



**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**ESSENTIAL SERVICES PERSONNEL NORFOLK ISLAND**

As of 24 March 2020, there are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 on Norfolk Island, and Emergency Management Norfolk Island (EMNI) continue to monitor the situation in conjunction with Norfolk Island Health and Residential Aged Care Service (NIHRACS), and advice received from the Australian Government.

Residents and non-residents who are deemed to be essential service personnel are not wholly exempt from the mandatory 14-day self-isolation. Under the Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) for the COVID-19 Emergency, essential service personnel are released from self-isolation ONLY for the purposes of fulfilling the essential service and are otherwise to remain in self-isolation, like anyone else. They must limit interaction with the community at all times until the 14 days isolation period has expired.

To be clear and address any confusion, this means that the essential services personnel can only go from home to work and return home again. They cannot go out for food, go shopping, visit family members or conduct any other matters that are not part of their essential services role. If the essential services person resides with family that are not in isolation, on returning home the essential person must continue to isolate themselves from the rest of the family.

They must adhere to the strict conditions imposed on them by the Incident Controller. They must find alternatives like any other person in self-isolation regarding the delivery of food and other necessary items to their house or accommodation and undertake the same precautions – such as keeping a certain distance from the delivery person and have the goods left at their door.

**Who or what type of functions are included within essential services?**

The Incident Controller, on advice from the Incident Management Team (IMT) determines, on a case-by-case basis, whether the person fulfils an essential service to the community. Essential services include doctors, nurses, emergency services personnel, and technicians for critical projects (as determined by the IMT). For example, it is important that NIHRACS has the staff to function now, and also into the future if further pressures are put on the island's health service. Release of the essential services personnel is based on advice provided by NIHRACS on the basis of a risk assessment.

**Strict conditions on any decision to release:**

The essential services person released from the 14-day mandatory self-isolation period for the purposes of fulfilling their essential service must restrict their movements and physical interaction with others for 14 days from date of arrival to Norfolk Island to only those movements and interactions necessary for the fulfilling of the essential service. Any specific additional measures for each individual are provided by the Incident Controller.

No non-essential movements and interactions (including shopping and visiting family members) may occur. Should the person be witnessed undertaking a non-essential activity, the Incident Controller may decide to revoke the decision to release the essential person from self-isolation or issue a fine.

It is important to comply with the self-isolation requirements to protect the Norfolk Island community. If you suspect that someone has broken the 14-day isolation period, please call the Norfolk Island Police Force on 22222 to report information.

**Restrictions and requirements for anyone in mandatory 14-day isolation period:**

During the 14 days of isolation, you must stay at home or in your accommodation and not go to public places including work, school, childcare, or public gatherings. Only people who usually live with you should be in the home. Do not see visitors. If you are in an accommodation, avoid contact with other guests or staff. If you are sharing a home with others, you should stay in a different room and if possible use a separate bathroom. If you live in a private house, it is safe for you to go into your garden as long as you don't meet with other people.

If you are well, there is no need to wear a surgical mask at home. Ask others who are not in isolation to get food and necessities for you. If you seek medical care, call the hospital first and they will make arrangements for you to be seen to.

When in isolation, monitor yourself for symptoms including fever, cough, sore throat, tiredness or shortness of breath. Other possible symptoms include chills, body aches and muscle pain.

If you develop symptoms (fever, a cough, sore throat, tiredness and/or shortness of breath) following your return to Norfolk Island, you should make a telephone call to Norfolk Island Health and Residential Aged Care Service (NIHRACS) for an urgent assessment over the telephone. A doctor or nurse will advise you of next steps. Follow their instructions. DO NOT present to the GP clinic.

Thank you.

**Glenn Elder**  
**Incident Controller**  
**EMNI IMT**  
**24 March 2020**