

Easing of Lockdown: FAQs following the session on 15 July 2020 – updated 7 September 2020

Introduction

A session was carried out for the third sector, led by Cardiff Third Sector Council around the easing of lockdown. The session covered three main areas:

- Risk assessments
- Social distancing, PPE and other mitigating actions
- Accessing accurate information.

During and following the session a number of questions were raised. This is a response to some of those questions. More information will be made available as it is known.

FAQs

Question: *When can Community Centres reopen?*

Answer provided by Shared Regulated Services via Cardiff Council: “The latest change to affect community centres, which came into effect 10 August 2020, was unheralded and unannounced but in terms of the impact on community centres is quite significant.

From Monday 10 August, the requirement that community centres should remain closed unless providing an essential voluntary service or a public service at the request of Welsh Ministers or the Local Authority was revoked.

This means that you no longer need to seek permission to open the building for these services.

The Welsh Government are in the process of updating their guidance on community centres to reflect this change which is why it still mentions the need to seek approval but they have updated the information about community centres on the list of businesses that must be closed - <https://gov.wales/coronavirus-covid-19-closure-businesses-and-premises-html> which confirms that community centres can open for activities allowable in the Regulations and to provide public services without having to seek approval from local authorities. There is a sting in the tail however as, even with the requirement to be closed except in certain circumstances removed, you must still take into account the law with regard to indoor gatherings.

It is still the case that no person may, without a reasonable excuse gather in premises indoors with any other person apart from—

- (i) the members of their household,
- (ii) their carer, or
- (iii) a person they are providing care to.

However, there are a number of situations which are defined as ‘reasonable excuses’. Like the Regulations these have been amended and added to over time and as of today they are as follows –

A reasonable excuse includes the need to do the following—

- (a) obtain medical assistance, including accessing any of the services referred to in paragraph 10 of Schedule 4 or accessing veterinary services;
- (b) provide or receive care or assistance, including relevant personal care, within the meaning of paragraph 7(3B) of Schedule 4 to the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, where the person receiving the care is a vulnerable person;
- (c) provide or receive emergency assistance;
- (d) donate blood;
- (e) work or provide voluntary or charitable services;
- (f) where the person is an elite athlete, train or compete;
- (g) attend a solemnization of a marriage or formation of a civil partnership—
 - (i) as a party to the marriage or civil partnership,
 - (ii) if invited to attend, or
 - (iii) as the carer of a person attending.
- (h) attend a funeral—
 - (i) as a person responsible for arranging the funeral,
 - (ii) if invited by a person responsible for arranging the funeral, or
 - (iii) as the carer of a person attending;
- (ha) attend a place of worship;
- (i) meet a legal obligation, including attending court or satisfying bail conditions, or to participate in legal proceedings;
- (j) access or receive public services
- (ja) access childcare or participate in supervised activities for children;
- (k) in relation to children who do not live in the same household as their parents, or one of their parents, continue existing arrangements for access to, and contact between, parents and children, and for the purposes of this paragraph, “parent” includes a person who is not a parent of the child, but who has parental responsibility for, or who has care of, the child;
- (l) move home;
- (m) undertake activities in connection with the purchase, sale, letting, or rental of residential property.
- (o) avoid injury or illness or escape a risk of harm.
- (p) exercise with others, in a gathering of no more than 30 people, at a fitness studio, gym, swimming pool, other indoor leisure centre or facility or any other open premises.

The First Minister announced last Friday (14 August) that the Welsh Government intends to add the reasonable excuse of meeting with no more than 30 people to eat a meal following a wedding, civil partnership or funeral to the list of reasonable excuses to gather together indoors. It is anticipated this proposed change will occur on Saturday 22 August.

Many of these reasonable excuses will not apply in a community centre but any activities that fall within any of the points above can now take place without needing permission.

This does mean that children's nurseries and play schemes can take place and if you have host any exercise classes such as yoga, pilates or martial arts then they can resume albeit with numbers restricted to 30. Each group should of course assess the risks that are unique to their group.

Unfortunately, at the moment any activities that do not fit within the reasonable excuses cannot resume. This means that social groups such as a WI group or art classes are not permitted indoors as this would currently breach the indoor gatherings rule.

I should also stress that the fact that a community centre can now open and that a specific activity would constitute a reasonable excuse for an indoor gathering does not in itself mean that it should take place. Each group should assess the risks associated with their activity and a decision to resume must be taken on the basis of the safety of group members. Both the community centre and the group using the building must take all reasonable measures to ensure that social distancing is in place.

