

Covid-19 Emergency Period and Places of Worship

The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020 (the “**Regulations**”) applies to places of worship, including this Gurdwara, as follows:

Section 5(5) of the Regulations: *A person who is responsible for a place of worship must ensure that, during the emergency period, the place of worship is closed, except for uses permitted in paragraph (6).*

Section 5(6) of the Regulations: *A place of worship may be used— (a) for funerals, (b) to broadcast an act of worship, whether over the internet or as part of a radio or television broadcast, or (c) to provide essential voluntary services or urgent public support services (including the provision of food banks or other support for the homeless or vulnerable people, blood donation sessions or support in an emergency).*

In accordance with the Regulations and the latest guidance issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (the “**MHCLG Guidance**”; available from www.gov.uk), the Gurdwara is closed for acts of communal worship. We have also decided to close for acts of solitary worship, and instead we encourage worshippers to join our livestream services on Facebook and YouTube.

The MHCLG Guidance elaborates on the exceptions listed in section 5(6) of the Regulations:

| Exception | What We Are Doing |
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| Funerals in places of worship and crematoria, where the congregation are members of the deceased’s household or close family. In a case where no members are attending, friends can attend. A distance of two metres should be maintained as per Public Health England guidelines. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will be performing shortened funeral services as permitted by the MHCLG Guidance for family members of the deceased’s <u>immediate</u> household, though we encourage bereaved family members to participate by livestream. • The Gurdwara has a prayer hall with a capacity for 400 people. Accordingly, there is more than sufficient space internally to maintain social distancing. The Gurdwara has decided to impose a maximum capacity cap of 20 people but intends to stay well below this maximum cap and ideally would encourage no more than 10 attendees at any one time. • Social distancing in accordance with Public Health England guidelines will be maintained at all times. • The Gurdwara has implemented a comprehensive cleaning protocol in line with Public Health England guidance. • Whereas conventionally, the deceased is first brought to the Gurdwara before being taken to the crematorium, this will no longer be permitted. |
| A minister of religion or worship leader may leave their home to travel to their place of worship. A place of worship may broadcast an act of worship, whether over the internet or otherwise. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our ministers of religion will travel to the Gurdwara in order to perform religious services for livestreaming. In addition to the ministers, other designated volunteers will also attend the Gurdwara to facilitate the livestream. • Our ministers and designated volunteers have been instructed not to attend if they are experiencing symptoms of Covid-19 or if they are required to self-isolate. |
| For the purpose of hosting essential voluntary or public service, such as food banks, homeless services, and blood donation sessions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Gurdwara has a commercial kitchen and as such, is working with local hospitals, NHS facilities and local charities to prepare and deliver (or have delivered) cooked meals to NHS workers and vulnerable people who are self-isolating. • Again, Public Health England guidelines are being observed in the preparation and distribution of cooked meals prepared by the Gurdwara. |

The Gurdwara is in full compliance with the Regulations and with the latest MHCLG Guidance and Public Health England guidance.

The Trustees of the Central Gurdwara (British Isles) London Khalsa Jatha
11 April 2020

Contact Details:

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