

Shielding FAQs for the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable

Contents	Page number
1. General Overview	1
2. Support Available	7
3. Employment	10
4. Housing	12
5. Food	13
6. Health and Wellbeing	17
7. Financial Matters and Concerns	22
8. Education	22

1. GENERAL OVERVIEW

What is 'shielding'?

What is 'shielding' and where can I find more information?

- People classed as clinically extremely vulnerable are advised to take additional action to prevent themselves from coming into contact with the virus. If you're clinically extremely vulnerable, you're strongly advised to stay at home as much as possible and keep visits outside to a minimum (for instance once per day). This is called 'shielding'

The Government is currently advising people to shield until 30 June 2020 and is regularly monitoring this position.

This guidance is still advisory. You will not be fined or sanctioned if you prefer to follow the guidance on staying alert and safe (social distancing). You may also choose to remain in your own home at all times if you do not feel comfortable with any form of contact with others. However, careful time outside in the fresh air is likely to make you feel better in yourself.

We know this is challenging guidance to follow, which is why we have a support scheme in place to provide help with access to food and basic supplies, care, medicines and social support.

We are keeping the [guidance to shielded people](#) under review.

Why have I received this letter or text telling me to shield?

You have received the letter or text because you have been identified as being at a very high risk of needing hospital treatment if you were to get Covid 19 because you have a serious underlying health condition. We are advising all people who are clinically extremely vulnerable to take additional precautions to protect themselves

<p>Who has been asked to shield?</p>	<p>Expert doctors in England have identified specific medical conditions that, based on what we know about the virus so far, place some people at greatest risk of severe illness from coronavirus. Disease severity, history or treatment levels will also affect who is in this group.</p> <p>Clinically extremely vulnerable people may include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Solid organ transplant recipients. 2. People with specific cancers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ people with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy ○ people with lung cancer who are undergoing radical radiotherapy ○ people with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment ○ people having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer ○ people having other targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors ○ people who have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months, or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs 3. People with severe respiratory conditions including all cystic fibrosis, severe asthma and severe chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). 4. People with rare diseases that significantly increase the risk of infections (such as severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID), homozygous sickle cell). 5. People on immunosuppression therapies sufficient to significantly increase risk of infection. 6. Women who are pregnant with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired. 7. Other people have also been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable, based on clinical judgement and an assessment of their needs. GPs and hospital clinicians have been provided with guidance to support these decisions. <p>More information about who has been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable is available on the NHS Digital website. If you're still concerned, you should discuss your concerns with your GP or hospital clinician.</p>
<p><u>What is the current advice to people shielding and why did it change?</u></p>	
<p>What is the current advice to people shielding?</p>	<p>The advice was updated on 31 May 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you wish to spend time outdoors (though not in other buildings, households, or enclosed spaces) you

	<p>should take extra care to minimise contact with others by keeping 2 metres apart.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you choose to spend time outdoors, this can be with members of your own household. If you live alone, you can spend time outdoors with one person from another household (ideally the same person each time). • You should stay alert when leaving home: washing your hands regularly, maintaining social distance and avoiding gatherings of any size. • You should not attend any gatherings, including gatherings of friends and families in private spaces, for example, parties, weddings and religious services. • You should strictly avoid contact with anyone who is displaying symptoms of COVID-19 (a new continuous cough, a high temperature, or a loss of, or change in, your sense of taste or smell). <p>We are keeping the guidance to shielded people under review.</p>
<p>Why was the shielding advice changed from 1 June?</p>	<p>We want to give people the information and advice they need to make the best decisions for themselves. This is, as always, advisory for the shielded. For those who are shielding, this means that although the chance of catching covid-19 cannot be removed completely, it should be very low if people follow the updated advice. However, you must still follow social distancing guidelines and remain at a two-metre distance from others.</p> <p>The changes we announced are modest but we hope will be hugely appreciated by the people they affect. And it's important to be aware that the system for supporting shielded people has not changed because of the recent change in advice. We will continue to do everything we can to support people shielding from coronavirus, led by clinical advice</p>
<p>Was there scientific evidence to support the change in advice from 1 June?</p>	<p>Senior clinical leaders across NHSE, PHE and DHSC discussed the changes in detail. The latest guidance was approved by the Deputy Chief Medical Officer and Public Health England.</p> <p>The Government has also engaged extensively with partners across the healthcare system throughout this process and will continue to do - particularly in the next two weeks, when more substantive measures are considered.</p>
<p>What happens on 30 June? Will it be extended for another 3 months?</p>	<p>As our understanding of the virus increases, the Government continues to review the emerging evidence and continue to listen to medical advisers on the level of clinical risk the virus</p>

