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## COVID-19 MITIGATION MEASURES

You will be aware that new cases in Scotland have more than doubled during the last week. This is one of the sharpest rises we have seen during the pandemic.

We always knew that cases were likely to rise as restrictions eased. However, the scale of the increase is of real concern.

While the vaccination has significantly weakened the link between new cases and serious health harms, and please do continue to encourage people in your sector to get both doses when offered, it has not been completely broken.

Scotland's health and care service is under considerable pressure and there is a risk that if the surge continues or accelerates – increasing pressure on hospital beds and ICU admissions – then we cannot rule out having to re-impose some restrictions.

We do not want to return to more stringent measures, but this is yet another fragile – and potentially very pivotal – moment in our journey through the pandemic.

We are asking all sectors – as part of a collective wider effort – to step up their efforts to reduce the spread of the virus.

This means taking all possible proactive steps to promote and reinforce the baseline measures, the promotion of advisory precautionary measures and sector specific good practice in your sector.

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There are four areas that are still required by law:

1. it continues to be the law (unless for some specific exemptions), that face coverings must be worn in all the same indoor settings as they were before 9 August and face coverings continue to be required on public transport;
2. as before, hospitality (restaurants, cafes, bars, pubs, hotels where food/drink consumed on the premises) and also now since the opening of the night-time sector, entertainment venues (nightclubs, dance halls, discos and sexual entertainment venues) are required to collect the contact details of customers so that Test & Protect can continue to contact-trace positive cases;
3. as before, businesses, services providers and places of worship must have regard to SG guidance about measures to minimise risk of exposure to coronavirus relating to their business, service or premises; and
4. organisers of outdoor events of more than 5,000 people outdoors and 2,000 people indoors will still require local authority permission before they can go ahead, as this will allow us and local authorities simply to be assured of the arrangements in place to reduce the risk of large scale gatherings.

I would be grateful for your confirmation that this has been conveyed to all relevant partners, and that in turn reinforced messaging is issued to all spectators, members and customers as soon as possible. I have written directly to Scottish Rugby, Scottish Racing, the Scottish FA, UK Active and local authority leisure trusts.

Kind regards



**HUMZA YOUSAF**

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