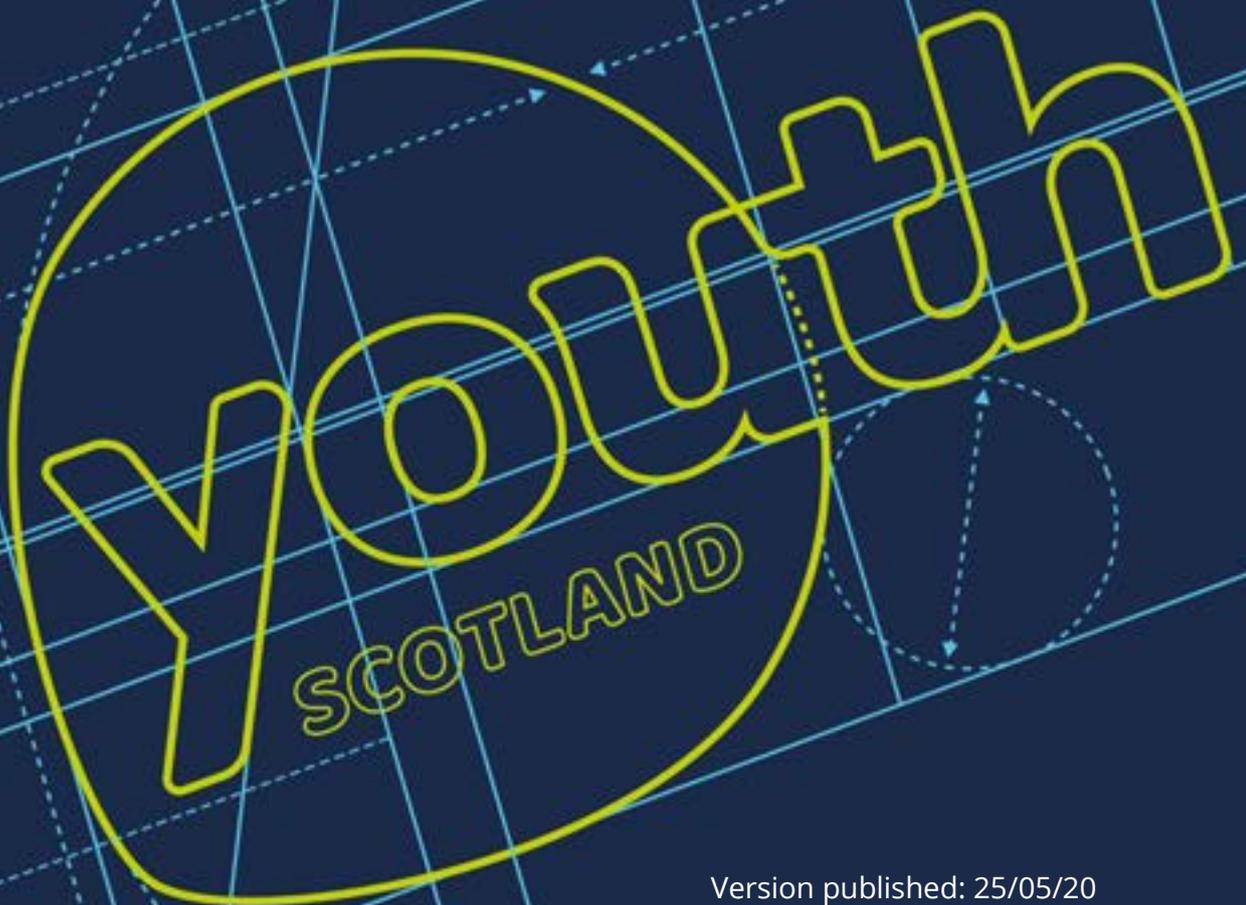


Youth Scotland Post Lockdown Readiness Guide

First step planning for your youth
group/organisation after the COVID-19
lockdown





Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
COVID-19 – A Framework for Decision Making	3
2. The Scottish Government’s framework and sector by sector approach	5
3. Law at Work (LAW).....	8
How to access Law at Work.....	8
4. Training and support	9
5. Resources and links mentioned in this document	10

1. Introduction

This document is a guide to being ready for Covid-19 lockdown restrictions being eased, particularly for community-based youth work groups and workers.

