

# Roadmap to easing access restrictions for Queensland's remote communities

A progressive approach to sustainable COVID-19 risk management including for Queensland's remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

**CONTINUING CONDITIONS** • Social distancing, 1.5 metres and hygiene • Stay at home if you're sick • Tracking, tracing, rapid response • Work at home if it works for you and your employer

## CURRENT BIOSECURITY ARRANGEMENTS

Entry to remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities ('designated areas') in Queensland is restricted under the *Commonwealth Biosecurity Act 2015 (Cth)*.

### What do the restrictions mean?

- › Everyone must go into quarantine for 14 days before entering or re-entering a designated area. Some exemptions for 'essential workers' apply and specific exemptions can be granted by the Chair of the Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) in each designated area, in conjunction with a Human Biosecurity Officer.
- › Everyone entering a restricted community 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
  - › Have an approved 'human biosecurity management plan' (essential services workers only).
- › The quarantine rules apply every time you want to enter a restricted community.
- › Queensland Police can enforce the restrictions.

### What are the restricted areas?

- › Restricted areas include the Local Government Areas of: Aurukun; Cook; Hope Vale; Kowanyama; Lockhart River; Mapoon; Napranum; Northern Peninsula Area; Pompuraaw; Torres Strait Island; Torres; Wujal Wujal; Burke; Doomadgee; Cherbourg; Mornington; Palm Island; Wooralinda; Yarrabah and Weipa.

## STAGE 1: FROM 1 JUNE 2020

Commencement on 1 June 2020, in line with Chief Health Officer Public Health Direction – Self-quarantine within Designated Areas

Access remains restricted under the Biosecurity Act, however a person can now complete their 14 days of self-quarantine within community, as directed.

### What does this mean for residents?

- › Residents will no longer have to quarantine outside of community if they leave, unless they have COVID-19 related symptoms or are unable to satisfy other pre-conditions of entry.
- › Existing exemptions by the Chair of LDMGs will continue to apply (i.e. granting approval to leave for specific reasons, and ensuring they do not need to quarantine on return to community).

### Who won't need to quarantine?

- › Workers with an approved biosecurity plan.
- › Workers entering for an urgent purpose (no requirement for an approved biosecurity plan).
- › People travelling through a community but not stopping
- › Exemptions provided by Chair of LDMG.

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### Will this be enforced?

- › Police and ADF personnel will continue to vet those entering restricted areas, to ensure compliance.

## STAGE 2: FROM 12 JUNE 2020

Subject to when the Commonwealth removes the communities from the Biosecurity Direction

### Considerations for transitioning to Stage 2 or 3

Decisions about whether communities can move to Stages 2 and 3 will be made by the Chief Health Officer based on public health conditions for each community, including the reported number of cases, rapid response capability, community consultation and in line with the Commonwealth framework for easing remote area restrictions.

Access to remote communities is now determined by Chief Health Officer Direction – Restricted Access to Remote Communities.

Safe Travel Zones are now in place, allowing residents to travel without quarantining. Queensland's Chief Health Officer is responsible for declaring Safe Travel Zones, according to public health advice and in consultation with LDMGs.

A list of Safe Travel Zones will be regularly reviewed and published on [COVID19.qld.gov.au](http://COVID19.qld.gov.au). Zones may apply to a single community, or an area. The Chief Health Officer may determine a community, based on health advice, can move to Stage 3 and be subject to Queensland's Roadmap to Easing Restrictions ([www.covid19.qld.gov.au/government-actions/roadmap-to-easing-queenslands-restrictions](http://www.covid19.qld.gov.au/government-actions/roadmap-to-easing-queenslands-restrictions)).

Restricted access to areas previously designated under the Commonwealth Biosecurity Act no longer apply.

### What does this mean for residents?

- › Residents may travel within a Safe Travel Zone (which could be more than one local area) with no requirement to self-quarantine when they return home. If they travel outside of a Safe Travel Zone, they must quarantine on return, except if this is for essential medical treatment.

### Other groups exempt from quarantine:

- › Workers entering a remote community with an approved biosecurity plan.
- › Workers entering a remote community for an urgent purpose (no requirement for an approved biosecurity plan).
- › Visitors from anywhere within a Safe Travel Zone must stay within that Safe Travel Zone.
- › As under Stage 1: self quarantining inside community can occur and the same preconditions of entry apply, including no COVID-19 related symptoms in the last 14 days.

## STAGE 3

When the Chief Health Officer determines it is safe to do so

Entry and quarantine restrictions no longer apply for communities declared by the Chief Health Officer as being in Stage 3.

Communities declared to be in Stage 3 are subject to the same provisions as other Queenslanders under the Roadmap to Easing Restrictions ([www.covid19.qld.gov.au/government-actions/roadmap-to-easing-queenslands-restrictions](http://www.covid19.qld.gov.au/government-actions/roadmap-to-easing-queenslands-restrictions)).

### What does this mean for remote communities?

- › Residents of remote communities and those visiting them must follow all existing Chief Health Officer Directions.

Communities may also transition back to Stage 2 from Stage 3 if an outbreak occurs and more restricted access arrangements are required.