	<p>presents to different groups of people at different points in time.</p> <p>At each review point for the social distancing measures, the Government will also review the risks for the clinically extremely vulnerable and assess whether the shielding period needs to be extended or whether it is possible for the shielding guidance to be eased further. The Government will base its assessment on clinical advice from medical experts, and the best data available about the prevalence of covid-19 in the community.</p> <p>The next review will take place the week commencing 15 June. As part of this, the Government will consider the next steps for shielding beyond 30 June. It will write to all individuals on the shielded patient list with information about next steps on shielding advice and the support that will be available to them after this review point.</p> <p>On the basis of the current epidemiological trend, the Government will be looking to gradually ease advice for people to return to normal over the summer, but will review the evidence on the week commencing 15 June to check that this is still the right thing to do. However, if the conditions become less favourable, this advice may need to be tightened.</p> <p>The core support offer remains as it is until 30 June and the Government will continue to ensure support is available for those who need it for as long as people are advised to follow shielding guidance.</p>
How will I know when the period of shielding has ended?	The Government will advise you when the period of shielding is over. This will be based on the best scientific and clinical evidence available.
I live in Wales/Scotland/Northern Ireland. What should I do?	<p>The UK Government is working in lock step with the Devolved Administrations, World Health Organization, and international partners to keep the whole of the UK safe.</p> <p>We have confronted this virus as one United Kingdom. However, the virus has spread at different rates across the country, therefore different parts of the UK may begin to move at slightly different speeds</p>
Why do we still have to shield when the incidence of the virus is now so low?	<p>The Government recognises this is challenging guidance to follow and wants to ensure that people who are shielding continue to receive the right advice for them at a time when the prevalence of the virus in the community is falling.</p> <p>Whilst the fall in prevalence means that the Government is updating guidance to now advise that those who are shielding</p>

	<p>can spend time outdoors once a day with low risk, it has not fallen enough to entirely lift shielding advice.</p> <p>If the prevalence of the virus continues to decline, the Government hopes to be able to provide further advice on how individuals could safely relax their individual approaches to shielding. However, if the conditions become less favourable, this advice may need to be tightened. The Government will continue to listen to medical advisers on the level of clinical risk the virus presents to different groups of people at different points in time.</p>
<p>Do the rest of my household need to shield too?</p>	<p>The rest of your household do not need to start shielding themselves, but they should do what they can to support you in shielding and to carefully follow guidance on staying alert and safe (social distancing).</p> <p>At home you should still:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimise the time other people living with you spend in shared spaces such as kitchens, bathrooms and sitting areas, and keep shared spaces well ventilated. • Keep 2 metres (3 steps) away from people you live with and encourage them to sleep in a different bed where possible. If you can, use a separate bathroom from the rest of the household. Use separate towels from the other people in your house, both for drying yourself after bathing or showering and for hand-hygiene purposes. • If you share a toilet and bathroom with others, it's important that they are cleaned every time after use (for example, wiping surfaces you have come into contact with). Consider drawing up a rota for bathing, with you using the facilities first. • If you share a kitchen with others, avoid using it while they're present. If you can, take your meals back to your room to eat. If you have one, use a dishwasher to clean and dry used crockery and cutlery. If this is not possible, wash them using your usual washing-up liquid and water and dry them thoroughly. If you are using your own utensils, remember to use a separate tea towel for drying these. • Everyone in your household should regularly wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, avoid touching their face and clean frequently touched surfaces. <p>You and the rest of your family or household should try to follow this advice as far as you are able. There is no need</p>

	for other members of your household to follow the shielding measures themselves.
What if I don't want to shield?	<p>Shielding is for your personal protection and it's your choice to decide whether to follow the measures we advise.</p> <p>You will not be fined or sanctioned if you prefer to follow the guidance on staying alert and safe (social distancing). You may also choose to remain in your own home at all times if you do not feel comfortable with any form of contact with others. However, careful time outside in the fresh air is likely to make you feel better in yourself.</p>
If I choose not to shield, am I putting anyone else at risk?	This advice is in place to protect clinically extremely vulnerable individuals who are believed to be at greater risk of becoming severely ill if they contract COVID-19. The guidance on shielding continues to be advisory, and the Government has no plans to enforce shielding guidance. If you choose not to shield you will not put anyone else at risk.
<u>Can I still see my friends/family?</u>	
Can I still see my friends/family?	<p>From 1 June those shielding may wish to spend time outdoors once a day. It is advised this is alone or with members of their own household or, for those shielding alone, with one person from another household.</p> <p>For those who do choose to go outside particular care should be taken to minimise contact with others outside their household and they should follow strict social distancing guidelines.</p> <p>Try to stay in touch with those around you over the phone, by post or online. Let people know how you would like to stay in touch and build that into your routine. This is also important in looking after your mental wellbeing and you may find it helpful to talk to them about how you are feeling. Remember, it is OK to share your concerns with others you trust and in doing so you may end up providing support to them, too. Alternatively, you might want to try an NHS recommended helpline.</p>
If I go outside, do I still need to remain 2m from other members of my household?	For those who wish to go outside with members of their household, the advice for living with people who are shielding still applies and you should remain 2m apart.
Does the one person I meet from outside my household need to be the same person each time?	If you are shielding and live alone you may wish to meet with one person from another household outside, as long as they maintain social distancing. If possible, the Government advises the shielded individual meets the same person every