For now, most of Scotland remains in lockdown. On 21 May 2020, the Scottish Government unveiled more details on their four phase 'route map'. It has published some important documents which outline the approach and principles that will guide the Scottish Government as it makes decisions about transitioning out of the current lockdown arrangements.

While every group must make its own risk assessments and judgements based on their specific needs and circumstances, we hope this guide serves as a solid starting point and highlights key points to consider. As the First Minister outlined, we will increasingly need to 'exercise judgement and responsibility' as lockdown eases, this guide provides some tools to help that decision making process. Please continue to follow Scottish Government and NHS guidelines.

To be clear: Youth Scotland is not encouraging youth groups to take any action beyond planning at this stage.

COVID-19 – A Framework for Decision Making

In view of the newly-released route map from Scottish Government, Youth Scotland has summarised some the key points of the Framework to support members and identify key issues which are likely to impact on member youth groups/ organisations and how they operate in the future.

See **The Scottish Government's framework and sector by sector approach section.**

As the COVID-19 restrictions are lifted through Phase 1 to Phase 4, 'business readiness' will be important—and likely varied from group to group. Youth groups/organisations, like many other businesses and charities, will face many decisions around assessing their operations, bringing employees and volunteers back to work, and ensuring the workplace/youth setting is safe for both young people and workers/volunteers.

The timelines and specifics of this have been unveiled as phased approach; Phase 1 – 4, with Phase 5 being 'normal'. The timeline for implementation of each phase will be determined based upon meeting certain criteria, including the R rate (the rate with which the virus is being transferred) and the World Health Organisation's (WHO) six key criteria for easing restrictions. Phase 1 is expected to begin Thursday 28 May 2020, barring a change in R. These criteria will be used to set a date for Phase 2, which means there is no fixed date yet.



Given the phased approach is now released, we understand that many of you want to make a start on some initial planning.

We have therefore provided access to a Return to Work Toolkit, provided by Law at Work. This is a FREE membership service available to all Youth Scotland member groups. Details of how to access the LAW at work resources are outlined in the **LAW at Work section**.

We know many of our member groups are embracing digital youth work activity and using this to engage and support young people. Based on the 4 phases, the need for this is likely to be ongoing for some time and we would encourage you to embrace and develop this provision where you can. Youth Scotland is providing a range of training and information to our member groups to support this. See **Training and support section**.

Other youth groups have closed for the moment and are not currently operating—either because they have had to furlough staff or because they are completely volunteer run—and may not feel able to run at this time. We want to provide the support all our members need to get back up and running when they are ready and able to do so.

Whilst we know from feedback that members are greatly concerned about young people's health and wellbeing and are keen to "get fully back up and running", we must stress that the Scottish Government route map and guidance remains for people to largely stay at home and for schools to remain closed until 11 August 2020 and the new term.

Beginning in Phase 1 there are now some provisions for "Meeting up with another household outdoors, in small numbers, including in gardens, but with physical distancing required" and "Greater direct contact for social work and support services with at-risk groups and families with physical distancing and hygiene measures." This may apply to groups and practitioners who work with the most isolated and vulnerable young people, hopefully allowing some contact with their workers, at appropriate distances outdoors.

As such, this document should not lead to member youth groups/organisation's restarting their face-to-face youth work activity in full, beyond the specific provision in the phased approach, but is a starting point for discussion about future models of youth work delivery, how we can best plan to fit in to each phase and what further support and guidance will be required.



2. The Scottish Government's framework and sector by sector approach

The Scottish Government continues to be clear that its main driver is preventing avoidable death and it is committed to being guided by data and evidence to achieve this aim.

The Framework and route map acknowledge that we cannot immediately go back to how things were, but equally we cannot sustain the current lockdown restrictions indefinitely as they are in turn doing harm.

