



Government of the Netherlands

Lockdown in order to minimise contact between people

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Please note: this news item was published on 3 November. Read more about [the current approach to tackling coronavirus in the Netherlands](#).

Coronavirus is once again spreading rapidly. In recent weeks, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of infections, with figures up to around 9,000 per day. The number of patients with COVID-19 in hospitals and care homes is also rising. That has an impact on healthcare in general; more than one million routine hospital procedures have had to be postponed. Unfortunately, it is not always possible to trace the source of an infection. But one thing is clear: the more people a person comes into contact with, the greater their chance of being infected. In order to ensure normal healthcare services can continue, we must take action and limit our contact with other people as much as possible. This is why the Netherlands will go into its strictest lockdown yet from 15 December until at least Tuesday 19 January.

Lees het [nieuwsbericht 'Lockdown om contacten tot een minimum te beperken' in het Nederlands](#).

Venues such as museums, theatres, amusement parks, zoos, casinos, saunas, indoor sporting venues, and establishments serving food and drink (including in hotels) will be closed throughout this period. Shops such as clothing stores, shoe shops, jewellery shops and shops selling craft supplies will also be closed. The government's aim in this regard is to limit contact between people as much as possible. Supermarkets, bakeries, butchers and other shops where food is sold can remain open, as can establishments such as pharmacies, chemists and petrol stations. People working in non-medical contact-based professions, including hairdressers, nail stylists and tattooists, cannot carry out their work. Only people in medical and paramedical contact-based professions can continue to carry out their work.

Primary and secondary schools, schools for secondary vocation education (MBO) and higher education institutions (universities and HBO) will deliver teaching online in order to reduce in-person contact. They may make exceptions for those sitting exams and interim exams this academic year, as well as for practical training and to support vulnerable pupils and students. Childcare centres will also be closed. Primary schools and childcare centres will remain open for children whose parents work in critical sectors. In order

to allow enough time to make preparations, the measures for schools, educational institutions and childcare centres will apply from Wednesday 16 December. They will be in place until Sunday 17 January.

Stay at home

Stay at home as much as possible, including during the festive season. We know that this is an effective way of reducing infection rates. Coming into contact with fewer people reduces the risk of infection and makes it harder for coronavirus to spread.

People should therefore continue to work from home, unless it is absolutely necessary that they go into work. The government is also advising people to receive no more than 2 people aged 13 or over at home per day. There is an exception to this on 24, 25 and 26 December: then, up to 3 people can visit, excluding children under 13. Outside, the maximum group size is 2 people, including during the festive period. Do not travel and do not book any trips until mid-March, unless strictly necessary. Adults can exercise alone or with one other person, and only outside, maintaining a distance of 1.5 metres from each other. Children aged 17 and under may take part in team sports, including matches with teams within their own club, but only outdoors.

The basic rules remain the same. Everyone must stay 1.5 metres apart from people they do not live with. 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.

It is important that we all follow the rules closely. That way, we'll be working together to ensure the lockdown is over as quickly as possible. On 12 January the government will assess which measures will still be required after 19 January to combat the spread of the virus.

Resilience

In the coming weeks we will again have to be resilient, as was the case earlier this year. A lockdown has a major impact on society and the economy. That is why the government has a comprehensive recovery and support package in place for businesses and employees. It is designed to be responsive to changing needs. Higher losses in turnover will trigger extra support.

Now more than ever, it is important that we look out for each other, because these measures will have a far-reaching impact on us all. But surveys show that they have the backing of most people. And just as we did in spring this year, we will try, despite the measures, to look out for the people around us, even if we have to do so remotely or digitally.

Overview of measures

From Tuesday 15 December to 19 January inclusive:

Only go outdoors alone, with members of your household or in a group of no more than 2 people.

You should receive no more than 2 visitors aged 13 or over to your home per day.

A number of locations will be closed:

Shops (except those selling essentials like foods)

Locations where contact-based professions are carried out, such as hairdressers, nail salons and sex establishments

Theatres, concert halls, cinemas, casinos, etc.

Zoos, amusement parks, etc.

Indoor sporting venues such as gyms, swimming pools, saunas, spas, etc.

Restaurants, bars and cafés

Hotels will be open, but hotel restaurants will be closed and room service will be unavailable.

You are strongly advised to work from home.

Adults may take part in sports activities on their own or with one other person, but only outdoors.

Children aged 17 and under may take part in team sports and play matches against children at the same club, but only outdoors.

Public transport is for essential travel only.

Do not book any foreign travel until mid-March at the earliest and do not travel abroad.

The only contact-based professions that can continue are those of a medical and paramedical nature.

From 16 December to at least 17 January inclusive, educational institutions will mainly be providing remote teaching. In secondary education, the following activities may continue on location: practical training, lessons for students with upcoming examinations, and school exams in the year of final examinations or the year before. Examinations, interim examinations and practical training may go ahead in secondary vocational education (MBO), higher professional education (HBO) and university education (WO). In all forms of education, an exception can be made when it comes to supporting vulnerable pupils and students. Childcare and out-of-school care establishments will be closed during this period.

Emergency childcare will be available for children whose parents [work in critical sectors](#). This will be provided at primary schools or at establishments providing childcare or out-of-school care.

There are some exceptions to the measures above:

On 24, 25 and 26 December you may receive 3 visitors aged 13 or over at home.

Healthcare must remain as accessible as possible. Medical and paramedical professionals may continue their work.

Shops that sell mainly foodstuffs, chemists, pharmacies, opticians, hearing specialists, and stores that carry out repairs and maintenance may remain open. DIY stores may operate on a 'click and collect' basis.

Service points for sending and receiving parcels will remain open.

Locations providing business services (banks, mortgage lenders and estate agents) will stay open. Town halls will still be open to provide services to the public. Courts of law and other government locations will remain open.

It will still be possible to borrow books from libraries.

Community centres will stay open to provide services to vulnerable people.

Elite athletes in top-level competitions may train and play matches.

See also

› [Coronavirus COVID-19](#)

Topic

Ministry responsible

› [Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport](#)

› [Ministry of Justice and Security](#)

› [Ministry of General Affairs](#)