

# Extended safety measures to reduce the spread of Covid-19

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To protect the health of the Latvian public and reducing the burden on the health care system, measures have been set throughout the country to reduce the risk of the spread of infection in educational institutions and sports centres. Particularly strict conditions will have to be observed in municipalities where the prevalence of infection is twice as high as the Latvian average. This is provided for in the amendments to Cabinet of Ministers Order No. 655 Regarding Declaration of the Emergency Situation adopted on Tuesday, 24 November. In addition to the safety measures, the Government has also approved support measures for taxpayers and parents.

At the same time, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved extensive state aid instruments for entrepreneurs, the self-employed, and employees whose activities have been negatively impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The Government has also decided to support parents whose children cannot attend educational institutions.

In the field of education, from 30 November, schools must provide at least 3 square metres of the classroom space per each child. Teachers shall use a mouth and nose covering both during the teaching process and during breaks.

In turn, in higher education and vocational education practical classes which cannot be implemented remotely, the number of people in one group may not exceed 10.

To reduce the risk of becoming infected with Covid-19 during sports, the number of people in indoor sports centres must be reduced from 27 November. Instead of 10 square meters, at least 15 square meters must be provided per each visitor, and the total number of people in the premises must not exceed 20% of the maximum possible. The opening hours of sports centres remain from 6.00 to 22.00.

Meanwhile, a slightly longer time has been set for individual amateur art rehearsals - from 27 November, they may take place until 22.00, subject to epidemiological safety requirements.

Significantly more stringent safety measures are applied to the residents of municipalities where the two-week total number of new Covid-19 cases per 10,000 inhabitants is twice the national average. The list of these municipalities will be published by the Centre for Disease Prevention and Control on its website, [www.spkc.gov.lv](http://www.spkc.gov.lv), every Tuesday.

Already from 27 November, the list includes Varakļāni municipality, Aknīste municipality, Baldone municipality, Salacgrīva municipality, Krāslava municipality, Mārupe municipality, Mālpils municipality, Smiltene municipality, Garkalne municipality, Limbaži municipality, Salaspils municipality, and Daugavpils city.

In addition to other restrictions imposed throughout the country, from 27 November these municipalities must return to the 2 + 2 principle applied in the first half of the year. On-site educational processes shall be implemented only in kindergartens and from grades 1 to 4. Cultural and exhibition venues, including fairs, shall be completely closed down. Libraries will be able to continue the work, but only by handing out books for take away.

Also any private events, both indoors and outdoors, shall be prohibited in the municipalities severely affected by Covid-19. Exceptions are emergency baptismal ceremonies and outdoor funeral ceremonies. At these events, epidemiological safety requirements must be observed, including wearing a face mask and maintaining a two-meter distance from others.

Sports trainings indoors shall also be prohibited in the municipalities where the spread of Covid-19 infection is significantly higher. Only athletes of the Latvian adult team, Latvian Olympic team, or Latvian Paralympic team and adult professional athletes of teams of international and the highest leagues of team sports can continue training.

The number of people on the city's public transport, in shops, and elsewhere, both indoors and outdoors, must also be significantly reduced. Citizens are encouraged to follow closely the information provided by service providers and merchants on the maximum number of people allowed and other security measures.

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