The route map outlines the ongoing restrictions and actions, including elements of physical distancing, being required until either a vaccine or cure is developed. There is confirmation that restrictions will be relaxed in a phased manner, based on key criteria.

The route map includes more detail on what each phase, from Lockdown to Phase 4 will look like, what the indicators are and what changes we can expect. During the First Minister's speech, she stated that not all sectors will necessarily move through the phases at the same time. There is a recognition that different sectors will have to be considered individually and this may result in different approaches being taken as to how physical distancing restrictions will apply to each sector.

There is a commitment to work with each sector and an onus on sectors to innovate to find different ways to function. Youth Scotland is actively contributing to discussions with YouthLink Scotland, other National voluntary Youth Work Organisations, colleagues from Education Scotland and Scottish Government to identify a pathway for youth work and our role in supporting young people in the transition from lockdown.

From the perspective of youth work, there are several potential implications from this sectoral approach. The Scottish Government has clearly recognised the importance of supporting young people's health and wellbeing during the lockdown. However, the Framework also places significant onus on the needs of areas such as education and business. It is clear supporting young people to return to schools and education in August will be a priority and careful consideration is being given as to how physical distancing can be applied in those settings.

At this stage, we cannot assume that a re-opening of schools will lead immediately to youth work delivery in any sense of 'normal'. However, discussions are taking place around youth work's role in supporting young people, what the youth work offer might look like after lockdown and how youth work could potentially contribute to the return to school for young people.



Key to this will be consideration of whether physical distancing restrictions can be applied to the sector in a proportionate way that continues to contain transmission while maximising the level of Youth Work activity that can be safely undertaken.

In the LAW at work section below, we signpost to a Return to Work Toolkit that will be helpful in your general planning for returning to work. However, in relation to youth work settings specifically, we need to await further guidance before specific planning can take place. However, it is likely that you will need to consider the following key elements:

Physical distancing in youth work premises

Please also refer to the [route map annexes, p38](#) for 'Protections advised in each phase'

As youth groups reopen, physical distancing is required in Phases 1-3 and new specifics in Phase 4. This may impact on the viability of operating some youth centres/groups, and you may need to operate with more limited activities or capacity than normal. You may only be able to run small groups e.g. with 15 young people or less depending on the space you have available and may not be able to deliver certain activities which require close contact. Some activities may be able to be delivered outside in Phase 2, where indoor areas and activities, such as gyms for example, remain restricted until Phase 3. You may also have to think about entry and exit points and restrict access to the setting, stagger arrival or departure times and think about the working patterns of staff/volunteers.

In addition to the guidance above, youth groups who do not own/operate their meeting space are encouraged to identify the specific guidance issued by the relevant school, community centre, church, village hall etc.

Hygiene and infection control measures

Please also refer to the [route map annexes, p38](#) for 'Protections advised in each phase'

You will need to think about cleaning schedules, provision of washing facilities and / or hand gel, notices about how to prevent spread of infection, employee health screening and how to deal with any incidences of COVID-19 infections in your setting. You may also have to limit the use of resources such as games or sport equipment and put additional cleaning measures in place.

Gatherings in larger groups

Gatherings in larger groups are restricted until Phase 3, which permits "People can meet in extended groups subject to physical distancing" and "Mass gatherings resume in line



with public health advice” in Phase 4. This has the potential to be disruptive to youth work. Depending on the size limits on groups and the nature of events covered it could impact on the size of groups you are able to run and also impact on larger scale youth participation events and residential events etc. until Phase 4.

Travelling and operating outwith your own youth setting

Some level of travel restrictions remains in place until Phase 4, which may also require physical distancing. Phase 2 sees an increase in public transport services and travel locally for ‘leisure purposes’ but physical distancing remains in place. Phase 3 brings public transport back to full services, but physical distancing remains. In Phase 2 & 3 there is the proviso that there “May be geographical differences depending on circumstances.” All of this will likely impact on youth work activities such as outings, visits to other groups and residential events.

While every group must make its own risk assessments and judgements based on their specific needs and circumstances, we hope this guide serves as a solid starting point and highlights key points to consider. As the First Minister outlined, we will increasingly need to ‘exercise judgement and responsibility’ as lockdown eases, this guide provides some tools to help that decision making process. Please continue to follow Scottish Government and NHS guidelines.

