



Proactive Release

The following item has been proactively released by the Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister:

Noting paper: COVID-19: Welfare of People in Quarantine and Managed Isolation

Minute of Decision: COVID-19: Welfare of People in Quarantine and Managed Isolation

Some parts of this information release would not be appropriate to release and, if requested, would be withheld under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Where this is the case, the relevant section of the Act that would apply has been identified. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Key to redaction code:

- 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of individuals

Noting paper

COVID-19: WELFARE OF PEOPLE IN QUARANTINE AND MANAGED ISOLATION

To: COVID-19 Ministerial Group

Date 2/04/2020

From

National Crisis Management Centre

Purpose

1. This paper updates you on issues related to the welfare of people who are either in quarantine (for those who arrive in the country with symptoms of COVID-19 illness), or “managed isolation” (those without symptoms but who are compelled to self-isolate).
2. This paper does not cover support for the broader population who are now in “self-isolation” as required by Alert Level 4 of the COVID-19 response.

Recommendations

3. We recommend you

note officials are working to ensure that supporting elements, such as domestic repatriation to at-home self-isolation, planning for future international scheduled and repatriation flights, and management of the quarantine and isolation facilities and associated welfare support, is well coordinated;

note upon arrival in New Zealand, people who are symptomatic and showing signs of illness are tested, treated as necessary, and placed in quarantine for 14 days. Passengers not displaying symptoms may also be required to undergo a 14-day period of managed self-isolation;

note while most are coping, the key concerns of people in isolation are related to uncertainty about the period after their quarantine ends, and for some job security; and

note to help address these concerns there are a range of welfare support measures in place including financial assistance packages, accommodation, access to essential goods and services, psychosocial support, and welfare checks after the return home.

Contact for telephone discussion if required:

Name	Role	Telephone
Signed out by	John Ombler	All-of-Government Controller
Lead author	Kathrine Wigley	Senior Policy Advisor, DPMC

COVID-19: WELFARE OF PEOPLE IN QUARANTINE AND MANAGED ISOLATION

Purpose

4. This paper updates you on issues related to the welfare of people who are either in quarantine (for those who arrive in the country with symptoms of COVID-19 illness), or “managed isolation” (those without symptoms but who are compelled to self-isolate).
5. This paper does not cover support for the broader population who are now in “self-isolation” as required by Alert Level 4 of the COVID-19 response.

Structures and processes established to support quarantine

6. A large number of those residing in New Zealand now require welfare support as a result of COVID-19 Alert Level 4 restrictions. Agencies are working to ensure those at the highest risk of severe illness from COVID-19 are being identified, and outreach continues to be undertaken to check on and support their welfare.
7. The requirement for welfare support is also likely to increase as New Zealanders and permanent residents continue to arrive home in the coming weeks. To manage this, officials are working to ensure that domestic repatriation, planning for future international and repatriation flights, and management of quarantine and isolation facilities (including welfare support) is well coordinated.
8. Work is also focussed on enabling the return of New Zealanders and permanent residents, where possible, to their home locations to complete self-isolation, while maintaining public health interventions at the border including the provision of quarantine facilities where necessary.
9. The National Crisis Management Centre has therefore directed Auckland Emergency Management to establish the Quarantine Isolation and Planning Cell, a repatriation cell in Auckland, and an Auckland Emergency Management Quarantine/Isolation Coordination Cell. Welfare considerations are an important part of this work.
10. The Ministry of Health (MoH) currently manages multiple quarantine and managed isolation facilities in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. The Ministry of Health will be transferring the management of these facilities to the new Auckland Emergency Management Quarantine/Isolation Coordination Team. The Ministry of Health, however, will retain governance and policy oversight of the facilities. It is expected that the new Auckland structure will be replicated across the regions.

Travellers assessed on arrival in New Zealand

11. All returning travellers are provided with a factsheet outlining the various government welfare support services available, including psychosocial support, temporary accommodation services, financial assistance and provision of essential goods and services. They are also provided information on self-isolation.
12. Upon arrival in New Zealand travellers are screened by health officials. People who are symptomatic and showing signs of illness are tested, treated as necessary, and placed in quarantine for 14 days. People in quarantine are restricted from leaving their accommodation.

