



## **PRESS STATEMENT**

**The Minister of Health**

**The Honourable Kim N. Wilson, JP, MP**

**Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2020, 5.45pm**

**at Berkeley Institute**

Good Afternoon,

Today there were 555 test results received by the Ministry of Health; and 2 were positive for COVID-19. Both new cases were imported on the Delta flight from Atlanta on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

Bermuda now has 156 total confirmed positive cases. Their status is as follows:

- there are 6 active cases, who are
- all under active public health monitoring, and
- none is hospitalized or in critical care;
- a total of 141 have recovered, and
- the total deceased remains 9.

The average age of all of our confirmed positive cases is 59 and the age range of all of our positive cases is from 18 to 101 years.

Overall, 54% of all cases are Black, 40% are white and 6% are other or unknown.

The source of all local cases is as follows:

- 52 are Imported
- 85 are Local transmission, with known contact
- 19 are Local transmission with an unknown contact, and
- none are under investigation

Bermuda's country status remains "Sporadic Cases". The seven-day average of our real time reproduction number is less than 1.

As we enter the Cup Match weekend, some of you may have travel plans for the holiday period...I would urge those individuals – and ANYONE considering travel over the next few weeks – to read the Ministry of Health's *Travel Advice for Residents*, which is currently posted at [coronavirus.gov.bm](https://coronavirus.gov.bm).

To be clear – in order to limit the spread of COVID-19, the Ministry of Health advises that Bermuda residents should avoid all non-essential overseas travel until further notice.

Keep in mind that many countries have put in place travel or border restrictions, and new restrictions may be imposed with little warning. Therefore your travel plans may be severely disrupted and you may be forced to remain outside of Bermuda longer than expected, incurring additional expenses.

If you're thinking about travelling off of the Island during the COVID-19 pandemic, you should consider the following:

- Anticipate a greater risk of exposure if travelling by public means (bus, train, or airplane) and take enhanced measures to protect yourself such as wearing a mask, practicing physical distancing, washing your hands and using hand sanitizer often.
- Explore with your employer any quarantine restrictions that you will be required to adhere to in your workplace upon you return.

- Ensure that you have sufficient finances and necessities, including medication, in case your travels are disrupted.
- Understand the risk of your safety and security abroad.
- Make sure you are up to date on measles, mumps, and seasonal flu vaccinations.
- Ensure you pack extra alcohol-based hand sanitizers and non-perishable foods; and be prepared to clean and disinfect your travel lodgings.

If you must travel during the COVID-19 pandemic there are certain things you must do during your trip. This includes the following:

- Avoid large crowds or crowded areas;
- Avoid contact with sick people, especially those with cough, fever or difficulty breathing;
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water or use hand sanitizer;
- And wear a mask in all public settings.

Upon return to Bermuda, you must comply with all testing and quarantine requirements. You will find the latest information by clicking the “travellers” tab on [coronavirus.gov.bm](https://coronavirus.gov.bm). If you

cannot get a COVID test in the country you are visiting, you will be required to quarantine for 4 days on your return.

There are also specific Return to Work standards which employers and employees should follow; these can also be found on the [coronavirus.gov.bm](https://coronavirus.gov.bm) page. They group employees into one of three workplace settings – low risk, medium risk and high risk, which then dictate how an employee should proceed when returning to work after travel.

Returning residents who work in high-exposure risk settings must quarantine for 14 days and have a day-14 negative test for clearance to return to work. This would apply to workers with close, sustained contact with the public and include institutional settings. For example:

- Care homes;
- Patient care settings;
- Corrections;
- And Health Professionals.

This is because institutionalized settings have a higher density of populations, closer interactions where it is difficult to

physically distance and, in some, more vulnerable populations. Therefore the risk of COVID-19 spread is higher in these settings and the Gold standard for COVID-19 prevention should be instituted.

For those who work in Medium risk settings such as retail stores, construction sites, police, public transport and schools and camps, they have two options. They can either adopt a 14-day quarantine until day 14 test results return. Employees can work remotely if possible. Or they should wait for **three negative test results** before the employee returns to work following the travel.

These settings can implement physical distancing; however, a balance between testing and reconfiguring the work environment can provide some safety when returning to work. Three negative test results within an incubation period for COVID-19 provides some level of assurance.

For those who work in low risk settings such as remote workers and office workers without frequent close contact with others, return to work requires compliance with the normal traveler

quarantine and testing regime, as they can work remotely and would not be of increased risk of exposing their colleagues or the public. These workers do not have close, sustained contact with other persons and therefore are of low risk to transmit the virus.

As always, before I step away from the podium tonight, I want to urge residents to continue to wash your hands frequently, use hand sanitizer before and after entering any store or public building, shield our medically vulnerable, avoid congregating in large groups, and continue to wear your mask and keep six feet apart if you are not wearing one.

I want to stress that plastic face shields are no substitute for a mask. Face shields may be worn in addition to – but not instead of – a mask. Recent studies have shown that face shields do not protect you or others from COVID-19 as well as a mask.

While on this topic of mask-wearing, I want to remind all summer camps that adults and students over the age of 10

must wear as mask if they are not physically distancing (more than 6 feet apart) from others while inside.

Also, I wish to remind diners and restaurants that there is still a maximum of ten diners allowed per table and that there is a continuing requirement for them to wear masks whenever moving around the restaurants or not at their table. These rules are enforceable by law and apply equally to bars, clubs and liquor license establishments.

I know this Cup Match holiday weekend will be completely different from anything we have enjoyed in the past – no game, no large gatherings with family and friends – but I truly hope that each of you finds joy and a chance to connect with those you love over the next few days. It will be different, but it can still be fun; it can still be meaningful...Cup Match can still be whatever it always was to you.

Thank You. Happy Cup Match. Stay safe and please practice SafeSix... keep six feet apart or wear a mask!