

Title: P-05-959 Give Welsh vulnerable access to priority supermarket shopping slots during COVID19

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 12 Mai 2020
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Reference: RS20/12505-1

Petition Number: P-05-959

Petition title: Give Welsh vulnerable access to priority supermarket shopping slots during COVID19

Text of petition: As a mother of a vulnerable child I would like to get access to a priority shopping delivery slot with supermarkets while having to shield her during the COVID19 crisis.

I appreciate the local Governments are delivering free food parcels and there are many people working extremely hard to provide these. However good this gesture, it is not enough to replace a home shopping delivery. Furthermore, I have been in contact with many vulnerable people who feel the same.

Firstly, the free food box is for the vulnerable person only, and rightly so, but as a family we also need to eat, buy cleaning and sanitary products. As a result, I still need shopping and after 21 days of shielding I have not been able to get a shopping home delivery. This is making it very difficult for us to self-isolate as a family as advised by our Respiratory Nurse.

I feel it is very unfair for people in England to register for this on the GOV.uk website and this is automatically passed on to supermarkets, whereas people in Wales cannot. Welsh people claim benefits, tax our cars, complete self-assessments and much more on this website so why can't we have access to the website for priority access to shopping.



Please give the Welsh vulnerable priority access to shopping slots with the supermarkets on the GOV.uk website or set up a similar system/website for Wales.

Diolch yn fawr!

Background

All those in Wales identified as being at high risk of severe illness from coronavirus due to a serious underlying health issue are required to undertake 'shielding'. This includes staying at home for 12 weeks.

These extremely vulnerable people should have received a letter from the Chief Medical Officer for Wales - a 'shielding letter' - by 17 April.

The letter advises that those receiving it will have access to priority delivery slots for online shopping deliveries from supermarkets.

It also says that if these individuals are unable to shop online, and have no other means of getting food (i.e. they have no family, friends, neighbours or support groups who can help), they are eligible for a free weekly food box delivered to their home.

The £15 million 'direct delivery food scheme' is funded by the Welsh Government and delivered by local authorities.

On 8 April the Welsh Government confirmed it had completed data agreements with the major supermarkets and that they will prioritise online home delivery slots for people who are shielding in Wales.

This follows a similar arrangement between the UK Government and supermarkets for the most vulnerable people in England, in place since late March.

However, in England, people are also able to register themselves as vulnerable if:

- they have a medical condition which means they're classed as being 'clinically extremely vulnerable' to coronavirus; or
- they've been told by their GP or hospital clinician that they're clinically extremely vulnerable and need to shield.

This is not the case in Wales; people here are not able to register as vulnerable. The advice on the Welsh Government website states:

People in Wales are not being asked to register as vulnerable. We realise that this is different to the arrangements in England, but in Wales we have decided to take a different approach.

If you are vulnerable but not in the shielding group you should ask family, friends and neighbours to support you and use online

services. If this is not possible, then the public sector, business, charities, and the general public are gearing up to help. Find out more from [Third Sector Support Wales](#).

If somebody in Wales feels that they are extremely vulnerable but hasn't received the shielding letter, they are advised to discuss their concerns with their GP or hospital clinician. The [Welsh Government's guidance](#) says that GPs have been given a list of the people who have been sent the letter. GPs should check the list against their patients and "contact any additional high-risk people who may not have been identified to ensure that they also receive the advice in the letters".

Welsh Government action

At the time of writing this briefing, the Committee has yet to receive a letter from the Minister in relation to this petition.

Senedd action

At the time of writing this briefing, the specific issue of people being able to register as vulnerable in England, but not in Wales, had not been discussed in Senedd business.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this briefing is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.