

**From:** HQ <HQ@vetireland.ie>

**Date:** Saturday 28 March 2020 at 18:16

**Subject:** VetALERT 10h/20 - Veterinary Ireland COVID-19 Update - 28th March 2020

## Veterinary Ireland COVID-19 Update - 28th March 2020

### SUMMARY:

- **New Public Health Measures** from midnight 27<sup>th</sup> March: Click [HERE](#)
- **Taoiseach's Address** 27<sup>th</sup> March 2020: Click [HERE](#)
- **Essential Businesses - Veterinary Practices:** Click [HERE](#)
- **VCI - Guidance to Veterinary Registrants:** Click [HERE](#)
- **Cocooning** for over 70s and extremely medically vulnerable: Click [HERE](#)
- **Health & Safety Authority (HSA) COVID-19 Advice:** Click [HERE](#)
- **Revenue - COVID-19 Wage Subsidy Scheme:** Click [HERE](#)
- **Veterinary Ireland COVID-19 Website** - Click [HERE](#)

Please be aware that this is a rapidly developing situation, with relevant information being updated on an hourly basis.

Members are therefore advised to log on to the [HSE.IE](#) and [GOV.IE](#) COVID-19 update pages on a regular basis, for the latest information.

Take care and God bless

Peter Bishton

Deputy Chief Executive

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### [Taoiseach's Address / New Public Health Measures](#)

You will no doubt by now be aware of the Taoiseach's address last night, putting further restrictions in place.

The basic tenets of the measures is **for all citizens to stay at home**, with a few stated exceptions, including **essential businesses unable to operate home-working**.

These measures have been in place from midnight last night (**27<sup>th</sup> March 2020**) and are currently in effect until **Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2020**.

Full details of the new Public Health Measures can be found [HERE](#)

The full text of the Taoiseach's address can be found [HERE](#)

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### **Essential Businesses - Veterinary Practices**

An important element of the Taoiseach's address was the inclusion of "**for farming purposes, ie food production or care of animals**", as being one of the **services for which travel to and from work is permitted**.

A full list of essential businesses for which travel to and from work is permitted is being drawn up by the Government and will be published on the [GOV.IE COVID-19 website](#) as early as possible today, Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

In the meantime, the Government advice for businesses and services which consider themselves essential, **is to remain open, pending publication of the full list**.

Also, the list of [Essential Retail Businesses](#) has been updated, and included at number 6. is “*Retail sale of essential items for the health and welfare of animals, including animal feed and medicines, animal food, pet food and animal supplies including bedding.*”

All essential services operating from central locations (i.e. not working from home) must ensure safe working conditions are in place - specific advice is available from the **Health & Safety Authority (HSA) website**: Click [HERE](#).

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## **[Guidance from Veterinary Council of Ireland \(VCI\)](#)**

The VCI has this afternoon issued guidance to all Registrants on the new Public Health Measures and veterinary practice.

Click [HERE](#)

In summary, the Guidance states that Veterinary Practice is deemed an essential service, but that veterinary services should be confined to those supporting food production, in addition to emergency treatment and care required in the interests of animal welfare.

The VCI document requests that all registrants over 70 years of age and those with underlying health conditions now shield or Cocoon, as per the direction of An Taoiseach last night. Also, the VCI asks that all veterinary practices and colleagues support one another as much as possible at this difficult time, and that the health and well-being of Registrants is imperative, in the best interests of animal welfare and public health.

The VCI document concludes with guidance on Healthcare Protocols and on the Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in veterinary practices.

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## **[Cocooning for Over 70s and Extremely Medically Vulnerable](#)**

Under the new Measures, [Cocooning](#) has been introduced for those **over 70 years** of age and those who are **extremely medically vulnerable** to COVID-19.

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## **[TVI / ERAD Update](#)**

As part of these cocooning measures, and in addition to the guidance from the VCI, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) has today issued an instruction to veterinary management at meat plants that TVIs over 70 will not be rostered from Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2020 in accordance with the Government's instructions on “cocooning” for the over 70s.

Other medically compromised TVIs should also follow the Government's instructions on Cocooning.

Veterinary Ireland has repeated a call to DAFM for all TVIs to be issued with appropriate PPE, conscious that availability is tight at present and all supply is being prioritised for the HSE. Once this becomes available, we would expect it to be distributed.

Practices are also reminded to place orders with suppliers for PPE, in order to ensure delivery, once supplies become available.

In relation to the ERAD Programme, the current position of DAFM is that tests scheduled for next week can proceed – further guidance will issue early next week.

PVPs over 70 are also required to follow the Government's instructions on Cocooning. Farmers over 70 are also to Cocoon.

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## [Temporary COVID-19 Wage Subsidy Scheme - Transitional Phase](#)

Information has been received from both Revenue and the Small Firms Association on the transitional phase of this new COVID-19 related scheme.

Guidance to assist employers, payroll operators, agents and other stakeholders on the operation of the transitional phase of the **Temporary COVID-19 Wage Subsidy Scheme** (see [eBrief 47/20](#)) has been published on the Revenue Website: Click [HERE](#).

For a set of FAQs on the Scheme: Click [HERE](#).

We will keep you apprised on further updates and developments as well as additional FAQs as they arise, but as this is a fast-moving situation, please bear with us while we try to accumulate the information, advice and guidance.

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## [Revenue - COVID-19 Advice webpage](#)


In addition, Revenue has set up a specific webpage related to COVID-19: Click [HERE](#).



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