13. Passengers not displaying symptoms must explain their travel and accommodation plans for self-isolation. If passengers do not have plans in place that meet MoH criteria, they are transported to accommodation for a 14-day period of managed self-isolation.
14. Flights from Auckland to other New Zealand cities are also now available for safely relocating travellers to points where they can travel home to go into self-isolation. This is a means of ensuring those who can return to their homes are able to do so, thus reducing additional distress and the likelihood of requiring welfare support.

People in quarantine and managed isolation face a range of challenges

15. While most people returning to New Zealand are coping, in some cases returnees have experienced initial confusion, for example about what is expected of them and what movement restrictions they might face.
16. The smaller size of some hotels means that practising social distancing is practically difficult. More significantly, health staff supporting hotel guests have advised there are a small number of people presenting with more complex physical and mental health needs. These needs have been exacerbated by the combination of the long journey home and the challenges of quarantine. In more extreme cases, individuals in this group have been supported to travel onward from Auckland so they can receive more comprehensive medical care.
17. More broadly, informal reporting indicates that for many travellers the main concern is less focussed on quarantine itself, but rather the next steps following the 14-day quarantine period. This anxiety has manifested in limited cases of aggression towards staff. Some people in quarantine have also signalled anxiety related to uncertainty about job security back in New Zealand.

These people also have access to welfare support

18. To help address the concerns above, and encourage compliance with the current alert level, people placed into quarantine and managed self-isolation are being provided the following welfare support:

Accommodation

19. Hotels across New Zealand have now been made available as facilities to support those in managed isolation and quarantine. There are now eight hotels in Auckland (with one hotel, the s9(2)(a), set aside for quarantine), two hotels in Christchurch and a further two in Wellington. Auckland hotels are accommodating the largest number of people (nearly 1500 people across eight hotels). Each hotel now has an appointed "site manager" to support the quarantine or self-isolation operation.
20. People accommodated in quarantine facilities are provided with three meals per day. The movement of a guest may be restricted, however, with those in quarantine unable to leave their rooms.
21. Within 24 hours of an individual going into quarantine or managed self-isolation, people can expect to be contacted, have the next steps explained to them, and be given an opportunity to communicate any needs they may have.

Essential household goods and services

22. As a result of restrictions on their movement, people in quarantine or managed isolation may have limited access to essential items such as toiletries and medicines.
23. Cabinet's previous agreement to amend the Guide to the National Civil Defence Emergency Management Plan Order 2015 ('the Guide') has supported Local Authorities to recover certain welfare costs they incur during the COVID-19 response. This includes the costs of essential household goods and services provided to people in quarantine or managed self-isolation.
24. Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) Groups are reaching out by phone to undertake welfare checks on guests in hotels. These calls have been positively received. Where appropriate, needs are also referred to CDEM Groups by health staff. Checking on the needs of families with children is a priority.
25. In Auckland, the Auckland Emergency Coordination Centre and Isolation Coordination Cell are working to deliver appropriate on-site welfare needs, such as food and other household goods. In Auckland, a small number of personal items such as nappies and toiletries have been provided on request. Some hotels also have arrangements for guests to order items and in other cases a support person drops off supplies for an individual.

Psychosocial support

26. In addition to the range of wellbeing resources available on the MoH website, there are health and other staff on site providing care and support to people in quarantine. In Auckland, the local District Health Board is also providing psychosocial support. Their welfare/psychosocial lead has been visiting the facilities and they have facilitated access to psychologists for individual residents.
27. People in quarantine, like all New Zealanders, also have access to trained counsellors by phone, 24 hours, 7 days a week.
28. The Psychosocial Response Team in the Ministry of Health is rapidly expanding and developing a range of additional psychosocial support options to support the community. These will also be available to people in quarantine. One of these is "Staying on Track", a free online course that introduces practical strategies to cope with worry and disruption of day-to-day life as an impact of COVID-19. When up and running later this week it will be promoted to the quarantine facilities through the information packs and onsite health coordinators.

Welfare support does not end with quarantine

29. Officials will undertake ongoing compliance checks with people who have left quarantine and managed self-isolation. These checks will include ensuring people continue to have access to the welfare support they may require.

