

---

WELSH STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

---

**2020 No. 44**

**The Official Controls (Animals, Feed and Food,  
Plant Health Fees etc.) (Wales) Regulations 2020**

**PART 4**

**Enforcement and penalties**

**Enforcement and prosecution**

**11.**—(1) Enforcement of these Regulations and the EU Official Controls Regulations is the responsibility of the competent authority or a designated authority.

(2) The Welsh Ministers may direct, in relation to cases of a particular description or to a particular case that these Regulations are to be enforced by the Welsh Ministers instead of a local authority.

**Powers of enforcement officers**

**12.**—(1) An enforcement officer may—

- (a) make any enquiries, observe any activity or process, and take photographs;
- (b) inspect any article, container, plant, equipment or records of any class which appear to the enforcement officer to be relevant for the purposes of the investigation, and may make or require copies of such records and remove such records as may reasonably be required;
- (c) mark any item for identification purposes;
- (d) require the production of any label, document or record (in whatever form it is held);
- (e) inspect and take a copy of, or take a copy of an extract from, any label, document or record;
- (f) have access to, and inspect and check the data on, and operation of, any computer;
- (g) if the enforcement officer has reason to believe that a person is in contravention of these Regulations or the EU Official Controls Regulations, and that the data may be relevant to the contravention, seize and detain any computer equipment for the purpose of copying the data or, if it has not been possible carry out adequate inspection on the premises, of further inspection;
- (h) if the enforcement officer has reason to believe that a person is in contravention of these Regulations or the EU Official Controls Regulations, and that certain records may be relevant to the contravention, seize and detain the records.

(2) An enforcement officer must—

- (a) produce evidence of authorisation when requested to do so;
- (b) as soon as reasonably possible—
  - (i) provide to the person appearing to be responsible for any records removed from any premises a written receipt identifying those records, and

- (ii) after deciding that they are no longer required, return anything removed, apart from records or other things to be used as evidence in court proceedings.

### **Powers of entry**

**13.—(1)** An enforcement officer may enter any premises (except any premises used wholly or mainly as a private dwelling) during normal working hours without prior notice, if the officer believes that it is necessary for the purpose of official controls or other official activities under these Regulations or the EU Official Controls Regulations.

(2) In circumstances where an enforcement officer is carrying out routine verification checks, notice must be provided before exercising a power of entry to premises during normal working hours.

(3) The requirement to give notice in paragraph (2) does not apply—

- (a) where reasonable efforts to agree an appointment have failed,
- (b) where the enforcement officer reasonably believes that giving notice would defeat the object of the entry, including any situation in which notice is not required under Article 9(4), or
- (c) where the enforcement officer has a reasonable suspicion that any provision of these Regulations or the EU Official Controls Regulations has been contravened.

(4) An enforcement officer must, if requested to do so, produce a duly authenticated authorisation document.

(5) A justice of the peace may sign a warrant to permit an enforcement officer to enter any premises, including a dwelling-house, if necessary by reasonable force, if the justice on sworn information in writing is satisfied—

- (a) that there are reasonable grounds to enter those premises for the purpose of enforcing these Regulations or the EU Official Controls Regulations, and
- (b) that one or more of the conditions in paragraph (6) are met.

(6) The conditions are—

- (a) that entry to the premises has been, or is likely to be, refused, and notice of the intention to apply for a warrant has been given to the occupier;
- (b) that asking for admission to the premises, or giving such a notice, would defeat the object of the entry;
- (c) that entry to the premises is required urgently;
- (d) that the premises are unoccupied or the occupier is temporarily absent.

(7) A warrant is valid for 30 days from the date of signature.

(8) An enforcement officer entering any premises which are unoccupied or from which the occupier is temporarily absent must leave them as effectively secured against unauthorised entry as they were before entry.

(9) An enforcement officer may—

- (a) be accompanied by such other persons, up to a maximum of three, as the enforcement officer considers necessary;
- (b) bring onto the premises such equipment as the enforcement officer considers necessary.

### **Offences and penalties**

**14.—(1)** A person is guilty of an offence if without reasonable excuse that person obstructs or causes or permits to be obstructed—

- (a) an auditor,
  - (b) an inspector,
  - (c) any person who accompanies a relevant auditor or relevant inspector, or
  - (d) an enforcement officer.
- (2) For the purposes of paragraph (1), obstruction includes failure by any person—
- (a) to produce records or provide reasonable facilities for copying records, or
  - (b) to provide relevant information when requested.
- (3) A person is guilty of an offence if without reasonable excuse that person supplies information which, in any material particular, is false or misleading.
- (4) A person guilty of an offence under this regulation is liable on summary conviction to a fine of any amount.

### **Offences by bodies corporate**

**15.**—(1) If an offence under regulation 14 is committed by a body corporate, and is shown to have been committed with the consent or connivance of an officer, or to be attributable to the neglect of such officer, that officer as well as the body corporate is guilty of the offence and liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly.

(2) If the affairs of a body corporate are managed by its members, paragraph (1) applies in relation to the acts and defaults of a member in connection with functions of management as if that person were a director of the body.

(3) “Officer”, in relation to a body corporate, means a director, member of the committee of management, chief executive, manager, secretary or other similar officer of the body, or a person purporting to act in any such capacity.

### **Time limits for prosecution**

**16.** A prosecution for an offence under this Part may begin no later than the earlier of the expiry of—

- (a) three years from the commission of the offence, or
- (b) one year from its discovery by the prosecuting authority.