	time they go outside. This will minimise the chains of social interactions and reduce the risk of catching COVID-19.
Is there a time limit on how long I should spend outdoors?	For those who choose to go outside, they should do so for a reasonable amount of time. It is still important that those who are shielding minimise contact with others outside their household and they should follow strict social distancing guidelines.
<u>If I get the virus</u>	
What are the symptoms/how will I know if I've got the virus?	The most important symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a new continuous cough • a high temperature • a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)
What should I do if I think I have the symptoms?	If you have any of the symptoms of COVID-19, (a new continuous cough, a high temperature, or a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell), you must self-isolate at home and arrange to have a test to see if you have COVID-19 – go to testing to arrange or contact NHS 119 via telephone if you do not have internet access Do this as soon as you get symptoms. Do not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital but if you need treatment, hospitals are still there to support and advise you. In an emergency, call 999 if you're seriously ill. Explain that you are clinically extremely vulnerable to coronavirus and are likely to get very unwell. Prepare a single hospital bag. This will help the NHS provide you with the best care if you need to go to hospital as a result of catching COVID-19. Your bag should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • details for getting hold of your emergency contact • a list of the medications you take (including dose and frequency) • any information on your planned care appointments • things you would need for an overnight stay (for example, medication, pyjamas, toothbrush and snacks) • your advanced care plan (only if you have one)
2. SUPPORT AVAILABLE	
What help can I get?	The Government's offer to Shielding individuals who request our support covers the following three areas of assistance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential groceries – a free, standardised weekly parcel of food and household essentials, and priority delivery slots with supermarkets • Medicines – arrangements to have medicines delivered to people's homes by local community pharmacies or their dispensing doctor

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social contact and basic needs – for example, emotional or social support such as people to talk to on the phone or via a computer.
How do I register for support?	<p>Register online https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable</p> <p>Or call 0800 028 8327</p> <p>Have your NHS number with you when you register. This will be at the top of the letter you have received letting you know you are clinically extremely vulnerable or on any prescriptions.</p>
I haven't received a letter from the NHS, but I believe I should be shielding, what should I do?	<p>The NHS in England has contacted clinically extremely vulnerable people to provide further advice. If you have not received a letter or been contacted by your GP but you're still concerned, you should discuss your concerns with your GP or hospital clinician.</p>
How long will I need to shield for, and will I continue to be supported?	<p>We've advised individuals with very specific medical conditions to shield until the end of June and to do everything they can to stay at home.</p> <p>From 1 June, those shielding may wish to consider spending time outdoors once a day. This can be with members of their own household or, for those shielding alone, with one person from another household.</p> <p>If individuals wish to spend time outdoors, they should take extra care to minimise contact with others by keeping 2 metres apart at all times. This is because we believe they are likely to be at the greatest risk of serious complications from coronavirus.</p> <p>We know this is challenging guidance to follow, which is why we have a support scheme in place to provide help with access to food and basic supplies, care, medicines and social support.</p> <p>We are keeping the guidance to shielded people under review.</p>
What if my circumstances/personal needs change and I need your support in the future?	<p>You just need to contact us via the automated phone line or website provided on your letter and tell us what has changed, and we can pass your details onto your Local Authority and/or wholesale grocery distribution supplier.</p>
I'm worried about my neighbour/ other dependants, etc. Can they be registered for support too?	<p>The National Shielding Service is currently only available for those who are clinically extremely vulnerable. Others who may need support should get in contact with their Local Authority and the phone number can be found online or in your local directory.</p>

<p>What exactly is the GoodSam service?</p>	<p>The NHS Volunteer Responders programme has been developed by NHS England with the Royal Voluntary Service (RVS) to complement local level volunteering activity during the Covid-19 Pandemic. It is intended to support people who are clinically extremely vulnerable to the effects of Covid 19 and have been advised to shield, and people who are not shielding but are also vulnerable for wider reasons including frailty, disability, pregnancy or social vulnerability.</p> <p>NHS Volunteer Responders can undertake one of four tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Community Response’ – collecting shopping, medication or other essential supplies for someone close to their home • ‘Check-in and Chat’ – telephone support to individuals at risk of loneliness as a consequence of self-isolation • ‘Patient Transport Support’ – providing transport to take patients home who are medically fit for discharge • ‘NHS and social care Transport Support’ - providing transport for equipment, supplies and/or medication between NHS/ social care services and sites. Also involves assisting pharmacies with medication delivery. <p>Individuals can directly request support from one of the NHS Volunteer Responders by calling 0808 196 3646</p> <p>https://volunteering.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/nhs-volunteer-responders-portal/isolating</p>
<p>What if I don't fall into this category of clinically extremely vulnerable but need support in getting essential supplies?</p>	<p>There are two ways to access NHS Volunteer support for those who are shielded, or otherwise vulnerable, in an area:</p> <p>Anyone with a Local Authority or NHS email address (e.g. GPs, social prescribing link workers, practice nurses, Local Authorities) can make a referral into the system via https://www.goodsamapp.org/NHSreferral or individuals in need of help.</p> <p>Vulnerable people and their families can directly self-refer for support. For more information on how to self-refer, please see this website: https://volunteering.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/nhs-volunteer-responders-portal/isolating.</p>
<p>I don't feel safe at home; Can I leave my home if myself or my children are at risk of domestic abuse?</p>	<p>The household isolation instruction as a result of coronavirus does not apply if you need to leave your home to escape domestic abuse.</p> <p>Any individual in danger and who is unable to talk on the phone, should call 999 and then either press 55 on a mobile when prompted or wait on a landline and you will be connected to a police call handler who will be able to assist you without you having to speak.</p>

