

Fixed penalty notices issued under COVID-19 emergency health regulations by police forces in England and Wales

Introduction

This release presents the latest data on the police use of COVID-19 enforcement notices and includes revisions to previously published figures.

Data for Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) issued in England is collated centrally by the ACRO Criminal Records Office and cover the 39 territorial forces, the British Transport Police and Ministry of Defence Police. Data for FPNs issued in Wales are collated separately but summary figures are included at the end of this release and in force level tables.

The figures below relate to enforcement activity by police forces and these data should be seen in the context of wider police activity to engage with the public to explain and encourage compliance with the new regulations. For example, the police in England and Wales recorded a total of 134,188 Covid-19 related incidents in the 4 weeks to the 24th May. This will include incidents where officers have proactively offered advice to people, responded to reports from the members of the public about breaches of the regulation by others and offences where criminals have sought to take advantage of the pandemic to commit a crime.

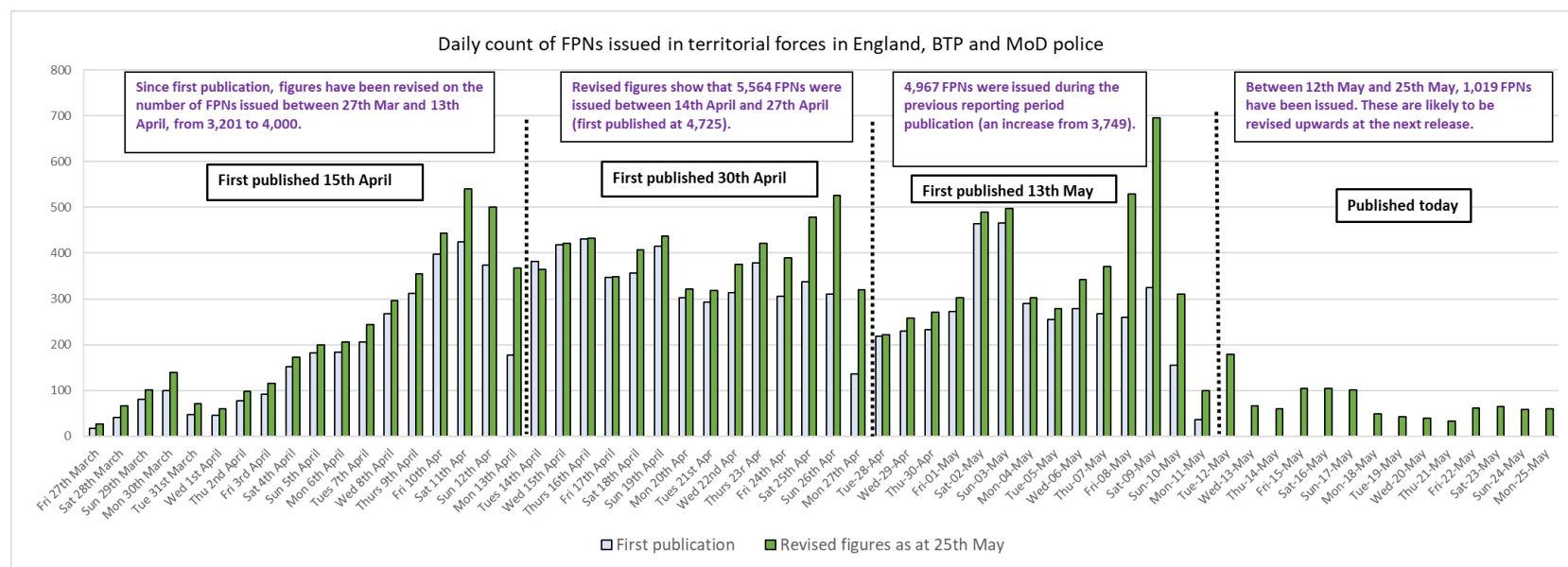
Headline figures for England

In total, 15,552 notices¹ have been recorded as having been issued in England between Friday 27th March and Monday 25th May. Chart 1 shows previously published figures for earlier reporting periods together with the latest revisions as more FPNs have been processed.

There was a general upward trend through early April peaking during the Easter Bank holiday weekend (10th to 13th April). Excluding some increases over subsequent weekends, there has since been a flatter trend with an apparent decline in the last two weeks. However, it is possible that figures for the most recent period are likely to be revised upwards when data are next released.

Chart 1: FPNs issued under COVID-19 regulations between 27th March and 25th May

¹ Includes two notices issued prior to 27th March.



