

SMH Final Easing of Restrictions

October 2021

The effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and the restrictions imposed have been far reaching over the past 18 months, and none more so than the people who use our service, their families and the staff members in St Michaels House who support them.

We would like to thank everyone for their overwhelming courage and commitment during this time and on this final lap of our journey with the easing of restrictions. We have included the latest guidance below on the final restrictions to be lifted and requirements for resumption of day services.

From 20 September- 21st October

Transport

All transport (SMH and Public) will return to 100% capacity-passengers continue to wear masks

Live music

Live music may re-commence

Cinemas and theatres

Cinemas and theatres will have capacity limits of 60% of venue capacity where all patrons are fully vaccinated, or accompanied minors (under 18), in line with their business guidance.

Where patrons have mixed immunity status, there will be no change to the current limits (50 patrons) during September.

Weddings

There will be no change to the current limits (100 guests) during September.

Live music at weddings will be permitted.

Religious ceremonies

All religious ceremonies can proceed with 50% of venue capacity, regardless of immunity status of attendees.

Organised indoor group activities

Organised indoor group activities (sports, arts, culture, dance classes) can begin again with capacity limits of 100 people (with appropriate protective measures) where all patrons are fully vaccinated or recovered from COVID-19 within previous 6 months.

Where patrons have mixed immunity status, pods of up to 6 participants will be permitted (excluding adult leaders/teachers).

Organised outdoor group activities

There will no longer be restrictions on outdoor group activities for participants.

Return to workplaces

A phased return to work spaces will begin from 20 September 2021.

From 22nd October 2021 onwards

Final restrictions will be lifted, including:

- Physical distancing restrictions will be removed
- Mask wearing outdoors and in indoor private settings will no longer be required (family homes/ not SMH residential or day services)
- Mask wearing will be required in healthcare settings indoors.
- Service users and staff can resume eating together- day and residential
- There will be no further limits on numbers that can meet in private homes/gardens (not SMH houses)
- People will no longer be required to show certification of vaccination, immunity or testing for engaging in any activities or events (with the exception of international travel)
- No restrictions on nightclubs etc
- No further restrictions on religious or civil ceremonies
- Limits on numbers at indoor and outdoor events and activities will be removed

Measures that will remain in place

- **Self-isolate when we have symptoms**
- **Mask wearing will be required in:**
 - **Healthcare settings**
 - **Indoor retail**
 - **On public transport and SMH transport (where possible)**

Resumption of Day Services

(see also Easy Read version)

Day services are currently developing their individual day service plan to increase the level of day service provision.

A plan for full resumption, for those service users who request it (or for service users with complex communication; where there is reason to believe that the service user is expressing this wish to resume full time), is required by October 22nd 2021. Please see below for requirements in relation to this. Efforts must be made to ascertain the individual's will and preference with regards to returning to day services and this evidence should be recorded.

Further guidance and a FAQs fact sheet will follow.

Requirements

- Service User and Day Service Risk Assessments will be drawn up.

- Public transport is now back to **100% capacity** and this change will also now relate to transport in disability day services.
- Staff training in managing COVID 19 will continue
- Service User supports in managing COVID 19 will continue
- Continue with enhanced environmental hygiene - maintenance and cleaning of Day Service Locations and on Transport.
- Pod like arrangements in Day service Locations (6 people or less), where suitable. Manage locally-in some cases, such as smaller day services, this will not be possible
- Where there are concerns regarding individual staff who are immuno- compromised please discuss this individually with your Service Manager and HR department.
- Protocols for the management of suspected and confirmed cases of COVID 19.
- Provision of information to the HSE to track the activity of COVID 19