TRAFNIDIAETH CYMRU
TRANSPORT FOR WALES

Date issued: 5 January 2022

Freedom of Information Request

We are writing in response to your Freedom of Information request. Your request has been considered in accordance with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act and our Data and Information Management Policy.

Your Question Answered

1. **How many people have been banned from Transport for Wales train services for not wearing a face covering/mask from January 2020 until now?**

   Firstly, we must note that face coverings were not mandatory on public transport in Wales and England in January 2020. The laws came into effect on the following dates:

   - June 2020 - England
   - July 2020 - Wales

   Since the requirements were mandated and up to the 31 December 2021, 11,213 people have been either removed from services or prevented travel for breaching COVID rules. It is important to note that since the first COVID restrictions were mandated by law in July 2020, different requirements have been in place at different times, according to the requirements of national lockdowns, localised measures and different levels of control across England and Wales. These have included a ban on all non-essential travel, social distancing requirements, mandatory face-coverings, and other COVID related measures. Whilst is the face-covering mandate remains in place, it is not possible to provide a single figure for the number of people that have been removed from TfW train services for not wearing a face-covering from January 2020 until now, as the figures for this timeframe will reflect those removed from our services for breaching a range of social-distancing requirements.

2. **The process for dealing with someone not wearing a mask? For example, do you ask them to wear one and if they refuse bar them, or is it an immediate ban?**

   There are a number of approaches that are deployed to manage non face covering compliance:

   - British Transport Police (BTP) deploy the '4E' method when dealing with people not wearing face coverings; Engage, Explain, Encourage, Enforce. This gives people an opportunity to explain if they are exempt for medical reasons, if they were not aware of the requirement, and to encourage them to comply for their own safety as well as others, before enforcement. Enforcement can result in refusal or prevention to travel at that time or the issuing of fixed penalty notices. This process is independent of Transport for Wales.

   - Transport for Wales Security are empowered under the Train Operator bylaws to either prevent travel or remove people from services for non-compliance with face covering rules. They follow a similar approach of reminding people of the requirement, and if people are not exempt, they can prevent travel. It is also worth noting that if people are eating or drinking, they are allowed to remove their

face coverings. Where people claim exemption, unless they freely offer evidence, Transport for Wales do not ask for medical evidence to prove the exemption.

- Our Security teams are part of a weekly deployment plan, whereby feedback is given on COVID compliance, antisocial behaviour etc. the deployment future resources on trains and stations is reviewed. It is also worth noting that when our teams make a decision to remove anyone from our services or prevent travel, we must also consider their welfare and a decision is made based on their safeguarding needs and vulnerability.

- Our Security teams are SIA trained to deal with any potential anti-social reactions. Conductors and Station Staff are trained in conflict avoidance. The role of station staff and conductors is to maintain announcements on face covering rules and where appropriate remind people of the face covering requirements. If they see non-compliance, they report this to our control team who make a decision based on risk to either contact BTP, our agile security teams, or to feed this into the weekly deployment plan.

- Transport for Wales have worked relentlessly to communicate with and educate our customers to create a safe environment during the pandemic. We have created social media campaigns, worked with news outlets and other media forums, and developed both our Travel Safer programme and our Capacity Checker tool to allow customers to select a train based on their expected capacity. We have introduced additional cleaning on trains and stations following government and industry advice, we have clear signage, and issue free hand sanitiser at hub stations. More recently, we have issued over 3000 free face coverings during major events, and on both weekends and evenings during the run-up to Christmas, supporting our customers to travel safely and protect themselves, our staff and other customers. We would not automatically ban people for non-compliance, preferring to prevent travel on that occasion as this allows people to make their own decision on whether to travel on public transport and comply with the rules.

We hope this information is of use to you.

Yours sincerely,

Transport for Wales

Appeal Rights

If you are unhappy with the way your request has been handled and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our decision, please write to the Head of Freedom of Information at either Transport for Wales, 3 Llys Cdwyn, Pontypridd, CF37 4TH or freedomofinformation@tfw.wales. Your request must be submitted within 40 working days of receipt of this letter. If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision.

The Information Commissioner (ICO) can be contacted at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or you can contact the ICO through the 'Make a Complaint' section of their website on this link: https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/

The relevant section to select will be "Official or Public Information".