



Covid Information for the Devolved Nations

On Wednesday 4th of November Dog A.I.D. issued a statement advising that all face to face training and assessments across England, were to be stopped until further notice. This was due to the second lockdown which started in England at midnight on the 5th of November and is scheduled to continue until the 2nd of December (at present). We will continue to monitor this situation and will provide more information for trainers and clients living in England in due course.

The statement can be found here: <https://dogaid.org.uk/>

We hoped that this statement was clear that this only applied to **England** and not the other devolved nations, however it appears that there has been some confusion and worry over how Dog A.I.D. will be working in other areas of the U.K.

Following receipt of the Animal Behaviour and Training Council (ABTC), and Pet Industry Federation (PIF) guidance that was issued over the weekend of the 7th and 8th of November, we are now in the position to provide the following information to those clients and trainers living in the devolved nations:

Scotland

Trainers can meet clients for sessions, if their local protection level allows. The four tier system was introduced on the 2nd of November and levels will regularly be reviewed by the Scottish government.

Dog A.I.D.'s advice is as per the guidance this summer, the trainers should undertake a risk assessment and both client and trainer should take measures to reduce risk as much as possible. Trainers should familiarise themselves with the Scottish Government's "[Staying Safe and Protecting Others](#)" guidance.

This may include, but is not exhaustive of:

- Work outdoors where possible, and follow physical distancing (at least 2 metres) and hygiene guidance such as: regular handwashing with soap and water after touching animals and animal products. You should also avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth until your hands have been thoroughly washed.
- When indoors, face coverings must be worn except where exemptions apply.
- Sessions must be stopped if anyone is self-isolating, due to having symptoms or being in contact with someone who has tested positive for corona virus, or is deemed as at an increased medical risk by professionals.



- If the client is deemed at an increased medical risk, trainers may wish to arrange socially distanced collection of the dog and work on training or socialisation aspects away from the client in order to help the development and progression of the dog through the Dog A.I.D. scheme. In these situations trainers should avoid going into client's homes where possible, and wash their hands before and after contact with the dog. The dog must be kept on lead to avoid contact with other people and dogs.
- If any party feel uncomfortable with face to face training or assessments, then they should remain on hold.

Wales

The Welsh firebreak lockdown ended after midnight on Monday 9th November.

The Welsh government's current headlines for Covid – 19 are:

Keep Wales safe:

- stay out of each other's homes, except in very limited circumstances
 - try to limit how many different people you meet
 - maintain social distancing
 - wash your hands regularly
 - work from home if you can

Where possible training should be done virtually, as guidance from the CVC – County Voluntary council is that you should volunteer from home where possible. The Companion Animal Welfare Group Wales (CAWGW) have also provided guidance for Welsh pet owners which trainers may wish to share with clients:

<https://cawgw.co.uk/>

However in person, face to face Dog A.I.D. training sessions and assessments can continue for Welsh clients so long as:

- Training and assessments take place outdoors in public places, and adhere to social distancing guidance. Sessions cannot take place in private gardens due to the Welsh coronavirus regulations guidance section 39235.
- Although shielding has not resumed in Wales, those who were classed as part of the shielded population during the first lockdown, should consider what time they go out and where they visit. i.e. avoid visiting shops at peak times. Trainers and Assessors should factor this in when scheduling sessions/assessments.



- A maximum of 4 people should attend these sessions. Although there are no legal limits on number of people who attend sessions for education or work purposes, four has been suggested by the Welsh government and where possible this should be adhered to.
- When indoors, face coverings must be worn except where exemptions apply.
- Neither, the client, trainer or assessor, or any member of the client, trainer or assessors household has been advised to self-isolate.

It is worth noting that for aspects of the level 2 and 3 assessments, you may be required to pre-book with details of all members of the group. As such you must comply with these requirements however Dog A.I.D. takes no responsibility for the data handling of this information by cafes/restaurants or any other venues chosen by the assessor. Clients with any concerns should express this directly to their assessor before the assessment takes place.

- If any party feel uncomfortable with face to face training or assessments, then they should remain on hold.

Northern Ireland

Regulations were introduced on the 16th of October and are due to be in place for 4 weeks – until the 13th of November. Guidance from NI [direct.gov.uk](https://www.direct.gov.uk) is as follows:

- Limit contact with others – therefore Dog A.I.D. training sessions should be done remotely i.e. using virtual software such as Zoom where possible.
- Households are not allowed to mix indoors in private homes. Therefore sessions must take place outdoors, or in public places. This can include gardens as up to 6 people from 2 households can meet outdoors in a private garden however if doing this then you must maintain:
 - Regular handwashing
 - Wearing of face coverings unless exempt
 - Maintaining social distance – 2 metres
- Guidance is that travel should be limited where possible. Therefore this should be taken into account when organising sessions and the local area should be used where possible.
- Anyone with symptoms must self-isolate straight away and book a test.



All guidance is correct on date of publication – 9th November 2020. If changes are introduced which affect this information then Dog A.I.D. will update this guidance accordingly and inform all members as soon as possible.