EMNI - MEDIA RELEASE

19 June 2020

BORDER OPENING

EMNI are working towards opening the Norfolk Island border to coincide with the opening of the Queensland border. The proposed date is 10 July 2020. To coincide with the plan to open the border, EMNI will be providing information to the community and businesses next week to advise how to prepare for this major change.

CHANGE IN REQUIREMENTS

EMNI recently received advice from the Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Australian Government Department of Health.

Wearing face masks are of minimal value if the prevalence of the disease on the mainland is low. It is more important for residents and visitors (when they are permitted to enter) to consistently follow the general physical distancing requirements at all times. Most people will not benefit from wearing a surgical mask. Masks are of benefit to people who are sick, so they don't cough on others, and health care workers who have frequent, close contact with sick people. If you are unwell you must stay at home. While coronavirus is of concern, it is important to remember that most people displaying symptoms such as fever, cough, sore throat or tiredness are likely suffering with a cold or other respiratory illness and not coronavirus.

Given this, the mandatory requirement to wear face masks for 14 days after arrival on Norfolk Island has been removed as per updated EMNI requirements listed below.

We are aware that this creates anxiety for some people within the community, however decisions made by EMNI are heavily based on advice provided by medical professionals. The most effective forms of virus prevention are physical distancing, practising good hygiene, limiting gatherings, and isolation if needed.

Residents returning to Norfolk Island

From Saturday 13 June 2020, residents returning to Norfolk Island will not be required to quarantine. EMNI request that returning residents comply with the requirements outlined below.

Returning residents should not travel to Norfolk Island if they are unwell with respiratory symptoms. If unwell in the 10 days prior to travel, they should obtain a COVID-19 test and only travel if they test negative.

For 14 days following their return to the island, Norfolk Island residents returning:

• Are expected to follow the COVIDSafe steps of frequent handwashing, and physical distancing

• Are expected to stay at home if unwell

• Are expected to report any COVID-19 symptoms immediately to NIHRACS

• Are encouraged to minimise contact, work from home where possible, avoid non-essential gatherings, and avoid contact with elderly and high-risk members of the community

• Are encouraged to download the COVIDSafe app (compatible from 19 June 2020).

       Alternately, or additionally residents returning can:

a. Complete a diary of places they have visited, people they have been in close contact with (15 minutes or longer) for 14 days prior to entering Norfolk Island, and 14 days following arrival.

b. Record their own daily temperature

Please visit the EMNI website page for full details.

www.norfolkisland.gov.nf/norfolk-islands-covid-19-advice

COVIDSAFE APP

The COVIDSafe app has been updated to be compatible with Norfolk Island phone numbers. The updated app is available from 19 June 2020. If you downloaded the app prior to this date (already on your phone) you may need to remove the app, re-download, then commence the registration process.

The COVIDSafe app is part of our work to slow the spread of COVID-19. Having confidence we can find and contain outbreaks quickly will mean governments can ease restrictions while still keeping Australians safe.

The new COVIDSafe app is completely voluntary. Downloading the app is something you can do to protect you, your family and friends and save the lives of other Australians. The more Australians connect to the COVIDSafe app, the quicker we can find the virus.

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