	<p>Refuges have continued to be open throughout the lockdown period to provide safe accommodation for those fleeing domestic abuse.</p> <p>Call the National Domestic Abuse Helpline for free and confidential advice, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247 or go to: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-and-domestic-abuse</p>
<h3>3. EMPLOYMENT</h3>	
<p>I have not received a letter, which I need for my employer, therefore I cannot shield. What should I do?</p>	<p>The NHS in England has contacted clinically extremely vulnerable people to provide further advice. If you have not received a letter or been contacted by your GP but you're still concerned, you should discuss your concerns with your GP or hospital clinician.</p>
<p>What should I do about my job and going to work?</p>	<p>If you usually work, you should talk to your employer as soon as possible if you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have been advised to start shielding • think you might need to start shielding <p>You should make every effort to work from home and your employer is expected to help you to do this. If you are unable to work from home, you should discuss and agree your options with your employer.</p> <p>At times, it may be appropriate for you to take up an alternative role or adjust your working patterns temporarily. Some employers may also be able to offer different types of leave. Beyond your statutory annual leave entitlement, this will be at the employer's discretion.</p> <p>If you were employed before 19 March 2020, you may be eligible for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, under which you can be furloughed at 80% of your salary (maximum of £2,500 per month) up to the end of August after which time employers are paying an increased proportion of furloughed staff salaries until the furlough scheme ends, as currently planned, at the end of October.</p> <p>Statutory Sick Pay is available as a safety net in cases where you are unable to work or to be furloughed under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.</p> <p>Employees have protections against unfair dismissal and may have certain entitlements around redundancy. It is breaking the law to discriminate, directly or indirectly, against anyone because of a protected characteristic such as age, sex or disability. Employers also have particular responsibilities towards disabled workers and those who are new or expectant mothers. Find out more about the rights you have at work.</p> <p>To support the self-employed through the coronavirus outbreak the Government has announced the Self-employment Income Support Scheme.</p>

<p>If I / someone in my home have to continue shielding and can't work from home, does the employer have to keep the job open/keep paying me?</p>	<p>We are considering all levers available to the Government – financial, legislative and non-legislative - to ensure employees are not worse off as a result of shielding. As the Prime Minister has repeatedly made clear, nobody should be penalised for following the advice.</p> <p>The Government expects employers to do the right thing by supporting their shielding employees to follow the guidance.</p> <p>You should work from home insofar as is possible, and your employer is expected to help you to do this.</p> <p>The Government is clear that employers should support their staff to follow the shielding guidance.</p> <p>If you are unable to work from home, you should discuss and agree your options with your employer. These options may include:</p> <p>At times, it may be appropriate for you to take up an alternative role or adjust your working patterns temporarily.</p> <p>Some employers may also be able to offer different types of leave. Beyond your statutory annual leave entitlement, this will be at the employer's discretion.</p> <p>Employers can agree to furlough a shielding worker under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. If your employer does not put you on furlough, you may be entitled to receive Statutory Sick Pay (at £95.85 pw).</p>
<p>I cannot work from home. What support is available to me whilst I continue to shield?</p>	<p>We have set out an unprecedented package of financial support to help the country through the coronavirus pandemic, and those shielding are able to access these, including the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS), the Self-Employed Income Support package and Statutory Sick Pay.</p> <p>This support continues to be provided, with the CJRS running until the end of October and we are continuing to work hard across Government to ensure those shielding get the financial assistance they need.</p>
<p>How do I get signed-off work if I am shielding?</p>	<p>Employees or workers should talk to their employer as soon as they can if they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have been told to start shielding • think they might need to start shielding • If you are shielding, you should work from home insofar as is possible, and your employer is expected to help you to do this. • If you are unable to work in your normal role, or do all of your usual tasks from home, you should discuss and agree your options with your employer.

4. HOUSING	
Can I be evicted from my home whilst I am shielding?	<p>No. Measures to protect tenants during the COVID-19 outbreak remain in place.</p> <p>Through the Coronavirus Act, landlords must give all tenants three months' notice if they intend to seek possession (i.e. serve notice that they want to end the tenancy) – this means the landlord cannot apply to start the court process until after this period. The provision is currently in place up to 30 September 2020.</p> <p>From 27 March 2020 the court service has suspended all ongoing housing possession action – this means that neither cases currently in the system nor any about to go into it can progress to the stage where someone could be evicted.</p> <p>Any decision to alter the duration of these emergency measures will be informed by the wider government approach to lockdown measures and Public Health England guidance, alongside consideration of the needs of tenants and landlords.</p>
I currently don't have a fixed address, what should I do?	<p>You should self-refer yourself to your closest Local Authority, who will be able to advise.</p> <p>If you plan on moving from the address you provide to your Local Authority, you can register with the new address at http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable</p>
Can I move house?	<p>The Government recognises people who are shielding or otherwise vulnerable may have pressing needs to move home; however, this should be balanced with the increased risks presented by coronavirus.</p> <p>Those shielding will need to carefully consider their personal situation and the circumstances of their own move and may wish to seek medical advice before deciding whether to commit to or go ahead with a move. Some moves are likely to be lower risk - for instance if the home is empty, all travel can take place in their own transport and they can avoid contact with others.</p> <p>Further details are set out in government guidance on home moving https://www.gov.uk/guidance/government-advice-on-home-moving-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak</p>
What if I need a plumber or electrician?	<p>No work should be carried out in your home unless it is to remedy a direct risk that affects your safety or the safety of your household. These are issues which will affect your ability</p>

