Self-quarantine Guidelines

Introduction

On 15 June 2020, the Northern Territory (NT) will transition from mandatory 14 day monitored quarantine to 14 day mandatory, self-quarantine, for interstate arrivals.

People arriving from interstate will be able to undertake the 14 day quarantine period in their own home; in private accommodation; or in appropriate commercial accommodation at their own cost.

People arriving from overseas will still be required to undertake the 14 day quarantine period in mandatory monitored commercial accommodation at their own cost, given the much higher risk associated with international travel.

Chief Health Officer (CHO) Directions and mandatory requirements

It is important that you keep informed about the Directions of the Chief Health Officer and any requirements which relate to quarantine.

Under the COVID-19 Directions (No.38) 2020 (the Directions), every person entering the Territory must submit an approved form to an authorised officer declaring the following information:

- details of the places where the person has been during the 28 days prior to entering the Territory;
- the person's contact details;
- details of where the person intends to stay while in the Territory;
- whether the place where the person intends to stay is a suitable place for quarantine; and the details and number of other people residing at that place.

You must travel directly to your suitable place of quarantine, located in one of the following areas:

- Municipality of Darwin, Palmerston or Litchfield or;
- Town of Katherine, Tennant Creek or Alice Springs or;
- The Townsite of Nhulunbuy.
If the suitable place for quarantine requires travelling for a period longer than 1 hour from where you enter the Territory, you must submit a travel plan to an authorised officer at the point of entry. While traveling to your place of quarantine you must practice social distancing. You must travel the most direct route and complete the travel within 48 hours after entry. You must not stop except:

- in an emergency or;
- refueling as per your travel plan or;
- a planned rest break from driving or;
- overnight accommodation.

If you are stopping overnight you must remain quarantined in your accommodation from the time you check in to the time you check out.

After you arrive in your place of quarantine you must remain in that place for the full quarantine period. You must not leave this place except for:

- an emergency or;
- a medical appointment, obtaining medical supplies, or testing or;
- if you have a temporary exemption from the CHO for a compassionate reason (e.g. to attend a funeral)

While in quarantine you must not let anybody enter your quarantine place unless:

- they are a resident of the place or;
- they are providing medical care or medical supplies or;
- they are providing testing or screening for COVID-19 or;
- there is an emergency.

During your quarantine, the CHO may require you to undertake testing for COVID-19. If you are required to be tested you must comply with the directions of an authorised officer and attend testing at the specified time and place.

Please note throughout your quarantine you must practice social distancing measures.

The CHO's directions are laws and it is an offence to contravene a direction of the CHO.

For more information, visit coronavirus.nt.gov.au
Where can I self-quarantine?

You can self-quarantine for 14 days in your own home, such as an apartment, unit or house; staff accommodation; self-contained caravan; or at commercial accommodation, including hotels, hostels and caravan parks at your own cost. You cannot quarantine in a tent, or in dormitory accommodation where this space is shared with strangers.

All arrivals to the NT must quarantine in a regional centre (Darwin, Palmerston, Alice Springs, Katherine, Tennant Creek or Nhulunbuy (Gove). You must not quarantine in a remote Aboriginal community, as Aboriginal people living in remote communities are at a greater risk of COVID-19.

What does self-quarantine mean?

You must stay at your nominated location for self-quarantine for a period of 14 days beginning on the day you arrive and ending at midday on the fourteenth day after arrival.

You must travel directly to your nominated location for self-quarantine and remain in your place of quarantine for 14 days. You should travel by personal transport, such as a car, to minimise exposure to others. If you need to use public transport (e.g. taxis, ride share service, bus) sit in the back seat of the car or away from other passengers in the bus.

If it will take more than one hour to get to your nominated place of quarantine from where you have crossed the NT border (travelling at the legal speed limit), you must submit a written travel plan on arrival setting out your planned fuel and rest stops. You should take the most direct route possible to your nominated place of quarantine. You must arrive at your designated quarantine address within 48 hours of your arrival in the Northern Territory. You must stay at this place for the full 14 days of quarantine.

If you need to change the place of your quarantine you must notify the CHO of your change of address prior to moving, via completing the online Change of place to self-quarantine Form.

Alternatively download the PDF and email envirohealth@nt.gov.au.

Failure to notify may result in a penalty for non-compliance with the CHO directions.

During the 14 days of self-quarantine, you must not go to any public places, including a supermarket, workplace, school, childcare, university, shops, parks, beach etc.
If you have a private garden, balcony or courtyard you may also access these areas as long as you stay within the boundary of the property.

You will need to organise for friends, relatives, or service providers to drop food off to you without them entering your place of quarantine.

You cannot visit common areas within an apartment or unit complex including a gymnasium, garden, pool or common recreation areas.

Only people who usually live with you are permitted to be in the home or place of self-quarantine.

Do not see visitors or allow visitors into your place of quarantine.

You can share bathroom or kitchen facilities with members of your household. However, you should follow the principles of physical distancing, good hygiene practice and minimise time in shared spaces to less than 15 minutes.

If you are staying in a place with a communal bathroom, where you may come into contact with members of the public, you should follow the principles of physical distancing, good hygiene practice, minimise time in shared spaces to less than 15 minutes and it must be cleaned after each use.

If you are in commercial accommodation, like a hotel, you must remain in your room. If there is a private balcony or courtyard connected to your room you may also access these areas. You cannot visit common areas of the commercial accommodation such as the reception, restaurant, pool, gymnasium or recreation spaces. You also cannot exercise in the hallways or fire escape stairwells.

