level 3 restrictions are there any Non-social meetings, training, and education meetings which can be facilitated? Hoteliers have received queries for training courses, health & safety courses, exams, etc., from the likes of NUA Healthcare, Driver CPC training, Aldi Ireland, ESB and others who have

told them that their courses are 'essential'.

The guidance from Government states that 'No organised indoor gatherings should take place', however there may be a limited exception to essential work related meetings which may be accommodated once the business confirms with the organising body that the meeting is required for essential work/education purposes. It is essential each business must ensure that they confirm all of the relevant details with the organisation booking the essential service. The guidelines for meetings must be adhered to e.g. pods of six, flow, etc.

[13.10.2020] In line with guidance relating to the current Level 3 restrictions, stronger messaging is now required – especially given the penal provisions in the current Regulations.

The first consideration for any organiser, therefore, should be establishing whether on-site, in person meeting/training is essential – or whether it could instead be accommodated on-line or otherwise remotely. If it must be on-site and in person, the next consideration is whether or not it is essential at present. If it can be postponed, then Government guidance would be that it should be postponed. In addition to the organiser's responsibility, the hotels or any other tourism/hospitality establishment approached about such bookings would be reasonably expected to conduct appropriate due diligence and satisfy themselves that the event in question is essential...and that it is essential NOW. If the organiser maintains that the event in question is essential now/imminently, the hotel or other premises offering meeting facilities should expect to be shown proof of some sort of legal or regulatory underpinning.

Should it be established to the satisfaction of the hotel that the event in question is essential now, then the advice set out in "Section 18: Meetings and Events" of Fáilte Ireland's guidelines for hotels and guesthouses should be followed in the main...but with one important stipulation to respect regarding maximum numbers permitted. Notwithstanding the fact that a) numbers should be kept to an absolute minimum; and b) seating capacity and floor plan will depend on the space available to ensure required 2m physical distancing is in operation, we believe that no more than 25 people (including trainers/facilitators) would be permitted. This is in line with max. numbers permitted at the only other indoor gathering permitted under Level 3 – i.e. weddings, where 25 guests max. are permitted.

Q.93 Weddings: Are the bridal couple included in the number of guests permitted? E.G. At level three it states that up to 25 guests are permitted to attend ceremony and reception. Does this mean 25 guests are permitted and that the Bride and Groom and Staff are not included in these numbers?

Yes, the bridal couple are part of the group of 25, but staff are not included.

Q.94 REF Elite sports teams. What is the situation for inter county teams which are considered to be elite? Do visiting teams have to stay to be fed? What about the local team?

If the team can assure the hotel that their travel to the county is in line with Government regulations in relation to sports events ([link](#)) then there should not be an issue providing accommodation – but from an optics/reputational point of view, the hotel might consider whether this accommodation is essential for the match. Only people staying in the hotel, can be provided indoor restaurant/dining services within the hotel.

Q.95 A Hotel has been asked if they can facilitate a pre-match meal for a League of Ireland Premier Division FC (c.35 pax). Is this a service they can provide?

[13.10.2020] Bars, cafés & restaurants (including hotel restaurants/bars) – clarification of position applying to requests for food/meal stops for essential travelers (e.g. professional or elite sports teams) We had previously understood that bookings for food/meal stops for essential travelers such as professional or elite sport teams were permitted (given the exemptions applying to professional/elite/inter-county/club championship/horse-racing matches and events). However, this is not the case under Level 3 restrictions (no matter the physical distancing/hygiene/other health and safety measures in place). With regard to on-site dining in bars, cafés and restaurants (including for non-residents in hotel restaurants/bars), the current Level 3 restrictions only permit outdoor

dining/service and to an absolute maximum of 15 people. The only other permitted service is indoors for residents only, or else take-away and delivery service.