	<p>to live safely and maintain your mental and physical health in your home.</p> <p>For people shielding in rented properties, your landlord will be best placed to determine if an annual gas safety inspection is absolutely necessary.</p> <p>Where a visit is necessary, tradespeople and landlords should keep up to date with and follow the latest Government guidance on working safely in people’s homes. For example, prior arrangements should be made to avoid any face to face contact, for example, when answering the door.</p>
5. FOOD	
Can I go out and get food?	<p>Apart from the option to spend time outdoors once a day, the guidance remains that shielded individuals should stay at home and avoid face to face contact. This includes not shopping or visiting the pharmacy.</p> <p>The Government has put a core support offer in place to help people stay at home where they wish to follow this advice, including delivering over 2 million free food boxes, providing priority supermarket delivery services, providing care, ensuring people can get medicines delivered to their homes and enlisting the help of our fantastic NHS volunteer responders in delivering shopping and calling people for a ‘check in and chat’.</p> <p>If you need support accessing food and you don’t have family/friends to help, you should register online here https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable</p>
I can afford my own food; can I just have a priority home delivery slot rather than a food box?	<p>Yes. The Government recognises that getting an online delivery slot gives people access to a wider range of food and household products.</p> <p>If you don’t need the food box anymore, including because you have started to get online supermarket deliveries, you should re-register through the gov.uk website as no longer needing a food delivery. Alternatively, you can inform your delivery driver at the door that you no longer require these food parcels.</p> <p>Individuals that opt out of food parcels will not lose their priority delivery slot with supermarkets.</p> <p>If you no longer want or need the food parcel, you should reregister via https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable or via the helpline on 0800 028 8327.</p> <p>To indicate that you do not need a food parcel, you should answer ‘yes’ to the question ‘Do you have a way of getting essential supplies delivered at the moment?’</p>

	<p>Cancelling a food box will not affect your eligibility for a supermarket priority delivery slot or any slots you already have in place.</p>
<p>What if I can't access grocery delivery slots online and I'm not allowed to go to the shops?</p>	<p>The Government has shared with supermarkets a list of clinically extremely vulnerable people who are registered and verified on the NHS website gov.uk, and who have requested essential supplies. Supermarkets are using this list to prioritise delivery slots for those who are clinically extremely vulnerable and in need of supplies, as long as individuals also already have an online account registered with one or more supermarkets on the supermarket website.</p> <p>To access priority supermarket slots, you must register on the gov.uk website as a clinically extremely vulnerable person once you have received your NHS letter, or use the phone line available. When signing up, you must ensure you request essential food supplies in order for your data to be passed on to supermarkets. <u>You must also have an online account with one or more supermarkets.</u> Supermarkets should then be prioritising these customers for online delivery slots.</p> <p>If you have followed these steps then you may wish to contact your supermarket and remind them that you are on the clinically vulnerable list in order to access a priority slot. If you choose to deregister from your food box you won't lose priority access to online supermarket slots.</p> <p>As an alternative to getting the supermarket to deliver your food, you could get it collected by an NHS volunteer responder. Call 0808 196 3646 or visit www.nhsvolunteerresponders.org.uk to arrange this.</p>
<p>How quickly will I receive the food parcel?</p>	<p>The food service providers are aiming to make the first deliveries within 7 days of receiving information (from the website/call centre) on who needs a parcel but, in a few cases, we understand this could be slightly longer. Deliveries will be made weekly.</p>
<p>How often will the parcels be delivered and for how long?</p>	<p>The parcels will be delivered on a weekly basis, but it may not always be on the same day each week. Support will be provided for as long as we are advising the individual to shield.</p> <p>The Government is currently advising people to shield until 30 June 2020 and is regularly monitoring this position.</p>
<p>Can you guarantee I'll have free food for as long as I'm being asked to shield for?</p>	<p>The core support offer remains as it is until 30 June and the Government will continue to ensure support is available for those who need it for as long as people are advised to follow shielding guidance.</p>
<p>Can I select a delivery slot?</p>	<p>No, the parcels may be delivered at any time between 6am and 10pm.</p>

<p>Will pet food be included in the delivery?</p>	<p>No. We are delivering standardised parcels of food as emergency provisions and these items do not form part of the standard offer.</p>
<p>Will sanitary products be included in the delivery?</p>	<p>No. We are delivering standardised parcels of food as emergency provisions and these items do not form part of the standard offer.</p>
<p>Is there any other way I can access food besides the food box and supermarket priority slot?</p>	<p>Ask family, friends and neighbours to support you and use online services. If you'd like help with your shopping, NHS Volunteer Responders are also here for you. You can choose what products you want and when you want them, and an NHS Volunteer Responder will then pick up and deliver your shopping to you. They can also pick up prescriptions or any other essentials you need. Call 0808 196 3646 (8am to 8pm) to arrange volunteer support. If you cannot get the help you need, the government can help by delivering essential groceries and support. For further information about how to get food and other essential supplies, please see the guidance on accessing food and essential supplies. If you urgently need food or care, contact your Local Authority.</p>
<p><u>Issues with the food parcel</u></p>	
<p>I no longer want food deliveries, what should I do?</p>	<p>If you no longer want or need the food parcel, you should re-register via https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable or via the helpline on 0800 028 8327.</p> <p>To indicate that you do not need a food parcel, you should answer 'yes' to the question: 'Do you have a way of getting essential supplies delivered at the moment?'</p> <p>If you have already done this and still received a food parcel, there may have been a delay in the system updating. If you have already filled in the form to de-register then it will be processed and there is no need to complete it again.</p> <p>Cancelling a food box will not affect your eligibility for a supermarket priority delivery.</p>
<p>I have registered as a shielding individual via the website/helpline but have not yet received a parcel?</p>	<p>If you have already registered for essential food supplies, have waited 7 days but have still not received a parcel then we advise that you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact your Local Authority to check if you are on the list of shielding individuals who are expecting deliveries. • If you are not on the list then we advise you try re-registering on https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable, making sure 'no' is answered to

