



Ein cyf/Our ref: WQ84120

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Dear Andrew,

I provided a holding reply to your written question regarding 'what COVID guidance should community choirs follow when meeting for rehearsals'. A substantive response is now provided below which will be published on the internet.

At present there is no specific Covid guidance in place for community choir rehearsals.

We are facing a very serious situation in Wales. A large wave of infections caused by the very infectious omicron variant is approaching. This form of coronavirus could infect large numbers of people in Wales, disrupting daily lives and businesses, and could cause an increase in the number of people who need hospital care in the coming weeks.

Therefore we all need to be extra careful as we deal with this new variant. From 26 December a general requirement of 2m social distancing for all public premises will be introduced. We are asking everyone to take a lateral flow test before meeting others. Gatherings indoors will be limited to a maximum of 30 people. Hopefully these new measures will be in place for the shortest possible time and we can work together to get through this phase safely. Moving to alert level two is designed to help businesses continue to trade while also strengthening measures to protect people's health in the face of the an omicron wave.

In terms of the key requirements, businesses, employers and other organisations, including activity and event organisers, must undertake a bespoke coronavirus risk assessment of their premises and activities and take reasonable measures to minimise exposure to, and the spread of, coronavirus based on that bespoke risk assessment.

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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.

Singing increases the amount of aerosol expelled into the air from people's mouths. Moving the activity outdoors and reducing the time spent rehearsing can help to reduce the risk of transmission. If singing rehearsals are to take place then organisers of rehearsals will need to take reasonable measures as part of the required risk assessment.

Potential reasonable measures include:

- requiring members of the choir to take a test before they attend rehearsals.
- requiring members of the choir to show that they have been vaccinated before they enter rehearsals.
- asking members of the choir if they have been vaccinated, have recently been tested or if they have COVID-19 symptoms before they enter rehearsals.
- informing members of the choir that anyone who is symptomatic, has tested positive, is awaiting a test result or has been told to self-isolate by NHS Wales Test Trace Protect, must not attend rehearsals.
- Maintaining 2m physical distancing between groups and individuals wherever practical.
- Rearranging seating or standing arrangements to maintain distance between people from different households and avoid face to face orientation.
- Reducing the number of people (maximum of 30) who may be inside your premises at any one time for example by having additional rehearsals e.g. different voice sections at different times. Limiting numbers will reduce the extent to which close physical interaction will occur.
- Using signs and markings to manage the flow of people entering and exiting the premises and inside in order to avoid bottlenecks.
- Maximising natural or mechanical ventilation (and not recirculating air). Airflow can be improved by opening windows and propping open internal doors (but not fire doors) where possible for the duration of a rehearsal or between activities.
- Making sure mechanical ventilation systems are effectively maintained and have been serviced.
- Providing hand sanitiser and encouraging regular hand washing.
- Helping to ensure that people present comply with their legal obligation to wear a face covering, for example through signage and/or verbal reminders.

This is not an exhaustive list and organisers will need to consider the individual circumstances of their choir activities to ensure they are taking appropriate reasonable measures for their circumstances. Further guidance on reasonable measures and legal requirements can be found here: [Alert level 2: guidance for employers, businesses and organisations | GOV.WALES](#). We have also produced Action Cards on potential reasonable measures which can be considered in places of [worship](#) or within [theatres and concert halls](#)

Yours sincerely,



**Eluned Morgan AS/MS**

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