To be clear: Youth Scotland is not encouraging youth groups to take any action beyond planning at this stage.

3. Law at Work (LAW)

You can access an extensive suite of legal advice, guidance and templates as part of your Youth Scotland membership. Law at Work have updated their COVID-19 guidance to include a Return to Work Toolkit.

As the COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, youth groups/organisations face many decisions around assessing their operations, bringing employees/volunteers back to work, and ensuring the workplace is safe.

The timelines for youth work restarting are not yet known but it is a good idea to begin planning for reopening because this will bring a new set of challenges. The main challenge which should be factored into all decisions will be ensuring that workers/volunteers and young people and their families have full confidence that their health will be protected.

To help you start to think about these challenges, the Law at Work Return to Work Toolkit includes documents and templates that you can use for your group including a Return to Work Checklist, Return to Work Risk Assessment, Return to Work Safety guide, Building pre-opening audit, and many more useful documents. Please note that these are general documents for employers and not specific to a youth work setting. We will aim to provide further specific guidance when it has been produced by the Scottish Government.

How to access Law at Work

These services are part of the package of benefits afforded to Youth Scotland member groups. You will be required to quote your Youth Scotland Membership number and details when accessing these services. Read about [joining Youth Scotland here](#)

To register for LAW: If you have not previously registered for Law at Work, go to this [webpage](#) and have your member group details and Youth Scotland membership number handy. Your Youth Scotland membership number will begin 350. LAW will also be using your primary membership contact email address.

To login: If you have previously registered for Law at Work, go to this [webpage](#) and enter your details. You should then click into the Coronavirus: Employer's resource centre, where you will find the COVID-19 Return to Work Toolkit.

If you have any problems logging in, [please contact us](#) at Youth Scotland and we can help you access a copy of the Return to Work toolkit.

4. Training and support

During the lockdown, Youth Scotland has been supporting member youth groups with regularly updated information, funding, and support. Visit our [COVID-19 page for details](#)

We have also developed a comprehensive training programme for youth workers and volunteers which aims to increase youth workers' abilities and skills to support young people through this crisis and beyond. Digital youth work has been gaining momentum for years and the lockdown has truly brought it to the fore. Our online training focuses on safeguarding young people online, young people's mental health and wellbeing, innovative adaptations to our ongoing programmes and highly accessible training on how to deliver digital youth work.

This includes: -

- Child Protection training
- Modules in 'Mental Health Awareness – Positive Coping Strategies'; 'Young people and self-esteem'; 'Mindfulness' and 'Understanding Challenging Behaviour'
- 'Digital Youth Work' training which supports youth workers to provide a safe space online for young people to engage in their youth groups with their friends.
- Creative Arts and STEM in an online space
- Youth Awards support and training, including Awards at Home for our Hi5 and Dynamic Youth Awards
- Google Be Internet Citizens – hugely relevant skills for youth workers and young people living in the digital age: how to spot fake news, echo chambers and filter bubbles, how to deal with trolling and online hatred and everything to help young people be good internet citizens

You can view our training programme and book your space [on Eventbrite](#) or by visiting our [events calendar](#)



5. Resources and links mentioned in this document

COVID-19 – Framework for Decision Making – website pages

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-framework-decision-making/>

COVID-19 – Framework for Decision Making: Scotland’s route map through and out of the crisis

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-framework-decision-making-scotlands-route-map-through-out-crisis/>

Excellent and Equity During the COVID-19 Pandemic – A Strategic Framework for Reopening Schools, Early Learning and Childcare Provision in Scotland

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/initial-impact-assessment-strategic-framework-reopening-schools-early-learning-childcare-settings-scotland/>

Joining Youth Scotland

<https://youthscotland.org.uk/join/>

Law At Work - membership legal advice and services

<https://www.lawatwork.co.uk/user/register>

Youth Scotland events and training

<https://www.youthscotland.org.uk/training-events/events-booking/>



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