	<p>the question: ‘Do you have a way of getting essential supplies delivered at the moment?’</p> <p>Alternatively, if you are having difficulty with the website and you have your NHS number, you can register for support via the inbound call centre on 0800 028 8327.</p> <p>If you are in urgent need of food assistance, you should contact your Local Authority for immediate food assistance.</p>
<p>I think my food box is getting delivered to the wrong address, what should I do?</p>	<p>If you are eligible, have registered for support and have a different or changed address, you should re-submit your registration form, noting your new address by visiting https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable</p> <p>If you do not have enough food in the house to last 7 days, or need help in getting deliveries into your house, please contact your Local Authority. If you don't know how to contact your Local Authority, you should be able to find out at this website by entering your postcode: https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council.</p> <p>NHS Volunteer Responders are also available to help collect and deliver shopping and medication. To arrange volunteer support, please call 0808 196 3646 between 8am and 8pm.</p>
<p>The content of the food box does not meet my dietary needs, can I change what's in the food box?</p>	<p>The parcels will comprise a box of household essentials, non-perishable food and basic supplies. If you are not able to eat some of the food supplied because of dietary or religious requirements, you should contact your Local Authority for food assistance.</p>
<p>The food boxes were fine for 3 months, but aren't nutritional enough / are too boring; Can I change what's in it?</p>	<p>The food boxes contain a basic selection of food and other essential items. They are a standardised package designed to be suitable for the majority of people and contain enough food for one person for one week, as reviewed by nutritionists and key industry groups.</p> <p>People may want access to a wider range of food and household products, and there are a number of ways in which they can get this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Government has given supermarkets the information they need – in addition to their own data – to ensure deliveries are prioritised to those with medical conditions that make them most vulnerable. • If a person meets the criteria to get support from the NHS Volunteer Responders programme, they can call 0808 196 3646 or visit https://volunteering.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/nhs-volunteer-responders-portal/isolating to arrange this and to be linked with a volunteer

	<p>who can do a food shop for them. A carer or family member can also do this on their behalf.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are also commercial food delivery options available, including food boxes and prepared meals. A list of these has been shared with Local Authorities and charities. • For those with special dietary needs that may not be met by the packs they receive, they should contact their Local Authority for further help and advice. • Anyone in urgent need of support should contact their Local Authority, most of which have dedicated Covid-19 helplines.
6. HEALTH	
<p>How can I get my medicine? Will it be included as part of the food parcel?</p>	<p>Prescriptions will continue to cover the same length of time as usual.</p> <p>If you do not currently have our prescriptions collected or delivered, you can arrange this by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Asking someone who can pick up your prescription from the local pharmacy 2. Contacting your pharmacy to ask them to deliver your prescription to you or help you find a volunteer to deliver it. <p>You may also need to arrange for collection or delivery of hospital specialist medication that is prescribed to you by your hospital care team.</p> <p>If you receive support from health and social care organisations, such as having care provided for you through the Local Authority or health care system, this will continue as normal.</p> <p>Your health or social care provider will be asked to take additional precautions to make sure that you are protected.</p>
<p>I get my medication from my community mental health team. Will this continue?</p>	<p>Please speak to your key worker or care coordinator who will be able to help you.</p>
<p>I require medical attention, but it is not life threatening- what do I do?</p>	<p>If you have an issue or injury that is not life threatening but requires medical attention, please ring NHS 111 for medical advice. Alternatively, NHS websites are updating on a daily basis – so it really is the best place to get further advice.</p>
<p>I've got an urgent health need relating to my existing condition which is not associated with the virus?</p>	<p>If you have an urgent medical question relating to your existing medical condition, or the condition of the person you are caring for, during this time, please contact your GP practice directly, or your specialist hospital care team.</p>

	<p>Where possible, you will be supported by phone or online. But if your clinician decides you need to be seen in person, the NHS will contact you to arrange a visit in your home, or where necessary, treatment in hospital.</p>
<p>I have an operation/outpatient appointment scheduled - what should I do?</p>	<p>NHS England has written to your hospital to ask them to review any ongoing care that you have with them. It is possible that some clinics and appointments will be cancelled or postponed. Your hospital or clinic will contact you if any changes need to be made to your care or treatment. Otherwise you should assume your care or treatment is taking place as planned. Please contact your hospital or clinic directly if you have any questions about a specific appointment.</p>
<p>Can I go to my GP surgery if I don't have symptoms?</p>	<p>Please phone your GP surgery. Do not visit the surgery without having spoken to them for advice first.</p> <p>Wherever possible, GPs will provide care by phone, email or online. But if they decide you need to be seen in person, they will contact you to arrange your visit to the surgery or a visit in your home.</p>
<p>I've got a dental/podiatry/physiotherapy appointment?</p>	<p>Everyone should access medical assistance online or by phone wherever possible.</p> <p>However, if you have a scheduled hospital or other medical appointment during this period, talk to your GP or specialist to ensure you continue to receive the care you need and determine which of these appointments are absolutely essential.</p> <p>Your hospital may need to cancel or postpone some clinics and appointments. You should contact your hospital or clinic to confirm appointments.</p>
<p>What do I do if I need emergency dental treatment?</p>	<p>If you think you require urgent dental treatment, please ring NHS 111.</p>
<p>I need social care, who will provide this for me?</p>	<p>Any essential carers or visitors who support you with your everyday needs can continue to visit unless they have any of the symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19).</p> <p>Essential carers coming to your home should follow advice on good hygiene: wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds on arrival to your house and often while they are there (or use hand sanitiser), avoid touching their face, catch any coughs or sneezes in a tissue (or their sleeve), and put used tissues immediately in the bin and wash their hands afterwards. They should keep 2 metres away where close or personal contact is not required and where this is possible.</p>

