

Rule of six won't apply to coaches in England, DfT confirms

By **routeone Team** - 2020-09-17

The Department for Transport (DfT) has confirmed that the newly announced 'rule of six' social distancing regulations will not affect coach tour operators in England.

From Monday 14 September new rules in England and Scotland restricted indoor and outdoor gatherings of more than six people after an escalation in the coronavirus COVID-19 'R' number.

Following publication of the regulations, the Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT) sought clarity on the situation regarding coach passengers.

DfT has now confirmed that the new regulations do not directly impact the number of passengers that can be carried in a coach. Operators should therefore continue to follow the Safer Transport Guidance for Operators published by DfT and continue in accordance with their own risk assessments.

However, once off the mode of transport and when visiting an attraction or venue, passengers will need to remain within their own households or as an individual party in groups of no more than six persons.

According to the Tourism Alliance, a tour guide can still take up to 30 persons from a coach or other method of transport on a walking tour around a destination, provided individual groups of no more than six persons socially distance.

Coach Tourism Chair (CTA) John Wales says: "This is an encouraging and practical step by the government to balance people's freedom to enjoy a holiday, while keeping to the rules. It is also a huge relief for the coaching industry that can now carry on with its UK tour programmes and day tours for this autumn and winter."

Details on how the governments of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland interpret the rules are yet to be revealed.

CTA continues to urge the government to extend the furlough scheme to tourism businesses, which continue to struggle through current restrictions. It is supporting recent proposals from CPT to gain extended finance holidays for the next 12 months.

routeone Team