Further work underway

30. Further work is now underway as part of the Quarantine Work stream to ensure full consideration is being given to the wellbeing of vulnerable children. This includes officials from Oranga Tamariki (OT):
 - a. establishing with MFAT that child travellers must have a designated responsible guardian accompanying them;

- b. considering what advice and assistance may be needed to support children in quarantine; and
- c. engaging with the All of Government Quarantine work stream to establish if quarantine criteria may be extended, and how this may affect children (especially children in the care of the Chief Executive), and OT's ability to deliver on its statutory responsibilities.

Attachments:	
Attachment A:	Factsheet: Information for travellers arriving in New Zealand
Attachment A:	Factsheet: Wellbeing in self-isolation

Proactively Released

Information for travellers arriving in New Zealand

Effective from 0200 Thursday, 26 March 2020

Given the global pandemic and the increasing numbers of COVID-19 cases being brought into New Zealand by arriving passengers, New Zealand has announced new border measures for arriving passengers.

It is already a requirement for all people entering New Zealand to self-isolate for 14 days from arrival. From 0200 Thursday March 26 2020 NZDT, every passenger entering New Zealand is being screened on arrival.

If you have symptoms of COVID-19 on arrival, you will be tested and placed in an approved quarantine facility for 14 days and will need to remain there even if your test result is negative. If you require hospital care, that will be arranged.

If you appeared healthy on arrival, but you did not have suitable transport arranged or you do not have suitable accommodation for self-isolation, you will be placed in accommodation, which has been approved for isolation for 14 days.

We thank you for your cooperation and appreciate this is a hard and uncertain time.

Reasons for isolation/quarantine

COVID-19 is a virus that can be passed on to others and it may be up to 14 days before you are aware of any symptoms, that is before you feel any signs of illness or feel sick.

We need to keep everyone safe and make sure that COVID-19 is not passed on to other people staying here with you.

Self-isolation or quarantine

All people entering New Zealand must enter a 14 day period of self-isolation.

Self-isolation is an effective precautionary measure to protect others from contracting COVID-19.

We know this is a very difficult time for you all and appreciate your understanding. We want to keep you all safe, as well as the staff at the hotel, and of course the people in New Zealand.

As you are self-isolating, you must limit your contact with any other people as much as possible. You are able to leave your room but you must stay at least 2 metres away from any other people.

If you start to feel sick or have any symptoms during the period of self-isolation, please call the national healthline anytime – **0800 611 116**

If you have been quarantined, you must remain in your room at all times. If you do need to leave your room, you must call **6993** prior to this and get permission/an escort. If you do leave your room, you must always wear a mask to reduce the risk of spreading any bugs.

Reasons for the rules that we have in place while you are staying here

It is very important for you all to follow the guidance and recommendations of health professionals / staff while staying at this hotel.

Why stay away from other guests and staff at the hotel?

If you have not been in contact with others, then there is less likelihood of you coming in to contact with someone who may have the COVID-19.

What are the next steps?

Within the next 24 hours someone will come to see you and to talk to you about what you can expect will happen over the coming days. If you are self-isolating, they will talk to you about what your needs are and provide you with further information about your stay here.

If you are in quarantine you will be tested for COVID-19 by a public health professional.

Over the next two weeks, meals will be provided to you three times a day and your rooms will be cleaned daily. The procedure for how meals will be delivered and what to do during cleaning times will be explained when you check in.

If you have any immediate, urgent needs (such as nappies or baby formula), please phone concierge to let them know.

During the 14 day period:

You will be able to:	You will not be able to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do essential online shopping and have it delivered to the hotel• Call your family or friends• Have access to WIFI• Order snacks from the hotel on your credit card• Arrange for laundry to be done	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leave your room if you are in quarantine (unless directed by health professionals)• Move around or use the hotel facilities (such as the gym)• Have family members visit you or drop off items to you (they are also in a lock down and are required to stay at home).

What happens if I feel unwell?

If you develop any COVID-19 symptoms or are feeling unwell at any stage, please call the national Healthline number anytime – **0800 611 116**

COVID-19 - Wellbeing in self-isolation

Effective from 0200 Thursday, 26 March 2020

How to look after your mental health and wellbeing when you are in self-isolation.

