

**MAYOR ROKHSANA FIAZ - UPDATE ABOUT CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19):
RESPONSE TO PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT THAT
SOCIAL DISTANCING WILL BE ENFORCED NATIONWIDE**

23 March 2020

Dear Newham Resident,

Earlier this evening, the Prime Minister announced new measures to enforce social distancing across the country as the confirmed cases and deaths due to Coronavirus continue to rise in the UK.

In Newham, six deaths attributed to the virus have so far been confirmed, and those infected rising to 70 people as of today, up 13 from Sunday. To be frank we expect the figures in Newham to rise. My heartfelt condolences to those families who have lost loved ones, and I wish those infected a speedy recovery.

We also welcome the Prime Minister's statement urging people to limit travel, to stay at home and to practise social distancing. Amongst the emergency measures he announced, and which will be reviewed in three weeks, are:

- There will be the prevention of gatherings of more than two people;
- Unless you are going to essential work, you will only be allowed to step out for shopping and exercise once-a-day; or for any medical need; or if you are helping an elderly or vulnerable person;
- All social events will be stopped including weddings, except burials;
- Non-essential retail businesses will be required to close, as will playgrounds in parks and libraries;
- Police have powers to disperse and fine people for breaching these restrictions.

I first want to assure you that we as a council are doing all we can to support you, which is why from tomorrow we will be putting in place further measures to stop the spread of this deadly virus spreading in Newham in line with this new guidance from the Government.

We all need to play our part in stopping the spread of coronavirus, which is why we have taken the decision to change the way we are delivering some of our council services to you.

A full list of the Newham Council services that are affected can be found at www.newham.gov.uk/servicestatus but please be reassured that we are doing everything we can to maintain as much business as normal, but we need to protect residents and our staff from unnecessary risk.

During this challenging and very difficult time I continue to urge all of you to do your bit to help prevent the spread of the virus; that means following all relevant health advice, from personal hygiene to minimising social contact with others, working from home were possible, restrict your gatherings with other people including in parks, recreational areas and places of worship, and only completing essential travel. Stations in Newham this morning were far busier than they should have been given the current circumstances.

It also means acting in the best interests of others, including not panic buying in our shops and supermarkets, which causes shortages where none really exist and puts the most vulnerable at risk.

For all the latest and best advice please visit our website www.newham.gov.uk

As ever please keep safe and look after one another.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rokhsana Fiaz". To the right of the signature, the year "2021" is written vertically.

Rokhsana Fiaz
Mayor of Newham

**People at the Heart
of Everything We Do**