

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Restricted Access to Remote Communities

Understanding this Direction

Overview

The direction is about travel and access to Queensland's remote communities. It implements Stage 2 of the [Roadmap to easing access restrictions for Queensland's remote communities](#).

The Australian Government originally restricted entry to remote communities ('designated areas') in Queensland to slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

There will be changes to this from 12 June 2020. The restrictions put in place by the Australian Government under the Biosecurity Determination will no longer apply to designated areas in Queensland. Instead, the Queensland Chief Health Officer has defined what is required for travel in and out of designated areas. This includes fewer restrictions on residents and is described in the Restricted Access to Remote Communities Direction [\[link\]](#).

Most travel that was previously permitted under the Biosecurity Determination will continue under the Restricted Access to Remote Communities Direction. For example, a resident of a designated area is still permitted to travel to another designated area provided you don't come into contact with other people on your journey between designated areas.

Additional travel within declared travel zones will also now be permitted for residents of designated areas. Residents of designated areas will also be able to be visited by family members living within a declared travel zone without the need for quarantine.

Declared Travel Zones

There are now declared travel zones for each designated area which allow a resident to travel anywhere in their declared travel zone for any purpose such as shopping or to visit friends and family.

Residents will not be required to quarantine after returning from another designated area or from within a declared travel zone for their community. Residents may visit the declared travel zone for any length of time including staying for as many nights as they want.

Further information

visit www.health.qld.gov.au/coronavirus
or call 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84).



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Designated Area	Declared Travel Zone
Cherbourg	South Burnett Gympie Noosa Toowoomba
Designated Area	Declared Travel Zone
Palm Island	Townsville Hinchinbrook
Designated Area	Declared Travel Zone
Yarrabah	Cairns Tablelands Mareeba Douglas Cassowary Coast (includes Innisfail)
Designated Area	Declared Travel Zone
Woorabinda	Rockhampton Central Highlands (includes Emerald, Blackwater) Banana (includes Biloela) Livingstone (includes Yeppoon)
Designated Area	Declared Travel Zone
Burke Mornington Doomadgee	Mount Isa Cloncurry Carpentaria (includes Normanton)
Designated Area	Declared Travel Zone
Torres Strait Island Torres Shire Northern Peninsula Area Mapoon Napranum Aurukun Pormpuraaw Kowanyama Lockhart River Cook Shire Hope Vale Wujal Wujal Weipa Town Area	Cairns Carpentaria Mareeba Tablelands Douglas

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Quarantine requirements for residents coming home from elsewhere

Under this Direction, there are some situations where a resident returning from beyond a declared travel zone will not need to quarantine. Residents can re-enter their community without quarantining after:

- receiving health care
- attending schooling
- being released from detention
- returning after using an approved community transport arrangement.

A person accompanying a person returning from health care or schooling for the purposes of providing support or supervision will not be required to complete 14 days of quarantine either. For example, a child returning home from a boarding school in Brisbane, as well as a parent collecting them from their school, will not be required to quarantine when re-entering their community.

A person moving to a designated area to make it their new place of residence will not have to quarantine if they are moving from another designated area or from within the declared travel zone for their new area. A person moving from anywhere else will be required to quarantine.

Unless one of the above exceptions apply, a resident returning from travel to a location other than a designated area or their declared travel zone, will need to complete 14 days of quarantine at a suitable place. Your home within a designated area may be a suitable place to quarantine. You should review the advice available on the [Queensland Health website](#) to determine if your home is a suitable place to complete quarantine. **If you don't think you can quarantine in your home, you should contact your council or disaster management group for advice before returning home to your community.**

Once you start your quarantine, you cannot leave your place of quarantine unless you:

- are getting essential medical care or supplies
- need to avoid injury or illness or to escape a risk of harm.

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Family visiting from a declared travel zone - quarantine requirements

A resident of who lives anywhere in a declared travel zone may enter the designated area for that travel zone to visit a family member without quarantining. For example, a grandparent in Cairns may be invited to visit their grandchild in Yarrabah.

Residents of declared travel zones need to complete a [Remote Communities Pass](#) before travelling to visit family in a designated area. You must present the pass at the vehicle check point to the designated area to prove you are a resident of a declared travel zone.

However, a person who wants to visit family in a designated area and is coming from **a place outside the** declared travel zone (other than another designated area) must quarantine for 14 days.

Other groups exempt from quarantine

You can enter a designated area, without quarantining if you:

- are a person providing an essential service such as health care, education, policing or freight transport
- are driving through the designated area and you take the most direct route and don't come into contact with other people
- are moving between designated areas without having contact with other people
- are entering the area to escape an immediate threat to your life
- are a member of the Australian Defence Force
- are a human biosecurity officer or public health official.

Essential workers

A person entering a designated area to provide an essential service such as health care, education, policing or legal services will need to have a risk management plan in place. You can continue to use an approved Biosecurity Risk Management Plan that is still relevant to your employment.

From 12 June 2020, essential workers entering a designated area that do not have an approved Biosecurity Risk Management Plan in place will need to complete a Queensland Risk Management Plan unless one of the below exceptions apply. A Queensland Risk Management Plan can be downloaded from the Queensland Government website ([insert link](#)).

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An essential worker will not be required to have a risk management plan if they are:

- entering the designated area from a declared travel zone for the designated area; or
- the work they are undertaking is urgent.

Tourist travel still not allowed into a designated area

A person who resides outside one of the designated areas listed in the Direction is not permitted to enter a designated area for the purpose of tourism or recreation.

Entry requirements for anyone entering a designated area

A person entering a designated area must meet the following entry conditions:

- no COVID-19 related symptoms in the last 14 days
- no overseas travel in the last 14 days
- not entering for the purpose of breaking the law
- not prohibited from entering by any other law

Process for requesting an exemption from the Chief Health Officer

If you need to visit a designated area and cannot meet the entry or quarantine requirements outlined by the Direction, you can apply to the Chief Health Officer for an exemption. For example, you may wish to seek an exemption if you live outside of the declared travel zone for a designated area and would like to enter the area to attend sorry business.

People are able to request an exemption [online](#) through Queensland Health or contact their local Council or local DATSIP staff for assistance in completing the request. The Chief Health Officer will consult with relevant community leaders when considering granting exemption requests.

What this means for you

- If you are a resident of a designated area, you can now travel to a declared travel zone for your community for any purpose without having to quarantine on your return.
- If you don't meet entry requirements for a designated area, you cannot enter unless you have an exemption from the Chief Health Officer.

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- If you are a resident who is returning after travelling outside a designated area or declared travel zone, you don't need to complete the 14-day quarantine if you are:
 - returning from receiving health care
 - returning from schooling
 - returning from detention
 - returning from using an approved community transport arrangement
 - granted an exemption from the Chief Health Officer.
- Visitors who live in a declared travel zone for a designated area can now be invited to visit a family member in a designated area without having to quarantine.
- Visitors seeking to enter a designated area from outside of the area's declared travel zone must quarantine.
- If you are entering to provide an essential service you must have a Risk Management Plan in place unless you are entering from a declared travel zone or the work is urgent.
- If you are not a resident of a designated area, you are not permitted to enter a designated area for the sole purpose of tourism or recreation.

The official public health direction is available [here \[update link\]](#).

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