

New rules for pubs and restaurants in Wales after fire break

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PEOPLE in Wales will be allowed to return to pubs, restaurants and cafes when the 'fire break' lockdown ends next Monday – but strict rules will remain in place.

The first minister said today (Tuesday) customers will be asked to visit these places "in as small a group as possible, and for many, this will only be the people they live with".

But a new, more relaxed restriction means groups of up to four people from different households can meet in a "regulated setting such as a restaurant, cafe or pub," Mark Drakeford said.

Anyone wanting to meet up in this way must do so "subject to strict protections" such as making advanced bookings in specific time slots and providing "verified identification" and contact details.

"This is a permission, not something we are encouraging people to do," Mr Drakeford said. "It is the most challenging change from a public health perspective and will be kept under continuous review.

"Its success depends on the actions of the sector and each of us to use this permission responsibly and sparingly."

The so-called 'rule of four' only applies to people from different households. The Welsh Government confirmed that people from the same household can meet in a bigger group if they can show they're from the same household.

Additionally, the 10pm ban on alcohol sales will remain in force across Wales.

— What are the new rules on meeting others?

The first minister clarified details around the resumption of certain "organised activities" in Wales from Monday.

"Certain organised activities for groups of up to 15 people indoors, and 30 people outdoors, will be allowed, with risk assessments and all reasonable measures taken to minimise the risk of contracting or spreading coronavirus," he said. "These activities will not be able to involve the sale or consumption of alcohol.

"There will be a separate exception for up to 15 people to attend a reception for a wedding or civil partnership or a funeral wake, but these should involve a sit down meal."

Children aged under 11 will not count towards these limits on meeting others, the first minister said.

However, these meetings cannot take place at home or in the garden.

People will only be allowed to meet their "extended household" in this way – limiting home interactions to no more than two households.

"If we are to make the most of the gains the firebreak period has created, then we must avoid the riskier types of behavior beyond that period altogether," Mr Drakeford said. "House parties, larger events and gatherings indoors continue to be unlawful, and we are making this clearer in our regulations."

— **Travel rules**

People will be able to travel anywhere in Wales from Monday, the first minister said.

"But we are asking everyone to behave responsibly, to stay close to home and continue to limit their contact with others," he added.

However, travel to and from England will be banned under English lockdown rules – unless it is for an essential reason.

Wales will also place restrictions on people leaving and entering Wales, and international travel is not allowed "without a reasonable excuse".

— **First minister's plea**

"We all need to take steps to keep each other safe," Mr Drakeford said. "Many people have made huge sacrifices to live within the rules before the firebreak. I am grateful to them."

"Over the winter period, we must all live our lives differently so that the effort we have made together is not wasted and we do not have to undergo a further firebreak later in the year."

"We must all keep our contacts with others to an absolute minimum, keep the circle of people we meet as small as possible, and consider other ways of keeping in touch."