

Local general guidelines are issued in order to prevent the spread of infection

From 19 October, the Public Health Agency of Sweden may decide on [general guidelines in the event of local outbreaks of COVID-19 \(HSLF-FS 2020:50\)](#) (in Swedish). Any such local guidelines, should it be decided to issue them, apply in addition to the guidelines already issued for the country as a whole.

In the event of local outbreaks of COVID-19, the Public Health Agency of Sweden, in consultation with the county medical officer, shall decide whether one or more of the general guidelines should apply.

It is the country's regional authorities that bear the ultimate responsibility for communicable disease control in their region. [On krisinformation.se you can see what guidelines currently apply in various regions](#) (in Swedish). You can also visit your region's website for information about the guidelines and recommendations that apply where you live.

Guidelines may apply to an entire region or more locally. The purpose of these targeted measures is to limit local outbreaks of COVID-19. Guidelines apply for a limited period and may be extended as and when necessary.

Other regulations apply to whether or not schools should conduct distance teaching. Separate regulations also apply to the responsibility of serving establishments such as restaurants and cafés to reduce the spread of infection.

This is what the general guidelines for local outbreaks mean

The guidelines are based on the duty, according to the Swedish Communicable Diseases Act, of each and every citizen to take whatever action they can to protect one another from the risk of being infected with COVID-19.

1. Avoid travelling on public transport such as buses, trams or the Metro

The aim is to ensure that, as far as possible, everyone avoids public transport. Instead, it is better to bicycle, take your own car or walk. Carpooling may be an alternative if you travel with people you meet often and in close proximity. This guideline is not intended to prevent you from, for example, getting to work, studies or other occupations or receiving care that requires your attendance at a healthcare facility. That said, even in such situations every effort should be made to avoid travelling during the rush hour and journeys should be planned to allow you to choose a different departure if your bus or train is crowded. If a journey is unavoidable, it is important that you maintain social distancing and do not sit next to anyone.

2. Refrain from unnecessary journeys both within and outside your region or district

Travel within or between regions can contribute to increasing the spread of infection as you will often meet new people, possibly starting new chains of infection. As far as possible, you should therefore refrain from any such journeys. This guideline is not intended to prevent you from, for example, getting to work, studies or other occupations or receiving care that requires your attendance at a healthcare facility. If a journey is unavoidable, it is important that it is made in a manner that presents the least possible risk of infection, by maintaining social distance and avoiding new contacts.

3. Refrain from visiting people in at-risk groups and those who live in care homes for older people

At-risk groups and those who live in care homes for older people are the groups most likely to suffer serious illness due to a COVID-19 infection. [Information about at-risk groups is available here](#). This guideline means that you should refrain from visiting these individuals. This guideline primarily focuses on care homes for older people. It is however always important to be cautious when visiting anyone at risk of serious illness, regardless of the context in which the visit takes place.

For the purposes of the general guidelines, a *visit* primarily refers to socialising. This guideline does not therefore relate to visits by healthcare workers, home care services, personal assistants or similar necessary visits.

4. Avoid indoor environments where people are likely to gather; for example, shops, shopping centres, museums, libraries, public baths and gyms. Exceptions to this rule are visits to the grocery store, pharmacy, etc.

You should avoid spending more time than is absolutely necessary indoors with people that you do not normally meet. Outdoor environments are not covered by this guideline, nor are necessary errands such as buying food or medicine or taking medically motivated exercise in public baths or gyms. It is however important to plan any such visits for times when the risk of crowding is low and, if you do exercise, to avoid changing rooms.

5. Refrain from participating in activities such as meetings, concerts, performances, sports training or matches and competitions. This guideline does not however apply to training for children and young people of compulsory school age.

You should avoid events where many people are likely to gather at the same time, whether indoors or outdoors; for example, concerts, theatres, cinemas and other performances, religious services and celebrations. Not only does the risk of infection increase in these situations, but it is also risky to travel to and from such events.

Sport is important for children and young people and as this group in general is not as seriously affected by this infection, they may continue to attend training sessions for their sport. That said, it remains important to avoid unnecessary physical contact and the sharing of water bottles and equipment such as ice hockey pads. It is also a good idea for accompanying adults to simply drop off and collect the child rather than risking any new contacts.

Matches and competitions should not be held, whether for children or adults, as these generally involve meeting new people and it may prove difficult to refrain from participating even if one has symptoms.

Matches and competitions include cups, leagues and other competitive events.

Participation in professional sport is not covered by this guideline.

6. Refrain from visiting serving establishments such as bars, restaurants and cafés

This guideline applies to individual customers rather than businesses, which are covered by separate regulations.

This guideline does not cover take-away establishments, only extended visits to serving establishments.

7. Avoid physical contact with people other than those you live with

This guideline tightens the requirement to maintain social distancing from people other than those you live with. For the purposes of the guidelines, *physical contact* refers to meeting people at a distance of 1 to 1.5 metres when the meeting itself (the contact) lasts for longer than 15 minutes. This type of physical contact should be completely avoided.

You should also refrain from certain kinds of activity that cannot be performed while physically distanced from others. This may refer to: certain sporting activities, such as contact sports like wrestling, ice hockey and basketball; private events such as parties, weddings, dinner parties and after-work events; health and beauty treatments that are not medically justified, such as massages, pedicures, haircuts, etc.

Businesses and workplaces will also be required to act in the event of local outbreaks

In the event of a local outbreak of COVID-19, businesses (those affected by points 1-7 above) and workplaces in the affected region or district will be required to take measures to prevent the spread of infection. Local general guidelines aimed at workplaces and businesses will consist of examples of measures that may make it easier for people to maintain social distancing and avoid infection. Which of these measures can be applied is decided by the person responsible for the business/workplace in question.

Here are a few examples of measures:

- A business may be able to adjust or increase its opening hours to reduce the risk of infection.
- The business may have systems that show when the risk of infection is greatest or when people should avoid visiting its premises.

- The business may provide information regarding how many people can gather on its premises at any given time.
- The business may attempt to steer its visitors towards times when there is less congestion or offer digital alternatives.
- The business should provide information regarding when it is inappropriate, unless absolutely necessary, for an entire family or other group of people to visit its premises. It may even be possible to offer outdoor activities for accompanying children.

Workplaces have been especially highlighted in the general guidelines, as a large proportion of those contracting COVID-19 have been infected at work. The most important measures a workplace can take are to encourage working from home or to introduce flexible working hours so that staff can avoid using public transport during the rush hour for the duration of the local general guidelines.

Please note that schools are regulated by a separate ordinance.