

## COVID-19 PRESS BRIEFING

**The Hon. Renee Ming, JP, MP**  
*Minister of National Security*

**JULY 23, 2020**

Good evening Bermuda,

First and foremost, I wish to extend my thanks to all those who have offered well wishes since my appointment as Minister. I also wish to express my appreciation to the Acting Permanent Secretary, Dr. Danette Ming and all those in the Ministry of National Security who have extended their support in updating me on all the critical matters happening in the Ministry. I've come to appreciate that this is an extremely significant Ministry, charged with ensuring the protection and security of our borders and the public safety of our residents.

The commitment never ceases, and I am very grateful to the entire team in the Ministry who work daily to keep our island safe.

With that, I wish to provide a general overview of the public safety preparations underway for the Cup Match holiday. Typically, the holiday weekend provides an opportunity for the island to come together to celebrate our heritage and our sporting traditions. This year however, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused us to re-assess how we conduct our gatherings.

Even though we won't be celebrating the Annual Cricket Classic this year, it's still a holiday.

And it's our expectation that many of our residents will be heading to our beaches and parks and spending considerable time on the water over the long holiday weekend.

In that regard, the Bermuda Police Service (BPS) has developed a robust policing plan in order to maintain public safety.

We want to ensure a safe and peaceful holiday and the BPS is working in partnership with the Royal Bermuda Regiment (RBR), the Coastguard, the Department of Parks, St. Johns Ambulance, the Road Safety Council, the Water Safety Council and CADA.

With the expectation of large crowds at our beaches and parks, the BPS and the RBR will have a visible presence at Horseshoe Bay Beach and Clearwater beach advising the public to maintain physical distancing.

The BPS will also be deploying drone assets to monitor large public areas such as beaches and parks.

As announced last week by the Minister of Public Works, Lt. Col. David Burch, with the lifting of the curfew, camping and boating are permitted.

We encourage persons to please practice the appropriate health and safety measures.

We are also urging the public to use common sense when it comes to alcohol consumption over the holiday period.

As you are aware, the BPS will be conducting Road Side Sobriety checks throughout the island.

Quite simply – don't drink and drive, and above all, have a plan to get home safely.

As it relates to recreational boating over the holiday, the BPS and the Coastguard will be present on our waters to ensure that the marine environment is as safe as possible.

In particular, the traditional popular gathering that takes place at Mangrove Bay on the Sunday following the holiday, will be monitored closely.

On the topic of events and gatherings of more than 50 individuals, I can confirm that the Ministry has received a number of applications for exemptions for the holiday period. They are under active review and we are in consultation with the Ministry of Health.

We expect that any event that is held, whether it is a gathering of 50 persons or an approved gathering of more than 50 persons, we still urge those in attendance to adhere to the health guidelines in place.

These are for your protection and for the protection of your loved ones.

We continue to review and refine the guidelines as it relates to event exemption guidelines.

Lastly, typically our Cup Match holiday is a festive period. Even against the backdrop of COVID-19, we expect that members of the community will seek to enjoy this national holiday to the fullest.

Bear in mind, though, the public safety precautions in place by the BPS and its partner agencies, are designed to ensure that any festivities remain safe and free of anti-social behaviour.

Let's all work together to make sure that the 2020 Cup Match, Emancipation Day and Mary Prince Day holiday can be remembered for the many enjoyable experiences – and not be marred by any major disturbances, gang violence, road traffic incidents or infringements of the COVID-19 regulations.

As the Minister responsible for National Security, I wish to take this opportunity to thank all of our essential personnel, uniformed services and emergency agencies for their tireless work.

Thank you.