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Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Guidance on Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders and Notices

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Purpose

The Scottish Government is issuing this guidance on temporary traffic regulation orders and notices in Scotland during the period public health measures are in place to reduce transmission of coronavirus (COVID 19). It has been produced in response to requests from local authorities regarding ongoing physical distancing measures and the potential need to close roads to traffic or reallocate road space in favour of pedestrians and cyclists allowing for physical distancing measures.

Background

Physical distancing measures are for everyone and the focus of the Scottish Government has been on trying to reduce physical interaction between people in order to reduce the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). We have been asking the people of Scotland to maintain a 2 metre distance from each other as a matter of public health and safety. The Scottish Government is clear that the incidence of coronavirus (COVID 19) is a danger to the public and there remains an ongoing likelihood of transmission in the community while public health measures are in place.

The Scottish Government, in consideration of the observed rise in walking and cycling while public health measures are in place and the necessity of maintaining physical distancing, is supportive of local authorities considering whether it may be appropriate to make adaptions to their road network, such as closing some roads to certain vehicles or reallocating road space to pedestrians and cyclists.

The Scottish Government also wishes to draw local authorities' attention to guidance on the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-stakeholders-on-the-coronavirus-scotland-act-2020/>

In particular, local authorities making traffic regulation orders can consider whether the adjustments made by the Act in relation to publishing or making available documents are applicable. Where publication would either give rise to a significant risk of the transmission of coronavirus or would be likely to be ineffective or inappropriate due to action taken to control the incidence or spread of coronavirus authorities may alternatively comply with requirements electronically. For example, press notices and on site display of notices may not always be necessary or appropriate and websites and other communication methods can be considered.

Local authorities have existing powers to regulate the use of their roads. Below are noted some existing statutory powers that local authorities may wish to consider using in immediate response to physical distancing due to coronavirus (COVID 19).

All other existing powers and functions remain available as local authorities consider appropriate.

Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTROs) - Section 14(1) Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984

Traffic authorities may make temporary traffic regulation orders covering their roads for a number of reasons for up to 18 months. In particular, where they are satisfied that traffic on a given road should be restricted or prohibited because of the likelihood of danger to the public the authority may make a TTRO restricting temporarily the use of that road by vehicles or by vehicles of particular types or by pedestrians.

It is a matter for individual traffic authorities to form a view on what specific circumstances in their area may require restrictions and for how long.

The physical distancing measures that we are asking everyone to undertake, for public safety reasons, have an impact on the amount of safe walking/cycling space required. This may particularly be the case where there are increases in numbers of pedestrians and cyclists all requiring to observe physical distancing. Changes to road space allocation and other temporary measures may need to be considered while Scotland is working to slow the transmission of coronavirus (COVID 19).

TTROs require no prior consultation and are relatively flexible so there is the potential for local authorities to assess and put in place temporary measures relatively quickly and responsively.

Temporary Traffic Regulation Notice (TTRNs) - Section 14(2) Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984

Traffic authorities may make TTRNs for the same reasons they may make TTROs but where they consider it necessary or expedient that the measures should come into force without delay. TTRNs for reason of danger to the public can last for up to 21 days if necessary and can be renewed.

TTRNs allow traffic authorities to respond very quickly to urgent circumstances when necessary but are not to be used for long periods of time. They can allow time for traffic authorities to put in place longer term measures if they consider it appropriate.

If you require further information on the Scottish Government's views please contact ActiveTravelEnquiries@transport.gov.scot



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