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Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Lee Waters AS/MS
Dirprwy Weinidog yr Economi a Thrafnidiaeth
Deputy Minister for Economy and Transport

Ein cyf/Our ref VG/00311/20

Cardiff Airport
BAR UK (the Board of Airline representatives)
AOA (the Airport Operators Association)
ABTA (the Association of British Travel Agents)
ABI (the Association of British Insurers)

17 September 2020

Dear Colleague,

TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS UNDER PUBLIC HEALTH REGULATIONS IN RESPECT OF CORONAVIRUS AND THE IMPACT ON THE TRAVELLING PUBLIC

We wrote to you on 10 September about the travel restrictions resulting from the local lockdown provisions in Caerphilly CBC. We are now writing to you to draw your attention to similar provisions which the Welsh Government has made in respect of Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT). Yesterday (16 September) we announced Regulations had been made introducing restrictions in the RCT County Borough Council area. These Regulations came into effect at 6pm today (Thursday, 17 September).

The regulatory provisions are made by the Welsh Government using its public health powers, to introduce local coronavirus restrictions in RCT in response to a rapid increase in cases, in order to control the spread of the virus in Wales and further afield and protect public health. This includes restrictions on travelling beyond the borough's boundaries, including travelling overseas.

The restrictions are made under regulations and have the full power of UK law. It is therefore incumbent on the travel and insurance industries, as with the situation in Caerphilly, to take the necessary steps to mitigate the financial impact of the restrictions on members of the travelling public in RCT whose travel plans are disrupted as a result.

The relevant legislation in respect of the local lockdown in the RCT County Borough area is set out at:

- **[The Health Protection \(Coronavirus Restrictions\) \(No. 2\) \(Wales\) \(Amendment\) \(No. 10\) \(Rhondda Cynon Taf\) Regulations 2020](#)**

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

The guidance/FAQs relating to these regulations is available at:

- [Rhondda Cynon Taf lockdown: frequently asked questions](#)
- [Rhondda Cynon Taf area map: lockdown](#)

Other extant regulations, which are relevant to controlling the spread of coronavirus in Wales are available, as I explained in my previous letter, on the Welsh Government website.

One of the consequences of the restrictions now in RCT, as well as in the Caerphilly County Borough area, to control an increase in coronavirus cases and prevent its spread to other parts of Wales and further afield, is a restriction on travel into or out of the area.

In particular, people affected by the regulations will not be able to travel out of the borough to go on holiday for the time being. As a result, there will be travel disruption for residents who have holidays/flights booked in the coming weeks, which will impact on them financially.

This comes at a time when people are already under financial stress as a result of the virus and its economic impact. We expect the travel industry and the insurance industry to respond positively to the situation and refund any payments made for holidays and flights booked, which cannot be taken as a result of the change in the public health situation in the area and the corresponding change in the law in Wales.

In addition to the position faced by residents of RCT and Caerphilly, you will need to consider the impact of attempting to require residents – perhaps because they have been unable to claim a refund for their holiday – to board flights they have pre-booked. Given the evidence of community transmission within both areas, if residents do board planes they represent an increased health risk to fellow travellers and staff. That risk is heightened if arrangements are not introduced that provide for refunds for citizens who are complying with a legal requirement not to travel.

We also want to draw your attention to the fact that the Welsh Government has acted on a Wales-only basis to make international travel regulations in relation to specific countries with high prevalence rates of coronavirus, because of an increase of imported cases. These regulations are also included on the Welsh Government website for reference.

The Welsh Government will continue to make regulations in respect of quarantine requirements and will add or remove counties and territories, as necessary, depending on the risk of transmission.

We have not as yet received a response to our earlier letter (other than from Cardiff Airport) and we should be grateful for an early response to that letter as well as this one, outlining your position. This is, as you would expect, a matter of significant public interest and growing commentary and given the interest from elected members we shall be publishing this letter and the Caerphilly letter and your responses.

If there is anything in the regulations or related guidance that you would like to discuss, please get in touch with us or with our officials.

We enclose for ease of reference, a copy of the letter in respect of Caerphilly.

Yours sincerely,



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