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Coronavirus (COVID-19) latest Northern Territory specific updates

Northern Territory update 13 March 2020

Mass gathering advice

Today at the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) all Australian Governments, state and territory leaders agreed to advance precautionary measures to limit the transmission of the COVID-19 virus in Australia and keep Territorians well.

These advanced measures are based on the best expert medical advice that advises against any organised non-essential gathering of more than 500 people where they may be in close contact for a static period of over two hours to limit the person to person transmission of COVID-19 in Australia.

This advice does not apply to workplaces, schools, universities, airports or public transport.

From Monday, event organisers will need to consider the cancellation of events falling within this category.

In addition, COAG is asking all Australians to reconsider the need for overseas travel at this time.

These measures are designed to keep Territorians safe and well in the face of COVID-19.

The aim is to get ahead of the curve and there will be some impacts to our Territory lifestyle regarding our significant events, however we all need to follow the best advice to limit the risk of COVID-19 to Territorians.

There remains just **one** confirmed case of COVID-19 in the Territory – this person is a tourist visiting Darwin who is currently in isolation in Royal Darwin Hospital.

How to reduce the risk of catching COVID-19?

The most important thing for everyone to remember with COVID-19 is to maintain strict hygiene by:

- washing your hands
- not shaking hands with people who may be sick
- staying at a distance of 1.5 m away from someone who is sick
- coughing or sneezing into your elbow
- not going to crowded places if you're sick, including staying home from school or work.

How many confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the NT?

- There is one confirmed case of COVID-19 in the Territory as at 10 March 2020 – this person isolated in Darwin.
- There are no other confirmed cases anywhere else in the Territory.

When do I have to isolate?

To help limit the spread of COVID-19, you must isolate yourself in the following circumstances:

- If you have left, or transited through mainland China or Iran in the last 14 days, you must isolate yourself for 14 days from the date of leaving mainland China/Iran.
- If you have left, or transited through the Republic of Korea on or after 5 March 2020 you must isolate yourself for 14 days after the date of leaving the Republic of Korea.
- If you have been in close contact with a proven case of coronavirus, you must isolate yourself for 14 days from the date of last contact with the confirmed case.

If you have left or transited through Italy on or after 11 March 2020 you must isolate yourself for 14 days after the date of leaving Italy.

More information is here: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-isolation-guidance> 

What do I do if I get sick?

If you develop symptoms (fever, a cough, sore throat, tiredness or shortness of breath) within 14 days of leaving country or region that is at higher risk for COVID-19, or within 14 days of last contact of a person with a confirmed case of the virus, you should arrange to get tested.

Testing can be done by most medical centres or GPs. If you are in Darwin you can visit the NT's Pandemic Clinic on the campus of Royal Darwin Hospital. You must phone ahead to your GP and the Clinic to get instructions on what to do.

To access the Pandemic Clinic you need to call the Public Health Unit on 89228044.

In other regions, including Alice Springs, we are establishing similar clinics to support GPs and in the remote communities, we are establishing processes for managing and testing anyone who may have the infection.

What is the NT Government doing?

The Northern Territory Emergency Operations Centre has been activated to ensure a greater level of co-ordination and response to COVID-19 in the Territory.

NTPS is receiving regular and ongoing advice from the Australian Government, the Northern Territory Department of Health and the Northern Territory Chief Health Officer in regards to COVID-19 and is making the necessary preparations in line with that advice.

This includes developing a clear plan to ensure NTPS staff, school students and their families are well informed.

We are sending regular updates through the NTPS agency networks, Workplace Health and Safety officers, schools and remote offices which includes factsheets and posters about hygiene practices in the workplace and in schools as well as the suite of additional resources available on the Australian Government Department of Health website. NTPS staff members are encouraged to share these resources with their colleagues and the community.

A Coronavirus (COVID-19) Public Health Remote Communities Plan has been developed and distributed to all remote Territory communities. This plan provides high level guidance and each community will tailor their individual plans to suit their specific circumstances and community requirements.

Information for Aboriginal communities

- There are currently no suspected cases of COVID-19 in any Territory communities.
- Residents should stay alert but carry on with normal activities.
- There is no risk to eating traditional animals and plants.
- The virus is not spread by mosquito bites.
- The virus is not spread on the wind.
- The most important thing for everyone to remember is to maintain hygiene by:
 - Washing your hands
 - Avoid shaking hands with people who may be unwell
 - Stay at a distance of 1.5 m away from someone who is unwell
 - Coughing or sneezing into your elbow
 - Don't go to crowded places if you're unwell.
- If you get sick, go to your health clinic.

What if I have overseas holidays booked?

The Australian Government is monitoring closely the COVID-19 outbreak and its implications for overseas travel. Many countries are now reporting cases. Many are introducing new entry restrictions. These are changing often and quickly. Get the latest travel updates here:

<https://www.smartraveller.gov.au/news-and-updates/coronavirus-covid-19> 

Where to get accurate and up-to-date information, including travel information?

Further updates and advice will be communicated to you as required.

You can also contact the National Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080 or www.health.gov.au 

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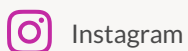
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