



Janet Finch-Saunders AC/AM

Aelod Cynulliad dros Aberconwy

Assembly Member for Aberconwy



Mark Drakeford AM,
First Minister,
Welsh Government,
By Email

31 March 2020

URGENT

Re: Covid-19: The Construction Sector

Office of Janet Finch-Saunders AM,
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Dear First Minister, Mark,

I hope that this letter finds you well during this worrying time.

In an effort to reduce the risk of contracting the virus we are following strict guidance which stipulates that we should only leave our homes for very limited purposes. This includes travelling for work purposes, but only where individuals cannot work from home. The exception currently includes construction workers.

I appreciate that you have advised that construction sites must operate safely, and that if employers cannot guarantee that people can maintain a social distance, work should not continue. More so, you have explained that where, for example, there is work on going to repair houses that were flooded or build defenses against future flooding, you do not want to see that stop. I agree. However, I have been contacted by numerous individuals working in the construction sector, including project directors, contractors, and tradesmen, raising a number of concerns that need addressing. It follows that I would be grateful if you could answer the following questions:

- What steps are you taking to ensure that individuals working on construction sites with no plumbed in toilet facilities are not at risk of contracting Covid-19?
- Operatives tend to work in teams of threes to six individuals, and share facilities, such as a canteen and dry room, so what steps are you taking to ensure that they can stay a safe distance from each other (6 feet) at all times?
- Construction workers rely on health and safety rules to ensure that they are safe at work, so what regulations will you consider implementing which give workers the opportunity to enforce their right to take safety measures on construction sites in light of Covid-19?
- What assistance will you make urgently available to individuals in the construction sector who are being subjected to abuse for being on site to work?

Mi wnâiiff Janet Finch-Saunders cadw unrhyw wybodaeth bersonol yn gwbl gyfrinachol, ac fel arfer mi fydd rhaid iddi rannu'r wybodaeth 'efo aelodau o staff i'w galluogi nhw i ddelio 'efo'r awdurdodau perthnasol er mwyn eich helpu a'ch cynorthwyo chi. Efallai mi fydd angen i rywun ysgrifennu atoch er mwyn darparu'r wybodaeth ddiweddaraf o bwys. Gadwch wybod i ni os nad oes diddordeb gennych mewn cael eich cysylltu at y diben hwn.

Janet Finch-Saunders will treat in confidence any personal information which you may pass on to her, and she will normally allow her staff to see it, so that they can consult with relevant authorities in order to help and advise you. We may wish to write to you from time to time to keep you informed on issues which you may find of interest. Please let us know if you do not wish to be contacted for this purpose.

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- How is it essential at this time for construction sites, such as hotel developments, to be open?
- What risk assessment was undertaken before deciding that construction can go ahead despite Covid-19?

I look forward to receiving your detailed response addressing the concerns raised. Indeed, more than anything, my aim is to see positive action in response to the scenario at construction sites where there is a perception that operatives seem to be at higher risk of contracting Covid-19 than the general public.

Yours sincerely

Janet Finch-Saunders AM/AC