

Queensland Government – Coronavirus Key Messages

Tuesday 4 February 2020 (as at 0630)

Key messaging

- There are still two confirmed cases in Queensland—a 42-year-old woman on the Gold Coast and a 44-year-old man on the Gold Coast.
- Fever clinics (Novel Coronavirus) have been set up at Gold Coast University Hospital and Royal Brisbane and Women’s Hospital to further support testing in those regions, with several other hospitals across the state also ready to open fever clinics at short notice if needed.
- **We want to assure Queenslanders that it is safe to go about their daily lives.** We are calling for calm and vigilance to get through this situation as it evolves.
- People need to self-isolate and remain at home if they have:
 - Left Hubei Province less than 14 days ago (until 14 days after they left Hubei)
 - Been in close contact of a proven case (until 14 days after the proven case became unwell)
 - Left, or transited through, mainland China on or after 1 February 2020 (until 14 days after leaving China)
- From Saturday 1 February if you are returning from mainland China, you will need to self-isolate for 14 days from date of departure from mainland China. National travel restrictions applied from 1 February means this will be limited to Australian citizens, permanent residents, immediate family members and legal guardians (see below State and national actions).
- Self-isolation means staying at home and not accepting visitors.
- The Queensland Government has added novel coronavirus to the state’s notifiable conditions list.
- It’s important to understand that contracting the virus requires a person to have more than 15 minutes face-to-face contact or more than two hours contact in an enclosed space with a confirmed case.
- Close contacts will be notified and monitored by public health authorities.
- Good hygiene including washing your hands and covering your mouth while coughing or sneezing is important to help protect against infection.
- Visit www.health.qld.gov.au for the latest advice.

State and national actions

- The Prime Minister announced on 1 February 2020 new border control measures and travel advice, and recommended Queenslanders familiarise themselves with this advice via Smart Traveller website: <https://www.smartraveller.gov.au/destinations/asia/china> and the Australian Border Force site: <https://www.abf.gov.au/>.
- On Friday 31 January the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the novel coronavirus outbreak a public health emergency of international concern.
- WHO is working with the Australian Border Force to screen all incoming residents on flights from mainland China for symptoms and provide them with information on self-isolation.

Symptoms

A number of clinical symptoms have been reported in confirmed cases of novel coronavirus. These symptoms include:

- fever
- respiratory-illness symptoms such as a cough, difficulty breathing, sore throat
- fatigue, headaches.



Anyone with these symptoms who has travelled to, or through mainland China, in the past 14 days should contact a GP or call 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84) immediately.

If attending a GP, please call ahead and advise of your symptoms and recent travel so the clinic can take necessary precautions.

Current status

Queensland Health is calling for calm and vigilance following confirmation of two cases of novel coronavirus in Queensland.

1. A 42-year-old woman, a Chinese national from Wuhan (Hubei Province). She is currently isolated in the Gold Coast University Hospital (GCUH) and is stable.
2. A 44-year-old man from Wuhan (Hubei Province), also remains at GCUH in isolation, and is unwell.

Both were travelling in the same tour group. Seven other people from the same tour group remain in isolation in GCUH. Contact tracing has occurred.

Late Friday (31 January), the federal government provided a list of 2740 Queenslanders under 18 years old who have recently returned from China, including Hong Kong. Queensland Health and Education Queensland have commenced sending a text message to the parents and/or guardians to reinforce the health advice for their children regarding coronavirus.

As at 2 February, a Chinese football team, staying in Brisbane and being assessed for coronavirus are complying with the provisions of self-isolation and will remain this way until 5 February. Queensland Health is working closely with the hotel and the 32 individuals concerned – who are all well and not showing any symptoms at this time.

Health recommendations

The community has a big part to play in preventing the spread of the novel coronavirus.

Just like you would in flu season, wash your hands regularly, cover your cough or sneeze and, if you feel unwell, avoid contact with others and get medical attention. The Chief Health Officer is advising people to stay one metre away from anyone coughing or sneezing.

From Saturday 1 February, returned travellers who have visited mainland China need to self-isolate for 14 days from their date of departure from mainland China. Self-isolation means staying at home (not leaving their residence) and not accepting visitors.

Testing

At this stage, only people who are showing symptoms of the virus can be tested.

Anyone who has symptoms and have been to mainland China within the last 14 days should immediately be assessed as to whether they need to be tested for novel coronavirus. Please attend your nearest hospital.

Anyone who has flown from Hong Kong, who has originated from mainland China, on or after the 1 February 2020, will also be assessed.

Anyone who is concerned should contact their GP or call 13HEALTH (13432584).



