

## Covid Statement from BWY 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2020

There is an interim statement from Sport England, and so our guidance in England cannot be definitive and will be updated when the full statement is published. With the exception of the Christmas arrangements, which have been severely curtailed since our previous statement, the position with regards to tiered restrictions and lockdowns as of today is as follows.

*Whilst lockdown and tiered systems are in place it is crucial that all of the relevant regulations are observed so that you remain covered by your BWY insurance if you are a teacher, and if you are a student attending a BWY class, you know that your tutor is properly insured. The order of priority for adhering to covid regulations is:*

- 1. Follow the Government Guidelines of the nation in which you are teaching/practicing**
- 2. Follow the Sport Governing Body advice for the nation in which you are teaching/practicing**
- 3. Adhere to BWY Best practice Guidelines in all nations which includes following track and trace and covid safety protocols**
- 4. Adhere to any specific rules or provisions that are in place at the venue where you are teaching/practicing**

*Here is a step by step guide for each nation:*

### ENGLAND

The English Government is operating a system of 4 tiers. You can find out what tier you are living in here: <https://www.gov.uk/find-coronavirus-local-restrictions> and the tiered rules are all listed here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-restriction-tiers-what-you-need-to-know#all-tiers> In brief:

#### 1. Government Guidance

**Tier 1:** Outdoor yoga and indoor yoga can continue at venues. The rule of 6 applies to socialising before and after classes. Private sessions are not expressly permitted but appear to be implied. This would apply to clients/students visiting the teacher. There are restrictions on entering somebody's home for work and to do so for yoga seems to be flouting the spirit of the regulations.

**Tier 2:** Outdoor yoga classes can continue at venues. The rule of 6 applies to socialising before and after classes. Leisure facilities remain open but the guidance is presently contradictory so it is currently unclear whether general yoga classes, which are an organised activity, can take place; or whether these must only take place with members of households or support bubbles. At present we therefore recommend that indoor classes must cease until the position is made clear. Private sessions are not expressly permitted but appear to be implied. This would apply to clients/students visiting the teacher. There are restrictions on entering somebody's home for work and to do so for yoga seems to be flouting the spirit of the regulations.

**Tier 3:** Leisure facilities remain open but group yoga classes cannot go ahead. Organised outdoor yoga classes can continue. Exercise in gyms and sports facilities refers only to households and/or support bubbles exercising together and there is no mention of organised indoor household or support bubble activities, which would

include private sessions. At present we therefore recommend that private sessions must cease until the position is made clear.

**Tier 4:** Outdoor yoga classes cannot continue. Outdoor sports can continue for households or support bubbles to exercise together or with one other person. Private outdoor sessions are therefore permitted. All indoor gyms and sports facilities, including studios, must close. Outdoor disability and U18 sports can continue. Indoor disability sports cannot continue but indoor U18 sports for educational purposes can continue.

## **2. Sport England**

Sport England recognises BWY as the national Governing Body for Yoga. Sport England have yet to release a full statement, so we must stress there is no complete clarity. Where matters are unclear this has been stated and we expect clarification to follow.

### **3. Follow BWY Best Practice Guidelines**

#### **4. Follow specific rules relating to your venue**

## **WALES**

### **1. Welsh Government Guidance**

The whole of Wales is on alert level 4, which is “stay at home”. You can find this information here: <https://gov.wales/alert-level-4-guide#section-57847> Leisure and fitness facilities must close. The Welsh Government advocates following the advice of National Governing Bodies in relation to sports and accordingly gives a degree of discretion to NGBs.

### **2. Sport Wales**

Organised outdoor and indoor exercise cannot take place. Individual activity can take place within your own household or support bubble but this does not include private sessions since that would be two households.

Sport Wales recognises BWY as the National Governing Body for Yoga. This means that the teaching and practice of yoga in Wales is directed by BWY and some discretion is therefore permitted.

### **3. Follow BWY Best Practice Guidelines**

Only regulatory exemptions can continue in accordance with best practice.

#### **4. Follow specific rules relating to your venue**

This will apply to educational settings where yoga is provided for vocational purposes; to health clinics/home studios and to care homes, where yoga is being provided for therapeutic purposes.

## **SCOTLAND**

### **1. The Scottish Government**

There are 5 levels of protection numbered 0-4. BWY members resident in Scotland must first check which protection level applies to their local authority area here: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-protection-levels/> Protection levels will change at 00.01 on 26<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

## 2. Sport Scotland

An updated guidance document was published on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2020. The guidance document contains a useful table giving details of what is permitted within the 5 levels and that document can be found here: <https://sportscotland.org.uk/media/6346/return-to-sport-and-physical-activity-guidance-151220-final.pdf> . Sport Scotland recognises Yoga Scotland as the National Governing Body for Yoga so their advice must be followed and you can check that here: <https://www.yogascotland.org.uk/coronavirus-covid-19>

### 3. BWY members and teachers resident in Scotland must then also follow BWY Best Practice Guidelines.

### 4. Follow specific rules relating to your venue.

## NORTHERN IRELAND

### 1. The Northern Ireland Assembly

Current coronavirus regulations can be found here: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-regulations-guidance-work-business-hospitality-tourism-and-sport> and this page links directly to Sport Northern Ireland for specific guidance information.

### 2. Sport Northern Ireland

The latest guidance on a return to sport, which was updated on 18<sup>th</sup> December, can be found here: <http://www.sportni.net/return-to-sport/> In broad terms outdoor yoga is permitted and indoor yoga that does not cause an individual to get out of breath is also permitted, both in groups of up to 15. One to one sessions are permitted. However, from 26<sup>th</sup> December at 00.01 to 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021 inclusive this situation will change and no organised outdoor or indoor sports will be permitted. Venues must close. From 00.01 on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2021 indoor and outdoor exercise, including yoga, will be permitted within schools only. This situation will be subject to review. Sport NI recognises The Yoga Fellowship of Northern Ireland (YFNI) as the Lead Body for yoga in Northern Ireland. The YFNI has not issued a covid statement but is an umbrella organisation and a member of BWY. Its website is here: <https://yfni.co.uk>

### 3. BWY members and teachers who are resident in Northern Ireland must follow BWY Best Practice Guidelines.

### 4. Follow specific rules relating to your venue.

*There are some exemptions from the tiered restrictions and the Northern Ireland lockdown but where exemptions apply, you should still follow the BWY best practice guidelines and also adhere to any provisions at the venue where you are teaching/practicing. Exemptions are not intended to flout the spirit of regulations rather, they provide for continuance in certain circumstances. Full details of these can be found in our “Regulatory Exemptions for Teaching during Covid” guidance document here: [LINK](#). On this link you will also find the full range of guidance documents relevant to the pandemic.*

We will continue to release amended statements as the situation develops and when further clarification is available.

Gillian Osborne  
BWY Vice Chair