



MEDIA RELEASE

Pause in visitor arrivals to the island and testing requirements.

EMT has agreed to a pause in visitor arrivals to the island commencing from this coming Thursday, 6 January and extending to Wednesday 19 January 2022. The pause is to allow NIHRACS to manage the current level of COVID cases in the community without additional cases from visitors arriving on the island. The pause will be reviewed on Wednesday 12 January. Returning residents and essential workers will continue to be able to obtain Entry Permits.

With the closure of many places offering PCR testing on the mainland testing requirements for passengers to the island have been modified to the following: -

- A negative PCR test result in the 72 hours prior to arrival on island

or

- A negative Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) in the 48 hours prior to arrival and a negative RAT test undertaken within 24 hours of arrival on the island.

Due to the limited availability of RAT tests on the island passengers are advised to bring a RAT test with them to comply with this requirement. There is no requirement to self-isolate before undertaking the second RAT test.

Anyone who has COVID-19 symptoms or underlying health conditions should not travel to the island and anyone on the island who has the slightest symptoms should self-isolate and contact NIHRACS to have a RAT test undertaken.

Updated case numbers as of 4 January 2022

Results of the PCR tests undertaken on the 30 of December 2021 have been received indicating that ten (10) of the close contacts in isolation are positive. This brings the number of positive people on the island to twenty (20). Fortunately, all the new positive people were already in isolation and contact tracing is underway to identify their close contacts. Those who have tested positive remain on the island. All 20 cases are being monitored daily by NIHRACS medical staff, 6 of which are deemed high risk and are also receiving daily clinical review from an Infectious Disease Consultant at Royal Brisbane, Metro North Hospital and Health Service (MNHHS).

There are currently 194 close contacts in self-isolation on the island. Close contacts are being released when it is regarded safe to do so and further people are being placed into self-isolation as contact tracing of people who test positive occurs. Most of the cases are reporting mild symptoms. It is therefore vitally important that if you are a close contact in isolation, you do not have contact with the rest of the community. If you have any symptoms associated with COVID, you must self-isolate, contact NIHRACS immediately and arrange for a test.

Response Escalation Matrix -conditions for level 4 met

EMT decided today that the conditions associated with level 4 had been met as NIHRACS has indicated that its ability to manage the local cases is at capacity. However, with the pause in visitors introduced from Thursday 6 January, it was agreed that additional restrictions on the community are not required at this time.



It is highly recommended that for the next few weeks those who can work from home, do so and people should try to minimise close interaction with each other - especially indoors.

EMT is very appreciative of the community support of the management measures that are currently in force and greatly regrets the disruption to the community and business associated with the visitor arrival pause. If we continue to abide with the measures that we currently have in place, it is hoped that the virus moves through the community at a rate that can be managed by NIHRACS.

EMT will continue to review the situation daily.

If you are in isolation and feeling unwell, please contact NIHRACS on 22091 and they will arrange to have a phone consultation with you. Do not go to the hospital. If you need anything such as food or supplies, please contact the Welfare Co-ordinator on 52777 so that this can be arranged.

For any questions about the COVID-19 response on Norfolk Island, please visit the Norfolk Island Regional Council website: <http://www.norfolkisland.gov.nf/covid-19-advice-norfolk-island> in the first instance or contact Sergeant Mark Watson, IMT Incident Controller at IO-Norfolk-Island@afp.gov.au or +6723 22222. Alternatively, could you contact the Welfare Co-ordinator on 52777.

15:00

4 January 2022

EMT