



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

ATISN 15417

10 September 2021

Dear

ATISN 15417 – Mask data

Thank you for your request to the Welsh Government for information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) received on 09 August. You requested the following information:

- 1. The decision making process to allow nightclubs, a public place, to open without people having to wear masks*
- 2. The decision making process to force people getting married to wear masks during the “public” aspect of a private service, but to remove the masks afterwards, usually 30 minutes, and hug, kiss, shout, dance etc.*
- 3. The data given to Welsh Government to allow them to differentiate between a 30 minute wedding service with masks and a nightclub without masks.*
- 4. The advice from the scientific community advising the Welsh Government to allow them to differentiate between a 30 minute wedding service with masks and a nightclub without masks*
- 5. The advice from the legal community advising the Welsh Government to allow them to differentiate between a 30 minute wedding service with masks and a nightclub without masks*
- 6. The exact moment a wedding is considered legal in wales; i.e. is it when the document has been signed, is it when the registrars finally decide to shut up waffling and leave?*

Our response

1. The decision making process to allow nightclubs, a public place, to open without people having to wear masks

There are several baseline measures in place in Wales to reduce transmission of COVID-19. Face coverings can be effective in reducing the transmission in public and community settings. The effectiveness stems mostly from reducing the emission of the virus-carrying particles when worn by an infected person. They may also provide some protection to an uninfected wearer.

The First Minister has been very clear that coronavirus has not gone away. While we have been able to take a significant steps in moving away from complex legal restrictions, we must not abandon all the simple measures which have done so much to keep us all safe.

Face coverings remain a legal requirement in all indoors public places, with the exception of hospitality settings. These requirements are kept under constant review and we expect to gradually ease requirements in other settings. This began with hospitality settings from 7 August, as face coverings were already not required when eating or drinking, as part of the wider lifting of restrictions on this sector.

2. The decision making process to force people getting married to wear masks during the “public” aspect of a private service, but to remove the masks afterwards, usually 30 minutes, and hug, kiss, shout, dance etc.

As signalled during the last review, we will not be making any substantive changes in this review cycle. Some small amendments are being made to help provide more clarity to existing rules.

Coronavirus has not gone away. While we are able to remain at Alert Level Zero, we must not abandon all the simple measures which have done so much to keep us all safe. Taking responsibility means we can get back to doing the things we’ve missed the most. We all have a reason to keep Wales safe.

Some minor changes to the regulations came into force on Saturday 28 August. One of which was; Exempting people attending wedding and civil partnership ceremonies from legal requirements to wear a face covering, bringing consistency with wedding receptions which are already exempt.

- 3. The data given to Welsh Government to allow them to differentiate between a 30 minute wedding service with masks and a nightclub without masks.**
- 4. The advice from the scientific community advising the Welsh Government to allow them to differentiate between a 30 minute wedding service with masks and a nightclub without masks**
- 5. The advice from the legal community advising the Welsh Government to allow them to differentiate between a 30 minute wedding service with masks and a nightclub without masks**

For more information on the role of face coverings please see the latest advice provided by the Technical Advisory Group:

<https://gov.wales/technical-advisory-group-advice-5-august-restriction-review-html#section-77921>

6. The exact moment a wedding is considered legal in wales; i.e. is it when the document has been signed, is it when the registrars finally decide to shut up waffling and leave?

Marriage law is non-devolved and is set by the UK Government and, as such, the Welsh Government cannot comment on the practicalities of this law. Should you wish to gain clarity on this subject from the UK Government, more information on how to do so can be found on the UK Government website at the following address:

<https://www.gov.uk/make-a-freedom-of-information-request/how-to-make-an-foi-request>

If you have any queries about this request, please do not hesitate to contact me at the address below. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future correspondence.

Please note: the Welsh Government is facing unprecedented challenges during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

As a result resources, both finances and people, are being diverted away from many of our usual activities to deal with the pandemic. This will undoubtedly impact on our ability to comply with the normal requirements for information rights work and as a result you may experience delays when making information rights requests during the pandemic. We thank you for your understanding during this time.

The following is a link to the blog page of the Information Commissioner's web site where you can find an article entitled "FOI and the coronavirus: a measured approach"

<https://ico.org.uk/about-the-ico/news-and-events/icos-blog-on-its-information-rights-work/>

The request you sent me contains personal information about you - for example, your name and address. The Welsh Government will be the controller for this information and, in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation, it will be processed in order to fulfil our public task and meet our legal obligations under the Act to provide you with a response. We will only use this personal information to deal with your request and any matters which arise as a result of it. We will keep your personal information and all other information relating to your request for three years from the date on which your request is finally closed. Your personal information will then be disposed of securely.

Under data protection legislation, you have the right:

- to be informed of the personal data we hold about you and to access it
- require us to rectify inaccuracies in that data
- to (in certain circumstances) object to or restrict processing
- for (in certain circumstances) your data to be 'erased'
- to (in certain circumstances) data portability
- to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) who is our independent regulator for data protection

For further information about the information which the Welsh Government holds and its use, or if you wish to exercise your rights under the GDPR, please see contact details below:

Data Protection Officer
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
CARDIFF
CF10 3NQ
Email: DataProtectionOfficer@gov.wales

The contact details for the Information Commissioner's Office are:

Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Telephone: 01625 545 745 or 0303 123 1113

Website: www.ico.org.uk

Any information released under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or Environmental Information Regulations 2004 will be listed in the Welsh Government's Disclosure Log (at <https://gov.wales/freedom-of-information-responses>).

Yours sincerely,