Note: excludes 2 FPNs with incorrect date of issue

Of all enforcement notices issued:

- The vast majority (11,568) were issued for ‘Contravene requirement as to restriction of movement during emergency period’ (Table 1).
- The large majority (around 8 in 10) were issued to males (Table 2).
- Around 7 in 10 were issued to the under 35; with 37% issued to 18-24 year olds, 18% to those aged 25-29 and 14% to those aged 30-34 (Table 3).
- Of those FPNs where the individual issued with the notice had a self-identified ethnicity² recorded, over three-quarters (78%) were issued to people who self-identified as White. Just over one in eight (13%) went to Asians and 5% to those identifying as Black (Table 4).

² 25% of FPNs issued did not have the ethnicity of the individual identified.

- To date, 1,020 FPNs (or 7% of the 15,552 FPNs) have been identified as having been issued to repeat offenders, that is the individuals who have been fined two or more times. The vast majority of these (81%) being for those who had been fined twice (Table 5).

Table 1: Reasons for which FPNs has been issued under emergency COVID-19 regulations, between 27th March and 25th May in England

Reason for issue	As at 25th May
Contravene requirement as to restriction of movement during emergency period	11,568
Contravene a direction or fail to comply with instruction	2,201
Contravene requirement to not participate in a gathering in public of more than two people	4,031
Contravene requirement from a relevant person	425
Obstruct person carrying out a function under the regulations	289
Total to date	18,514

Note: The total in this table exceeds the headline measure of total FPNs issued as an FPN can be issued for more than one reason.

Table 2: FPNs issued under emergency COVID-19 regulations, by gender, between 27th March and 25th May in England

	As at 25th May
Male	81%
Female	17%
Unknown	2%

Table 3: FPNs issued under emergency COVID-19 regulations, by age group, between 27th March and 25th May in England

	As at 25th May
18-24	37%
25-29	18%
30-34	14%
35-39	10%
40-44	7%
45-49	6%
50-54	4%
55-59	2%

60-64	1%
65+	1%
Unknown	0%

Table 4: FPNs issued under emergency COVID-19 regulations, by ethnicity, between 27th March and 25th May in England

	As at 25th May
White	78%
Asian	13%
Black	5%
Chinese	0%
Mixed	2%
Other	1%

Notes: Excludes 25% of FPNs where the ethnicity of the individual issued with the notice was 'not stated'.

Table 5: Number of FPNs issued to repeat offenders under emergency COVID-19 regulations, between 27th March and 25th May in England

Number of FPNs	As at 25th May
2	827
3	126
4	49
5	9
6	6
7	1
8	1
9	0
10	1
Total	1,020

Summary of FPNs issued in Wales

- In total, 1,395 FPNs have been issued in Wales between 27th March and 25th May.
- Similar to England, most FPNs³ (1,069) had been issued for 'Contravene requirement as to restriction of movement during emergency period'.
- Over three-quarters (78% or 1,084) had been issued to males and just under two-thirds (62%) were to individuals aged between 18 and 34.
- Excluding FPNs where ethnicity was not recorded, the vast majority (91%) were issued to those self-defining as White with four percent of FPNs issued to those identifying as Asians.

Understanding the data

These data cover the number of FPNs issued under COVID-19 regulations which came into effect from 27th March. Headline analysis includes data from FPNs issued in England (including the BTP and the MoD police). Data from Welsh forces are collated separately and are therefore presented separately.

Data presented in this release represent the number of FPNs issued. While the vast majority of FPNs relate to a single individual, some people have been issued with an FPN more than once. An FPN can be issued for more than one reason.

Figures on the number of FPNs issued should not be seen as a measure of the amount of police activity involved in policing the new measures, or the level of public non-compliance, since fines are issued as a last resort after initial attempts to engage with the public to explain and encourage compliance with the new regulations have not been successful.

Owing to the time taken to process FPNs, figures presented here are likely to underestimate the volume of FPNs issued each day and will be updated with each release as new data are received.

The nature of the administrative process involved in issuing an FPN is such that there is sometimes missing data or discrepancies when data are returned. For example, as ethnicity is self-defining this is not always completed, and the level of missing data needs to be considered when interpreting such figures.

Force level figures [can be found here](#). However, caution should be taken to make comparisons between forces as variation in is likely to reflect a range of factors including how the force has decided to police non-compliance as well as differences in local context (e.g. composition and density of the local population).

³ In total 1,531 reasons have been recorded. This figure exceeds the total headline figure as more than one reason can be given for issuing an FPN.