



Northern Territory of Australia

*Public and Environmental Health Act 2011*

## **COVID-19 Directions (No. 18) 2021: Directions for COVID-19 public exposure sites in the Territory**

I, Hugh Crosbie Heggie, Chief Health Officer, under section 52 of the *Public and Environmental Health Act 2011 (the Act)*, consider it necessary, appropriate or 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 (*the public health emergency declaration*), by making the following directions:

### **Part 1 Preliminary matters**

- 1 These Directions take effect at the time they are made and remain in force while the public health emergency declaration is in force.

*Note for direction 1*

*These Directions will remain in force during any extensions of the duration of that declaration, which may be made under section 50(2) of the Act.*

- 2 In these Directions:

**Border Directions** means my COVID-19 Directions (No. 8) 2021, or any subsequent Directions that replace and substantially correspond to those Directions.

**casual contact site** means a specified site in the Territory:

- (a) determined by me from time to time; and
- (b) published on the COVID-19 NT website.

**child** means a person who is under 18 years of age.

**close contact site** means a specified site in the Territory:

- (a) determined by me from time to time; and
- (b) published on the COVID-19 NT website.

**COVID-19 NT website** means the website coronavirusnt.nt.gov.au.

**COVID-19 public exposure site** means each of the following:

- (a) a close contact site;
- (b) a casual contact site;
- (c) a low risk contact site.

**low risk contact site** means a specified site in the Territory:

- (a) determined by me from time to time; and
- (b) published on the COVID-19 NT website.

**public exposure period**, for a **COVID-19 public exposure site** means the period determined by me and specified on the COVID-19 NT website for the public exposure site.

**quarantine period**, see direction 8.

**social distancing measures** means the measures required under direction 45 of my Border Directions.

**suitable place for quarantine**, see direction 4 of my Border Directions.

- 3 If these Directions are inconsistent with an advice, order or notice under the *Notifiable Diseases Act 1981*, the advice, order or notice prevails to the extent of the inconsistency.

*Example for direction 3*

*A person may be ordered under the Notifiable Diseases Act 1981 to isolate for longer than the quarantine period or to undertake a specific course of medical treatment.*

- 4 To avoid doubt, my COVID-19 Directions (No. 7) 2020, or any subsequent Directions that replace and substantially correspond to those Directions, apply to any person who is notified by an authorised officer or health practitioner that the person is infected with COVID-19.

## **Part 2      Responsibility to check COVID-19 NT website**

5      Each adult in the Territory should check the COVID-19 NT website at least once in every 24 hour period to determine whether the adult, and any child for whom the adult is responsible, has been in a COVID-19 public exposure site during the public exposure period for the COVID-19 public exposure site.

## **Part 3      COVID-19 public exposure sites**

6      This Part applies to a person who has been at a COVID-19 public exposure site during the public exposure period for the site.

7      If a person was at a close contact site during the public exposure period for the site the person must, as soon as the person becomes aware of that fact:

- (a) immediately contact the COVID-19 Hotline to advise that the person was at the close contact site; and
- (b) submit to a test or assessment for infection with COVID-19 as required by me; and
- (c) travel directly to a suitable place for quarantine or to a place approved by me and as directed by an authorised officer and remain in that place, except to submit to a test or assessment or for a reason referred to in direction 19 of my Border Directions; and
- (d) remain quarantined in that place for the quarantine period.

*Note for direction 7*

*The COVID-19 Hotline number is 1800 490 484.*

8      The quarantine period for a person mentioned in direction 7 is the period starting when the person leaves the close contact site during the public exposure period and ending at 12 noon on the 14th day after the person left the COVID-19 public exposure site.

*Note for direction 8*

*The duration of the quarantine period for a person is not reduced if the result of a test or assessment under direction 7 is negative.*

- 9 Nothing in direction 7 prevents a person who is not ordinarily resident of the Territory from leaving their suitable place for quarantine in order to leave the Territory before the end of the person's quarantine period under direction 7.

*Note for direction 9*

*However, my COVID-19 Directions (No. 21) 2020, or any Directions that replace and substantially correspond to those Directions, may apply to the person.*

- 10 A person mentioned in direction 9 must:
- (a) leave the Territory in the quickest and by the most direct manner possible in the circumstances; and
  - (b) practise social distancing measures until the person has left the Territory.
- 11 If a person was at a casual contact site during the public exposure period for the site the person must, as soon as the person becomes aware of that fact:
- (a) immediately contact the COVID-19 Hotline to advise that the person was at the casual contact site; and
  - (b) submit to a test or assessment for infection with COVID-19 as required by me; and
  - (c) travel directly to a suitable place for quarantine and remain in that place, except to submit to a test or assessment or for a reason referred to in direction 19 of my Border Directions, until notified of the results of the test or assessment.

*Notes for direction 11*

1 *The COVID-19 Hotline number is 1800 490 484.*

2 *If the result of the test or assessment is negative, the person may leave the place. If the result is positive, the person must comply with my COVID-19 Directions (No. 7) 2020 or any Directions that replace and substantially correspond to those Directions.*

12 If a person was at a low risk contact site during the public exposure period for the site, the person must:

- (a) for 14 days after the person leaves the low risk contact site, regularly check for symptoms of COVID-19 including fever, coughing, sore throat, muscular pains, shortness of breath, unexpected tiredness, loss of and altered sense of taste and loss of sense of smell; and
- (b) if the person displays a symptom referred to in paragraph (a):
  - (i) submit to a test or assessment for infection with COVID-19 as required by me; and
  - (ii) travel directly to a suitable place for quarantine and remain in that place, except to submit to a test or assessment or for a reason referred to in direction 19 of my Border Directions, until notified of the results of the test or assessment.

*Note for direction 12*

*If the result of the test or assessment is negative, the person may leave the place. If the result is positive, the person must comply with my COVID-19 Directions (No. 7) 2020 or any Directions that replace and substantially correspond to those Directions.*

#### **Part 4 Application of Border Directions**

13 Directions 19, 20 and 21 of my Border Directions apply in relation to a person who is required to quarantine under these Directions.

#### **Part 5 Changes to COVID-19 public exposure site**

14 To avoid doubt, if a casual contact site or low risk contact site is later determined to be a close contact site, any person who was in that site during the public exposure period for the site must comply with clause 7, even if the person has already complied with clause 10 or 12 in relation to the site.

- 15 Despite clause 7, a person who is in quarantine only because the person was in a site that was determined to be close contact site is not required to remain in quarantine if:
- (a) after being in the site, the person was tested for infection with COVID-19 and received a negative result; and
  - (b) the place ceases to be a close contact site.

*Notes for these Directions*

- 1 *Section 56 of the Act provides for an offence for failing to comply with a direction given by me under section 52(3) of the Act.*
- 2 *The maximum penalty for this offence is 400 penalty units.*
- 3 *A person is not guilty of this offence if the person has a reasonable excuse.*

Chief Health Officer

Dated