Key bits of guidance that you may find helpful relate to reasonable measures (<https://gov.wales/taking-all-reasonable-measures-minimise-risk-exposure-coronavirus-workplaces-and-premises-open>) and access to toilets (<https://gov.wales/providing-safer-toilets-public-use-coronavirus>) . The operator of the building and the hirers may also need to consider whether the collection of names and contact information might be required for the NHS Test Trace Protect (track & trace) system [https://gov.wales/test-trace-protect-guidance-employers.](https://gov.wales/test-trace-protect-guidance-employers)"

Question: *Do we know if there is any specific PPE that we need have on hand for First Aiders?*

Answer: One of the leading charity insurers are currently providing the following guidance. PPE equivalent to those used in medical/healthcare must be provided for both First Aiders and cleaning up any contaminated waste – these include face visor, FFP2/3 mask, disposable gloves, clinical waste bag and disposable apron. They recommend a grab bag. All items should be for single use only and must be changes after each First Aid intervention and not used between different people. The PPE needs to be put on and taken off in the correct order. Prior to using PPE staff or volunteers should watch the Public Health England guidance video on how to safely put on and take off PPE.

They also recommend the provision of alcohol hand rub and masks for the person requiring First Aid.

St John's Ambulance have also produced guidance for [how to do CPR on an adult COVID-19 update](#) including not to carry out the breaths part of CPR.

Question: *Is there any guidance for open access play settings with children & young people?*

Answer: The Westminster Government have issued [COVID-19: Guidance for managing playgrounds and outdoor gyms](#) on the 17 July 2020. There is also information on the Welsh Governments [Coronavirus regulations: frequently asked questions](#), in the section on sport and outdoor activity.

The Wales guidance for indoor play areas is available <https://gov.wales/indoor-play-areas-children-coronavirus-guidance.html>.

Question: *Does the £60 fine apply to a specific offence in relation to COVID-19 activities?*

Answer: For not meeting the legal requirements, there are three to comply with:

- All reasonable measures must be taken to maintain 2 metre distancing on premises or while someone is working.
- Other reasonable measures must be taken to minimise the risk of exposure to coronavirus. These may be required in addition of 2 metre distancing or instead of. This refers to reducing face to face interaction and enhanced hygiene and other mitigation actions.
- Information must be provided about how to minimise the risk of exposure to coronavirus on premises.

Taking all reasonable measures to minimise the risk of exposure to coronavirus in workplaces and premises open to the public, Welsh Government, 13 July 2020.

Question: *Should we be asking clients who drop in to wear face masks on or before entering?*

Answer: As of 14 September 2020 it is now a requirement to wear face masks before entering venues, such as shops. The Face coverings unless otherwise specified should be three-layer face coverings. For more information see <https://gov.wales/face-coverings-guidance-public>

There are exceptions for some people due to disabilities and impairments and the guidance recommends that they carry information if possible which demonstrates they have a reasonable excuse.

Question: *Do we need to put our council PPE in a separate waste bag or are they put in with general waste?*

Answer: The guidance from Westminster for England [available online](#) under “If you run a business or organisation’ is available. For individuals the advice is to put in the ‘black bag’ in the same guidance.

The question was asked of Cardiff Council and their response was: “PPE can be put in the normal general waste bag, double bagged and ideally stored for 72 hours before putting out for collection.”

For clarity general waste bags are black bags, PPE cannot be recycled.

Question: *Where can we get up to date information on who is open for providing services?*

Answer: C3SC have a range of directories which are updated with information as we are informed. The directories are available from the website. In addition, Dewis Cymru is being updated as more services are being opened up.

It is important to note that due to social distancing, it is possible that as services open up that the numbers are restricted and so there may be limited capacity. With prioritisation being managed by the organisations or groups themselves or in collaboration with the commissioners if appropriate.

Question: *Can volunteer befrienders start visiting clients at home in their gardens? What if the client doesn't have side access and volunteers have to walk through the client's house to the garden?*

Answer: There does not appear to be specific guidance prepared for Wales (there is for Scotland). The following however is in the Welsh Government's [Coronavirus regulations: frequently asked questions](#):

*“Members of two separate extended households (and any carers) are allowed to meet outdoors as long as you maintain **social distancing**. This does not need to be the same people from the same household every time. Maintaining the physical distancing measures while outdoors means there is a low risk of infection, but low risk does not mean no risk. So although you can do this, please think about whether you should do this.”*

“Can friends or family from another extended household come into my home?”

Not generally, no, unless they are passing through to reach an outdoor area, or they have another legitimate purpose for being there such as providing care.”

The FAQs make it clear that social distancing must be maintained throughout.

Befrienders will continue to need to be DBS checked, whether face to face or by telephone. Information on current requirements for DBS are available from the [WCVA website](#).