



The government is launching the [NHS COVID-19 app](#) in England and Wales on Thursday 24 September.

Everyone is being urged to familiarise themselves with the app ahead of the launch.

When entering some businesses - such as pubs, restaurants, hairdressers and cinemas, or visitor attractions, or libraries, (anywhere the public goes where they'll be congregating for more than 15 minutes in close proximity) - those venues will need to keep a record of who is there, and when.

That's so that when someone tests positive for coronavirus, the NHS Test and Trace teams can trace people who have recently been in close contact with that person.

So the app is to make that process easier and more reliable for those businesses, as well as for the general public who visit those places.

There are two elements:

Right now, businesses and other venues* across England and Wales are being urged by the government to ensure that they have [NHS 'QR' code posters](#) visible on entry, so that customers can use their smartphones to easily check-in.

* You should create and display a QR code if you are a business, place of worship or community organisation with a physical location that is open to the public; or an event which is taking place in a physical location.

From Thursday 24 September, the general public are encouraged to download the new NHS COVID-19 app, that they should then use when entering a premises, by showing their smartphone to the businesses' QR code poster.

The phone app and the QR code poster do the rest. It will create a digital record that you visited that venue at that time, and that record will be logged on your phone for 21 days.

If there is a positive case identified at a venue, the identification for that venue will be sent to all mobile phone devices in England and Wales, and if there is a match with your phone, you may get an alert with advice on what to do next based on the level of risk.

The app does the work. It takes away the need for people with the app to manually check-in at venues, although those premises will still need to provide a manual system for people who don't have the app. That could be a handwritten register.

Businesses are being asked now to download the free posters and display them in their premises ahead of the launch of the app. That way, customers can use them straight away, once the app is launched.

Some businesses already use their own QR system, but they're being asked to switch to the NHS Test and Trace QR code.

Ongoing trials of the app have shown it highly effective when used alongside traditional contact tracing to identify contacts of those who have tested positive.

If you are a business or you are holding an event at which the public are likely to congregate for more than 15 minutes in close proximity, you can [download the free QR code poster here](#).

If you have more than one venue, you need to create a separate QR code for each location.

For more information about the NHS COVID-19 app, visit [covid19.nhs.uk](https://www.covid19.nhs.uk)