**Can I mix with family or friends who also live at the same address?**

You must take all reasonable steps to stay at least 1.5 metres away from any other members of the household who are not in quarantine.

To reduce the risk of transmitting COVID-19 you should limit the time you spend with other members of the household who are not in quarantine, to less than 15 minutes. You must sleep by yourself in a bedroom away from family members or friends. Ideally you should have access to a private bathroom, however if you share a bathroom it must be cleaned after each use.
Household members not in quarantine can go about their normal business as long as they maintain physical distancing from those in quarantine at all times.

If however you share a household with babies, young children or other people that you cannot maintain physical distancing from, then these household members should also be in quarantine.

If babies, toddlers, or children under 16 are required to self-quarantine then a parent or guardian should also quarantine with them.

How is COVID-19 spread?

COVID-19 is spread from person-to-person through close contact and droplets including:

- Direct contact with infected persons.
- Contact with droplets from an infected person’s cough or sneeze.
- Touching contaminated objects or surfaces (like doorknobs or tables), and then touching your mouth or face.

The best way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and protect your family and friends is through maintaining good hygiene practices and physical distancing.

Hygiene practices

- Frequently wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds e.g. after going to the bathroom, before and after eating, and after touching your face or hair.
- Avoid touching your eyes, mouth and nose.
- Use a hand sanitiser or wash hands with soap and water before touching shared items such a TV remote control, keyboard, food packages etc.
- Make sure you have separate items like drink bottles, plates and cutlery.
- Do not share hand towels, bath towels or face washers.

Physical distancing

- At all times maintain 1.5 metres distance between you and any other members of the household who are not in quarantine.
- If you need be closer than 1.5 metres to a person not in quarantine with you, minimise contact to less than 15 minutes.
• You must sleep by yourself in a bedroom away from family members or friends. Ideally you should have access to a private bathroom.

• Do not eat meals with other members of the household who are not in quarantine.

You do not need to wear a mask, unless you have to leave quarantine for example to seek medical attention.

**Cleaning and disinfecting**

If you are sharing your place of self-quarantine with other people, then extra cleaning should be carried out throughout your accommodation to help reduce the risk of COVID-19 being spread from contaminated surfaces or objects.

• Clean shared surfaces after each use. This should include door handles such as room doors, cupboard handles and fridge and freezer handles; kitchen benches; tap handles; tables; light switches; fan controls; chair arm rests and remote controls.

• Clean general surfaces and fittings when visibly dirty and immediately after any spillage.

• If using a shared bathroom it should be cleaned and disinfected after use.

• Wash dishes using the dishwasher or wash well in hot soapy water.

• Wash your clothes and bed linen in a separate load with laundry detergent, preferably using the hot cycle of the washing machine.

• If you think a surface may be contaminated, clean it with a common household disinfectant to kill the virus.

• Management of accommodation and caravan parks with shared facilities should clean common areas frequently and encourage anyone in quarantine to minimise their time in shared spaces to less than 15 minutes.

**Cleaning products**

Use a disinfectant which the manufacturer claims can kill viruses. Chlorine-based (bleach) disinfectants are one product which is suitable. Read the label and follow the manufacturer’s instructions for dilution and usage.

Bleach solutions should be made fresh daily as they become less effective over time.

The recommended concentration of available chlorine for routine disinfection of cleaned surfaces is 1000ppm as this concentration has been shown to be effective against the majority of microbial pathogens.
Rubbish disposal

The risk of transmission of COVID-19 when handling rubbish is low. Normal collection of rubbish for households, retail and other businesses should continue.

When managing rubbish, the following good hygiene practices should be followed:

- Tissues, disposable gloves, masks, and other items should be placed in a rubbish bag before disposing of them with other domestic waste.
- Hands should be washed with soap and running water or rubbed with hand sanitiser immediately after handling these items.

Taking care of your health and wellbeing

Being in quarantine can be stressful and boring.

Suggestions in coping during quarantine include:

- Keeping in touch with family members and friends via telephone, email or social media.
- Learn about COVID-19 and talk with others.
- Reassure young children using age-appropriate language.
- Where possible, keep up normal daily routines, such as eating and exercise.
- Arrange to work from home.
- Ask your child’s school to supply assignments or homework by post or email.
- Do things that help you relax and use quarantine as an opportunity to do activities you don’t usually have the time for.

Testing for Coronavirus

If directed by health officials, you will be required to undertake a COVID-19 test. This can be undertaken at a GP or Pandemic Clinic across the NT. Please see the NT Government Coronavirus website for more information on testing.

You should travel to the clinic by using personal transport, such as a car, to minimise exposure to others. If you need to use a taxi or ride share service, sit in the back seat of the car preferably with the window open and wear a mask.

For more information, visit coronavirus.nt.gov.au
What do I do if I get sick?

If you develop symptoms (fever, a cough, sore throat, tiredness or shortness of breath) within the 14 day quarantine period, you should arrange to see a doctor for urgent assessment.

You should telephone the health clinic before you arrive and tell them your travel history and if you have been in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19. If you can't contact or get to a GP, but you have the symptoms, you should call 1800 008 002. This is a dedicated NT wide COVID-19 number for people who need to arrange testing only.

How is self-quarantine being monitored and enforced?

People in self-quarantine will be monitored to ensure that they are complying with the Chief Health Officer's directions. The Northern Territory Department of Health, with the support of the Northern Territory Police Force, will undertake periodic checks during the 14 days of self-quarantine period. People who breach their quarantine requirements may be subject to a penalty.

For more information

- Contact Environmental Health COVID-19 Compliance on 1800 095 646
- SecureNT website
- NT Coronavirus website.