By staying at home right now, you're doing a great thing to protect the health and wellbeing of all New Zealanders, including your whānau, friends and community. Ngā mihi, thank you.

It's all right to feel anxious, angry, scared or worried right now. Your wellbeing while you're staying at home is important and we want you to know you're not alone. He waka eke noa – we're all in this together.

This resource/page has some ideas about things you can do to support your mental health while you're in self-isolation to help you feel good and get through. If you're struggling and need to talk, free call or text **1737** to have a chat with a trained counsellor. They're available day and night.

Stay connected, be kind (especially to yourself) and keep moving. We're going to get through this.

Wellbeing tips

These tips are to help get you thinking about what will help your mental health at the moment. These small actions are big mood-boosters – find what works for you and keep at it.

Use technology to stay connected

Connect with the people who are important to you on the phone, through social media, video chats and text. Self-isolation doesn't mean cutting off all communication – in fact, it's more important than ever to talk and listen, share stories and advice, and stay in touch with the people who matter to you. For example you might want to organise a digital shared lunch, or schedule a daily phone call with your grandmother.

Take notice of things that make you feel good

Eating healthy food, noticing the beauty outside your window or on a walk around the block, taking time to thank people. What ngā manu (birds), ngā kapua (clouds) ngā rakau (trees) can you see? Pay attention to how you feel when you do these things and then try to do them more often.

Keep moving

Try not to spend all day in bed or on the couch. Getting some exercise helps your mind and body to release tension and stress and gives you the energy and good feelings you need to get through. Find ways to move your body and your mood every day. Remember, you can go outside, but you need to limit your contact with others. It's ok to go for a walk, run or ride your bike, as long as you avoid people who aren't self-isolating.

Think about what you have to give

Giving helps us to feel we're still a part of our whānau and community even when we have to stay at home. You've got so much to offer – get creative and think about ways you can give your time, skills and knowledge to help others. For example can you text a complement to someone, share a recipe or book recommendation on social media, or call someone who might be feeling lonely?

Stick to a routine

This sounds boring but it will help you get through each day. Go to sleep and wake up at the same time, eat regularly, shower, change your clothes, get some fresh air, book in video-chats with colleagues or friends, do your chores. Make sure you make time for fun!

Find ways to relax

This is especially important if you're feeling stressed or anxious. Finding things that help you breathe deeply, switch off and recharge will help you to feel better.

Go on an information diet

Covid-19 is a global issue and the endless updates from news outlets and people on social media can be completely overwhelming. Visit <https://covid19.govt.nz> for information and pick one trusted news source and check it once per day. Pay attention to how news coverage makes you feel and switch off if you need to.

For support with grief, anxiety, distress or mental wellbeing, you can call or text **1737** to talk with a trained counsellor for free, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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Meeting of the COVID-19 Ministerial Group

Minute of Decision

This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.

COVID-19 – Welfare of People in Quarantine and Managed Isolation

The group of Ministers with Power to Act on COVID-19 matters [CAB-20-MIN-0130] convened on 3 April 2020 at 10.30am, and in accordance with their Power to Act:

- 1 **noted** that officials are working to ensure that supporting elements, such as domestic repatriation to at-home self-isolation, planning for future international scheduled and repatriation flights, and management of the quarantine and isolation facilities and associated welfare support, is well coordinated;
- 2 **noted** that upon arrival in New Zealand, people who are symptomatic and showing signs of illness are tested, treated as necessary, and placed in quarantine for 14 days. Passengers not displaying symptoms may also be required to undergo a 14-day period of managed self-isolation;
- 3 **noted** that while most are coping, the key concerns of people in isolation are related to uncertainty about the period after their quarantine ends, and for some job security;
- 4 **noted** to help address these concerns there are a range of welfare support measures in place including financial assistance packages, accommodation, access to essential goods and services, psychosocial support, and welfare checks after the return home;
- 5 **directed** officials to report to the Cabinet Business Committee on 8 April 2020 with advice on implementing a more comprehensive quarantine and assisted self-isolation regime at the border.

Michael Webster
Secretary of the Cabinet

Distribution:

The Cabinet
Hon James Shaw

Copied to officials via email