

Coronavirus timeline: the response in Wales

Research Briefing

The table below highlights key developments in Wales in response to coronavirus (COVID-19).

<p>Easing of restrictions is paused</p> <p><i>17 June 2021</i></p> <p>The First Minister, Mark Drakeford, <u>announces</u> a 4 week in pause in the easing of coronavirus restrictions due to the new delta variant. He says the pause will allow more people to receive their second dose of a vaccine and help prevent an increase in serious illness as cases begin to rise again.</p>
<p>Supporting people with long COVID</p> <p><i>15 June 2021</i></p> <p>The Health Minister, Eluned Morgan, <u>outlines</u> how the government will work with NHS Wales to support people with long COVID. The latest estimate is that 50,000 people in Wales are experiencing long COVID and the ONS estimates that 9,400 of these people will be limited in their day-to-day activities.</p>
<p>All adults in Wales offered a vaccine ahead of schedule</p> <p><i>13 June 2021</i></p> <p><u>Health Minister Eluned Morgan confirms</u> that all eligible adults in Wales will have been offered a vaccine by Monday 14 June 2021 - six weeks ahead of schedule.</p>
<p>'Covid support hubs' pilot</p> <p><i>11 June 2021</i></p>



Hubs offering a range of support to people who need to self-isolate and to those hardest hit by the pandemic are being rolled out in a pilot scheme in parts of North Wales. The scheme is part of Wales' Test, Trace, Protect programme.

Vaccination strategy update

7 June 2021

The Welsh Government publishes an update on its COVID-19 vaccination strategy. The Health Minister says she is confident that, subject to supply, the Welsh Government will achieve milestone 3 (all adults offered their first dose by end July 2021) around four weeks early. For second doses, the Welsh Government expects all those who have come forward for their first dose to be offered a second dose by end of September 2021. It is also planning to re-offer the vaccine to those who did not take up the original offer. An online booking system will be established in Autumn 2021 to allow people to book and amend appointments. The strategy update also sets out how Wales is preparing for any decisions by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) about booster jabs and vaccinating children, following the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA's) approval of a vaccine for use in children over 12 years of age.

UK approval for Pfizer vaccine for 12-15 year olds

4 June 2021

The UK Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) approves use of the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine in 12 to 15 year olds.

Phased move to alert level one

4 June 2021

Wales' First Minister confirms that from Monday 7 June 2021, up to 30 people will be able to meet outdoors, and larger organised gatherings and events will be able to take place outdoors. Up to three households can form an extended household. 'The two-stage approach will enable more people to be vaccinated – and complete their two-dose course – amid growing concerns about the spread of the delta variant of the virus across the UK'.

Portugal moves to amber on international travel traffic light list

3 June 2021

From 04:00 hrs on Tuesday 8 June, [Portugal \(including Madeira and the Azores\) moves to the amber list](#), meaning travellers returning to Wales from Portugal will need to self-isolate. This reflects the position across the UK. The decision follows increased concern about the spread of variants of coronavirus. Seven countries – Afghanistan, Sudan, Sri Lanka, Bahrain, Trinidad and Tobago, Costa Rica, and Egypt – have also been added to the red list.

Contact tracing in Wales extended until March 2022

2 June 2021

The [Health Minister, Eluned Morgan, announces](#) that the Test, Trace, Protect service in Wales will be extended until March 2022. The Welsh Government will invest a further £32 million in the service.

Football fans urged not to travel

28 May 2021

[The Welsh Government and the Football Association of Wales urge](#) fans to support the Wales football team at home rather than travelling abroad. Wales are set to play matches in France, Azerbaijan and Italy but all are currently on the [amber list](#) of countries for travel to and from the UK. The First Minister said 'It's our very clear advice that you shouldn't travel – France, Azerbaijan and Italy are on the amber list because the virus is in circulation there'.

Covid tests encouraged for people holidaying in Wales

26 May 2021

The [First Minister urges](#) anyone planning a break in Wales from an area with higher rates of coronavirus, including areas in England with high levels of the delta variant, to test themselves before they travel and during their stay. Only those with a negative test result and no symptoms of coronavirus should travel. See information on [how to obtain lateral flow testing kits](#).

Vaccination certificate for urgent international travel

24 May 2021

Health Minister, Eluned Morgan, announces that Welsh residents can apply for a certificate of vaccination for urgent international travel. People living in Wales can request a certificate if they have had both doses of a COVID-19 vaccine, they urgently need to travel to a country which requires vaccine certification, and they are not able to either quarantine or provide tests to meet the country's entry requirements. The Welsh Government's advice is to only travel overseas if it is essential.

Funding for NHS and social care recovery

20 May 2021

Wales' Health Minister announces a £100m investment to kick-start the health and care system's recovery from the pandemic. 'The money for new equipment, staff, technology and ways of working will help health boards improve services across primary, community and hospital care, by increasing capacity and cutting waiting times as they begin resuming non-emergency care following the pandemic'.

Vaccination progress update

19 May 2021

The Welsh Government publishes an update on vaccination, highlighting that all health boards in Wales are now offering the vaccine to adults aged 18 and over. It also states that the Welsh Government is closely monitoring the 'India variant' (VOC-21APR-02) in Wales. 'In line with the latest JCVI advice, we are working with our local incident teams and health boards to facilitate bringing forward, subject to supply, second doses of vaccination where it will reduce infections, severe illness and hospitalisations'.

International travel resumes

17 May 2021

From Monday 17 May, international travel can resume under a traffic light system aligned with England and Scotland. Countries will be classified as green, amber or red. People returning from green list countries will not have to quarantine when they return. The Welsh Government advises people to only travel abroad for essential purposes.

Further information on [foreign travel](#) and [vaccine certificates for travel](#) is available from the Welsh Government.

Wales moves into alert level 2

14 May 2021

Following the latest three week review of the coronavirus restrictions regulations, the First Minister [confirms](#) that from Monday 17 May the whole of Wales will move into [alert level 2](#). As well as the re-opening of indoor hospitality, indoor entertainment venues can re-open and an increased number of people can attend organised indoor and outdoor activities.

Re-opening of indoor hospitality and further support

11 May 2021

The First Minister [confirms](#) that from 17 May six people from six different households will be able meet indoors in cafes, pubs and restaurants.

The Welsh Government also announces that businesses still affected by the coronavirus restrictions will be able to claim up to £25,000 in support to meet ongoing costs through to the end of June 2021. More information is available on [Business Wales](#).

Pilot events get underway

11 May 2021

The First Minister, Mark Drakeford, [announces](#) a proposed list of pilot test events that will take place over the coming weeks. The Welsh Government says it is working with partners on the delivery of pilot events which will develop processes and guidance for the safe return of events.

UK lowers the COVID-19 alert level

10 May 2021

The four Chief Medical Officers of the UK [agree](#) to reduce the UK COVID-19 alert level from 4 to alert level 3. The UK was at alert level 5 in January and came down to alert level 4 in February. [Alert level 3](#) means that the virus is in general circulation. This UK alert level relates to the threat the virus poses and is separate from the alert levels that underpin the restrictions in Wales.

Update on the AstraZeneca vaccine

7 May 2021

The Welsh Government announces it will implement the change in the advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) and the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and offer those under 40 (with no clinical risk factors) an alternative to the AstraZeneca vaccine. Those who have already had a first dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine should still receive the second dose.