	If you need support from a carer to leave the house, you can still meet one person from another household (ideally the same person each time).
My family currently provide personal care, can they still do this?	Yes. Any essential carers or visitors who support you with your everyday needs can continue to visit unless they have any of the symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19). Essential carers coming to your home should follow advice on good hygiene: wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds on arrival to your house and often while they are there (or use hand sanitiser), avoid touching their face, catch any coughs or sneezes in a tissue (or their sleeve), and put used tissues immediately in the bin and wash their hands afterwards. They should keep 2 metres away where close or personal contact is not required and where this is possible.
What if my carer becomes sick?	Speak to your carers about back-up plans for your care in case your main carer is unwell and/or needs to self-isolate. You should have an alternative list of people who can help you with your care if your main carer becomes unwell. You can also contact your Local Authority for advice on how to access care.
My carer has symptoms of Covid-19 or has been in contact with someone who has symptoms - what should I do?	<p>You should arrange for someone else to provide your care. If you do not have anyone else, contact your Local Authority who will make arrangements for you.</p> <p>If your carer has symptoms then they should isolate themselves (and not provide your care) for at least 7 days or longer if they are not yet well. If a member of your carer's household has symptoms, their whole family should isolate for 14 days</p>
<u>Mental health and wellbeing</u>	
I'm worried about my mental health, what should I do?	<p>It is very normal during these uncertain and unusual times to be experiencing distress or anxiety or be feeling low. Go to the Every Mind Matters website and GOV.UK for advice and tailored, practical steps that you can take to support your wellbeing and manage your mental health during this pandemic.</p> <p>Anyone concerned about their mental health should speak to their GP or existing care team, or can access further advice via NHS.UK. Online self-referral options are commonly available for some services including children and young people's mental health services, and psychological therapies services for adults with common mental health problems such as anxiety and depression.</p>

<p>This is making me very anxious; can you tell me what to do?</p>	<p>The government has advised that those shielding can now spend time outdoors if they wish to do so. Despite these measures, however, continued social isolation, reduction in physical activity, and changes in routine can all contribute to increased stress.</p> <p>Many people, including those without existing mental health needs, may feel anxious. Reasons for increased anxiety may include potential effects on support with daily living, ongoing care arrangements with health providers, support with medication and changes in daily routines. It is important that you take care of your mind as well as your body and that you get further support if you need it.</p> <p>Follow the advice that works for you in the guidance on how to look after your mental health and wellbeing during COVID-19. At times like these, it can be easy to fall into unhealthy patterns of behaviour which in turn can make you feel worse. Constantly watching the news can make you feel more worried. If you think it is affecting you, try to limit the time you spend watching, reading or listening to media coverage of the outbreak. It may help to only check the news at set times or limit this to a couple of times a day. Try to focus on the things you can control, such as where you get information from and actions you can take to help you feel prepared. The Every Mind Matters page on anxiety and NHS mental wellbeing audio guides provide further information on how to manage anxiety.</p> <p>If you're still struggling after several weeks and it's affecting your daily life, contact NHS 111 online. If you have no internet access, you should call NHS 111.</p>
<p>What mental health support is available?</p>	<p>Mental health trusts in England have been instructed to put in place 24/7 crisis lines for all ages so people can get urgent help whenever they need it. A national service finder for local urgent mental health telephone lines is now available on the NHS.UK website.</p> <p>The Government has issued guidance to those shielding and this has been accompanied by expanded digital mental health support such as Every Mind Matters, which has now seen 2.7 million visits since the introduction of social distancing.</p> <p>All mental health providers, including providers of psychological therapies services, have been issued with guidance to encourage them to deliver care remotely so that vulnerable groups, including those who are shielding, can receive care safely.</p>
<p>I have mental health/autism/learning disability needs, how will they be met?</p>	<p>If you're receiving services for your mental health, learning disability or autism and are worried about the impact of isolation, contact your key worker or care coordinator or provider to review your care plan. If you have additional needs, contact your key worker or care coordinator to develop a safety or crisis plan.</p>

<p>How will I get exercise?</p>	<p>From the 1 June the shielding guidance was updated to advise that those shielding may wish to consider spending time outdoors once a day. This can be with members of their own household or, for those shielding alone, with one person from another household.</p> <p>For those who do choose to go outside, particular care should be taken to minimise contact with others outside their household and they should follow social distancing guidelines.</p> <p>You may now wish to go outside of your property to exercise, walk, or spend some time outdoors. If you do so, the best way to protect yourself is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • keep the number of visits outside to a minimum (for instance once per day) • go on your own, or with members of your household. If you live alone, you can spend time outdoors with one person from another household (ideally the same person each time) • go outside when there are fewer people around, such as early in the morning • ideally spend time in open areas • always keep a social distance of 2 metres • take particular care to minimise contact with others • do not share or exchange personal belongings (such as cups) with others • avoid going into enclosed spaces and other households, shops and buildings • spend as long as you feel comfortable outside • if you would prefer not to spend time outside of your property, try spending time with the windows open to let in fresh air and get some natural sunlight or get out into any private space (such as a garden or balcony), keeping at least 2 metres away from your neighbours and household members at all times
<p>Can I drive to exercise?</p>	<p>The advice for those shielding remains that you should follow strict social distancing guidelines and remain 2 metres from other people. Therefore, you should not drive to an outdoor location with members of your household or someone outside your household in the same vehicle, due to the difficulties of maintaining social distancing.</p>
<p>Can I walk my dog?</p>	<p>From 1 June those shielding may wish to spend time outdoors once a day. It is advised this is alone or with members of their own household or, for those shielding alone, with one person from another household.</p> <p>For those who do choose to go outside particular care should be taken to minimise contact with others outside their household and they should follow strict social distancing guidelines.</p>