Economic impacts

- A teleconference was held yesterday (Monday 3 January) with industry experts to commence collecting data about the economic impacts to the tourism and education sectors, and agriculture and aquaculture to help inform the government's response.

Education

- State schools will be open today (Tuesday 4 February) and throughout the rest of the week as usual.
- The health and wellbeing of staff and students remains a priority focus. Schools have been asked to remain alert to student wellbeing and the range of reactions that students may display during an event like this and make the appropriate guidance support available as required.
- Department of Education continues to work closely with health authorities in relation to the management of this situation.
- The department has provided the latest advice from Queensland Health, and fact sheets, to school principals since the emergence of the coronavirus
- The department has provided updated information to all state schools, and to the independent and Catholic sectors, with the most current advice from Queensland Health.
- Schools have been requested to share information for parents and caregivers through their normal school community communication channels. A version of this message transcribed into Mandarin has also been provided on a needs basis.
- The department has also made more detailed FAQs available to schools via its intranet and continues to work closely with Queensland Health to ensure schools are well informed.
- Study Queensland represented Queensland on an international taskforce, led by the federal government and IEAA and are working a central repository of information for stakeholders and students.
- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) has advised that students who are unable to begin their courses will not face penalties.

Queensland Ambulance Service

- Information has been provided to responding paramedics to ensure the appropriate use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as well as a notification to the receiving hospital.
- QAS has not experienced any increase in respiratory/breathing incidents.

Multicultural Affairs

- The Queensland Government is working with local Chinese organisations and community leaders to promote the latest advice from Queensland Health to the broader community, particularly those with limited English.
- The government will continue to support Queenslanders of Chinese heritage in providing both health information as well as investigating instances of racial vilification.
- We are all Queenslanders, regardless of our cultural heritage and we will continue to support each other at these times.



Transport and Main Roads

- Queensland Health has developed a fact sheet for public transport operators which has been provided to taxi and rideshare companies.
- Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ) and Queensland's Vessel Traffic Services have been monitoring all foreign trading ships arriving at Queensland ports and will continue to do so.
- All foreign trading ships scheduled to arrive at Queensland ports are required to provide the following information until further notice:
 - 1) Report if any crew member or passenger has visited Hubei Province, China within the past 14 days;
 - 2) Report if any crew member or passenger has visited mainland China since 1 February 2020;
 - 3) Report if any crew Member or passenger is showing any of the Novel Coronavirus symptoms.
- Over the course of the last 12 hours (05:00 Mon 3 Feb – 17:00 Mon 3 Feb), 24 vessels have entered Queensland ports and Reef Vessel Traffic Services.
- 133 vessels have entered Queensland ports and Reef Vessel Traffic Services since Fri 31 Jan, four vessels answered yes to one of the above three questions. All four vessels were then cleared.
- All vessels to date have confirmed they have no crew or passengers who have visited Hubei Province, China in the past 14 days or visited mainland China since 1 February 2020, and no crew or passengers have also been reported as showing any of the above-mentioned symptoms.
- Two bulk carriers in the Townsville region (inbound Gladstone and Hay Point) departed China within the past 14 days (20/1 and 22/1 respectively).
- Both vessels reported nil signs of illness associated with the Novel Coronavirus.

Agriculture and Fisheries

- The Queensland Government is aware of impacts from coronavirus on premium fresh food exports from Queensland, such as live coral trout, tropical rock lobster and fresh fruit and vegetables.
- We are working with industry to understand the impacts on exports and explore options for how government can assist them if necessary.
- Fisheries Queensland is also liaising with other fisheries agencies around Australia regarding options to assist industry affected by coronavirus to ensure a coordinated approach.

Tourism

- TEQ is liaising with industry to monitor the impact of the cancellations for Queensland tourism operators.
- TEQ and Tourism Australia are supporting tourism operators by ensuring they have access to the latest health advice.
- DITID has secured emergency accommodation in Brisbane, Cairns and the Gold Coast for any inbound travellers who have been in China in the past 14 days and do not have accommodation already booked.
- Only one traveller has required emergency accommodation so far.



Employment, Small Business and Training (including TAFE Queensland)

- TAFE Queensland has communicated key health messages to agents and students at the start of all classes and have been requesting all staff and students to identify if they have been in China over the past 14 days and has then encouraged self-isolation.
- TAFE Queensland is capturing data on these students and staff.
- Additionally, information posters have been translated and distributed across TAFE Queensland campuses.
- Central Queensland University and other state contracted vocational and training providers have been provided with the relevant advice from Queensland Health.

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