



WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

TITLE Interim Review of the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (No. 2) (Wales) Regulations 2020

DATE 7 August 2020

BY Mark Drakeford MS, First Minister

The Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (No. 2) (Wales) Regulations 2020 place a series of restrictions on gatherings, the movement of people, and the operation of businesses, including closures. They require businesses, which are open to take reasonable measures to minimise the risk of exposure to coronavirus. They are designed to protect people from the spread of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2).

Welsh Ministers are required to review the need for the requirements and restrictions and their proportionality every 21 days. The last full review – the sixth – took place on 30 July and set out a phased approach for the next three-week cycle.

The scientific and medical advice shows that, overall, levels of coronavirus transmission in Wales are low. The outbreak in Wrexham, centred on the Maelor Hospital, now appears to be under control. We have therefore concluded that there is headroom to re-open further parts of our society and economy.

From the 10th August we will re-open swimming pools, indoor fitness studios, spas, gyms and leisure centres as well as children's indoor play areas.

As we move into the green phase in our traffic light system, with more and more premises, workplaces and venues now open, we need to make sure that that people and businesses comply with the Regulations and adhere to guidance on operating in a Covid secure way.

The vast majority are doing so, but for those that are not, this week we are strengthening the provisions on enforcement in the Regulations. This would enable enforcement officers in local authorities identify non-compliance, seek to remedy the situation and then if necessary issue a premises improvement notice to highlight

breaches and specify measures that need be taken on any premises to comply with the law. Where a Premises Improvement Notice is not complied with, or where a breach is sufficiently serious, premises can be closed by issuing a Premises Closure Notice. Where notices are issued signs will be displayed in a prominent place to inform the public that improvement is needed on a premises or that a premises has had to close.

We continue to explore whether we can make changes to the rules about people meeting indoors and will provide more detail on this next week. Given the resurgence of the virus elsewhere in the UK and across the world, and the increased risk of transmission from meetings indoors, we continue to take a cautious approach. If conditions in Wales worsen we may have to reverse these or other easements.

Coronavirus has not gone away – we all have a shared and ongoing responsibility to keep Wales safe.

This statement is being issued during recess in order to keep members informed. Should members wish me to make a further statement or to answer questions on this when the Senedd returns I would be happy to do so.