Can I take my pet to the vets?	No. You should not go to the vet with your pet. A friend, neighbourhood or relative may be able to help. If they can't, phone your vet for advice.
I don't feel I have enough support whilst I am shielding, what should I do?	You should contact your Local Authority who should be able to provide you with more information on support in your area. You can find their phone number online or in your phone book
7. FINANCIAL MATTERS AND CONCERNS	
I don't do online banking. How do I pay my bills or manage my money?	You can phone your local bank branch for advice, or most banks have national helplines. You can find their number online or in the phone book.
Should I leave my house to go to the bank/ access my benefits in cash/ top up my gas or electricity card?	You should not travel to your bank or job centre. If you ring your bank they may be able to arrange for internet or telephone banking. Similarly, your Job Centre will be able to arrange for a bank transfer straight to your account. Alternatively, you could ask a friend, family member or neighbour to help manage your money in person.
I am struggling financially to meet payment demands, what should I do?	You should contact citizen's advice, who will be able to provide further information on what financial support is available during this time and how to claim.
How can I protect myself from scammers?	Door to Door Scamming: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not open the door to people, unless they are providing you with care or support which cannot be provided over the phone. • Always check the person's identity. If you are unsure about a person's identity, do not let them into your house. • Never leave your front door open/unlocked unless you are sat on your doorstep. <p>For further advice, you can call citizens advice consumer helpline on 03454 04 05 06.</p>
How do I know if someone dropping a leaflet through my door offering to help is a scammer?	If you need help, only contact people you know and trust, your Local Authority or a recognised charity.
8. EDUCATION	
Should my shielded child go to school?	Our advice to children who are clinically extremely vulnerable and shielding remains that the Government does not expect these children to be attending school or college, and they should continue to be supported at home as much as possible. As with all shielding guidance, this is based on the

	<p>risk to individuals, which will reflect the prevalence of COVID-19 in the UK amongst other factors. The Government will keep this under close review and may change the advice if COVID-19 prevalence decreases significantly.</p> <p>Parents should notify their nursery/school/college as normal if their child is unable to attend so that staff can explore the reason with them and address barriers together. Parents will not be fined for non-attendance at this time.</p>
<p>I am shielding, should my child go to school? Will I be fined if they don't?</p>	<p>If a child, young person or staff member lives in a household with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable, it is advised they only attend an education or childcare setting if stringent social distancing can be adhered to and, in the case of children, they are able to understand and follow those instructions. This may not be possible for very young children and older children without the capacity to adhere to the instructions on social distancing. If stringent social distancing cannot be adhered to, the Government does not expect those individuals to attend. They should be supported to learn or work at home.</p> <p>Parents should notify their nursery/school/college as normal if their child is unable to attend so that staff can explore the reason with them and address barriers together. Parents will not be fined for non-attendance at this time.</p>
<p>How will my child learn while shielding?</p>	<p>The Government wants to do everything it can to support schools and families to continue children's education while they are at home, recognising that schools, pupils, parents and carers are facing unprecedented challenges, and has developed a package of support to address this.</p> <p>The Government has published a list of quality online resources, identified by some of the country's leading educational experts, to help pupils learn at home. There is also a range of advice and guidance for parents and carers of children who are learning at home, covering different age ranges as well as specific guidance for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).</p> <p>To support the hard work of schools in delivering remote education, Oak National Academy launched on Monday 20 April. This brand-new enterprise has been created by 40 teachers from schools across England. It is providing 180 video lessons for free each week, across a broad range of subjects, for every year group from Reception through to Year 10. Specialist content for learners with SEND was launched on 4 May. This covers communication and language, numeracy, creative arts, independent living,</p>

	<p>occupational therapy, physical therapy and speech and language therapy.</p> <p>For those in rural areas or without a connection, schools will be able to draw on support from the BBC which is broadcasting lessons on television via the red button, and may choose to draw on the many resource offers which have been made by publishers across the country.</p>
<p>What support is available to support young peoples' mental health and wellbeing whilst shielding?</p>	<p>Many learners will be feeling uncertain and anxious and it is vital that they can still access the mental health support they need. Providers will need to consider their learners' mental health and wellbeing and identify learners who may need additional support.</p> <p>All NHS mental health trusts are setting up 24/7 helplines and seeking to use digital and virtual channels to continue delivering support during the pandemic.</p> <p>Social connections, alongside exercise, sleep, a healthy diet and routine, are important protective factors for mental health. Resources to promote and support mental wellbeing are included in the list of online resources published to help children and young people to learn at home.</p> <p>Public Health England have also published more extensive guidance on supporting children and young peoples' mental health and the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) is providing £5m of additional funding for mental health charities (to support adults and children).</p>