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# Coronavirus (COVID-19) latest Northern Territory specific updates

## Update - 19 March 2020

Please be assured that if there are any confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the Northern Territory, a statement will be issued by the Chief Health Officer. If you hear any rumours about cases of COVID-19 in the NT please verify the facts through SecureNT BEFORE sharing it or posting it on social media. This will avoid creating unnecessary panic and undue alarm across our community by spreading false information, remember we are all in this together.

The Prime Minister has announced greater restrictions around gathering in groups to further slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus in Australia. Organised, non-essential gatherings of more than 500+ people outdoors and 100+ people indoors are not allowed. As a result, more events have been cancelled, postponed or modified. Please access the [risk assessment tool](#) [DOCX \(66.0 KB\)](#) on SecureNT if you are in the process of organising a large gathering.

All Australians are now advised not to travel overseas and residents returning home to Australia after international travel will need to self-isolate for 14 days. The Prime Minister announced today that from tomorrow only returning Australian residents will be allowed access into the country.

These measures are designed to keep all Australians safe and well in the face of COVID-19. We are expecting further information and direction to come from the next National Cabinet meeting.

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. To date, there has still been no community spread of the virus.

## Public Health Emergency declared

The Minister for Health has declared a public health emergency for the whole of the Territory under the [Public and Environmental Health Act 2011](#) in response to Novel coronavirus (COVID-19). This will be in force until further notice.

This means:

- Non-essential large gatherings are prohibited (500 people outdoors and more than 100 people indoors)
- People are legally directed to self-quarantine upon returning from overseas travel

There are penalties of up to \$62,800 for failure to comply with the new COVID-19 directions.

- [Declaration of Public Health Emergency - Signed instrument \(PDF 260Kb\)](#)

Chief Health Officer Hugh Crosbie Heggie, under section 52 of the *Public and Environmental Health Act 2011*, considers it necessary, appropriate and desirable to take action to alleviate the public health emergency in the Territory, declared by instrument entitled "Declaration of Public Health Emergency", dated 18 March 2020.

Directions have changed in relation to:

- non-essential large gatherings
- self-quarantine following overseas travel

[Chief Health Officer Directions - Number 1 \(PDF116Kb\)](#) [↗](#)

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## Gathering in groups

Organised, non-essential gatherings of more than 500+ people outdoors and 100+ people indoors are not allowed.

[Find out more](#) [↗](#)

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## Tiwi Islands

The Tiwi Land Council has directed that any person who is NOT a resident of the Tiwi Islands is not permitted to enter the Tiwi Islands, and subsequently has revoked all non-essential permits. No new non-essential permits will be granted.

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## Community update

The Northern Territory Government announced on 18 March 2020 that the NT Government will freeze Power and Water tariffs to July 2021 in response to COVID-19.

Power and Water tariffs are set by the NT Government and are effectively a price fixed (per kilolitre for water and kilowatt for power) for a set period for a service, including the power, water and wastewater services provided by Power and Water.

Power and Water billing will continue as per normal during this time. Customers still need to pay their bills.

Power and Water understands that some of our customers may experience financial hardship as a result of COVID-19. We are committed to assisting customers during this challenging time. Power and Water bills can be paid off in instalments so we ask any customers facing hardship to contact us to discuss payment options.

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## Contact and hotline numbers

### Advice

**There is a dedicated COVID-19 national hotline number - 1800 020 080.**

Call this line if you are seeking information on coronavirus (COVID-19). The national hotline operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

### Testing



There is a dedicated COVID-19 hotline number for the NT **for people who need to arrange testing only - 1800 008 002.**

If you live in Darwin and need to arrange testing, please call the Public Health Unit on **8922 8044**.

## Mass gatherings

**There is a dedicated COVID-19 mass gatherings hotline for the NT - 1800 518 055.**

Call this line if you are seeking information regarding an upcoming mass gathering in the Northern Territory. All gatherings of more than 500 people are prevented and will need to be cancelled, postponed or modified to meet requirements.

The [NT Health COVID-19 Risk Assessment tool](#)  [DOCX \(66.0 KB\)](#)  has been developed to assist event organisers to determine the level of clinical risk around proposed events.

## Remote communities

**There is a dedicated COVID-19 remote community travel hotline for the NT - 1800 518 189.**

Call this line if you are seeking information regarding traveling to a remote community in the Northern Territory. NT remote communities have been closed to all non-essential travel in response to concerns about the spread of COVID-19.

**Last updated:** 10 March 2020

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