

# STATES OF JERSEY



## A SAFER TRAVEL PERIOD: STATES ASSEMBLY APPROVAL

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Lodged au Greffe on 26th June 2020  
by the Council of Ministers

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STATES GREFFE

## **PROPOSITION**

**THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –**

- (a) that a safer travel period, as set out in the policy statement attached as Appendix 1 to the report, should commence from Friday 3rd July 2020;
- (b) that during the safer travel period, anyone entering Jersey must either participate in and comply with the requirements of the border testing programme, developed in accordance with medical advice in order to identify and contain cases of COVID-19, or self-isolate for the timeframe specified by the latest medical advice;
- (c) that the options for pre-travel testing should be co-ordinated with other relevant jurisdictions, in accordance with medical advice;
- (d) to request the Council of Ministers to give effect to the safer travel period, as set out in this proposition, and to present a report to the States prior to any changes being made to the safer travel policy; and
- (e) to request the Council of Ministers to provide regular and timely information to States Members on the operation of the safer travel period, including the border testing and contact tracing programmes.

**COUNCIL OF MINISTERS**

## REPORT

### Introduction

The Council of Ministers understands that any changes to the current policy of only permitting travel in and out of Jersey for essential purposes must be handled carefully and fully explained to States Members and the public.

Travel to and from Jersey at the current time is an issue which is subject to differing views both within the Assembly and our community. Indeed, it is a matter of significant interest, for varying reasons, to the majority of Islanders. The issue of safer travel is only one part of the range of considerations that impact on how Islanders are experiencing the current pandemic. Uncertainty about the future, in particular amongst our most vulnerable friends, family and neighbours, will understandably remain. For those reasons, it is right and proper that the move to a safer travel period, and the evidence and medical advice that inform it, are considered by the Assembly.

That is the purpose of this proposition. It sets out a clear Government policy for a safer travel period to commence from 3rd July 2020, based on the latest evidence and medical advice, and seeks the Assembly's endorsement for that policy and approach. The proposition and accompanying information demonstrate that the updated policy continues to ensure that Jersey's response to COVID-19 is aimed at causing the least overall harms to Islanders, and adheres to the overall suppress, contain and shield strategy.

### P.68/2020

This proposition follows, and is related to, [P.68/2020](#) lodged by Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour.

As stated in the report accompanying the amendment lodged by the Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture (the "EDTSC Minister") to [P.68/2020](#), Ministers appreciate the intention and objective of Deputy Maçon's proposition and are supportive of many of the Deputy's proposals.

Ministers were pleased to work constructively with Deputy Maçon in developing the amendment to [P.68/2020](#) and were grateful to the Deputy for the co-operative and open manner in which he regularly engaged. The amendment was seen as necessary in order to take account of the significant work that had already taken place at that stage, in accordance with the Safe Exit Framework, to permit more, safe, travel to and from Jersey and to ensure that any future measures could be implemented in accordance with the latest medical advice. This work has continued since the amendment was lodged (and indeed resulted in a further amendment being lodged by the EDTSC Minister to [P.68/2020](#)) and further medical advice has also since been received by the Council of Ministers.

Ministers have continuously sought to keep States Members and the public as well-informed as possible on this, and all other matters relating to this public health crisis. Accordingly, and in view of the further work undertaken since the amendment to [P.68/2020](#) was lodged and the updated medical advice received by Ministers, the Council of Ministers has lodged this proposition, along with the latest information which is included in this report and the Appendices. The proposition upholds both the

spirit and substance of the amendment lodged to [P.68/2020](#), as agreed with Deputy Maçon, and goes further in that it seeks the Assembly's approval for a clear policy decision.

Ministers have discussed their intention to lodge this proposition with Deputy Maçon. The Deputy is to be credited for the initiative he has shown on this issue and his understanding of the various considerations that have formed part of ministerial decision making.

### **Consideration by the Assembly**

The Council of Ministers will be requesting that this proposition is debated at the sitting commencing on 30th June. It is hoped that Members will recognise the links between this proposition and [P.68/2020](#), and that this proposition is a result of further work and updated advice received by Ministers. Indeed, Ministers believe that the Government has a duty to lodge this proposition, in order that the Assembly can have a relevant debate on this highly important topic based on the latest information and advice available. Ministers therefore hope that Members will agree to reduce the lodging period and believe it is in the public interest to do so.

### **Background**

As was mentioned in the report accompanying the amendment to [P.68/2020](#), a move towards more travel between Jersey and the UK requires major consideration to ensure it is undertaken as safely as possible. This also applies to travel between Jersey and any other jurisdiction. There is an ongoing need to continue to suppress COVID-19 in Jersey and contain the virus in order to keep it at very low levels within our community. This is all part of the Government's suppress, contain and shield strategy which, to date, has been implemented successfully due to the efforts of all Islanders.

Equally, there is a concurrent medical requirement to ensure that the Government's efforts to combat COVID-19 causes the least overall harms. The report accompanying the amendment to [P.68/2020](#) set out the considerations that need to be made in ensuring that a balance is achieved between the social and economic harms being caused by the present travel arrangements and the harm which could be caused by a significant rise in cases of COVID-19 if the virus were to spread again as a result of being brought to the Island by those entering from the UK or further afield.

The report explained that this balance was being sought, in the first instance, through the trial programme for testing passengers for COVID-19 as they arrive at Jersey Airport, which has been in place since 1st June and was developed based on the advice of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell ("STAC"). It was highlighted that the results of the pilot programme would inform longer-term planning and the development of a route to restoring the Island's connectivity in stages, while maintaining progress towards a Safe Exit. Importantly, it was noted that the development of future proposals for at-border testing would need ongoing clinical assessment and oversight, as would the period of isolation required of any person not participating in at-border testing.

## **Deputy K.F. Morel of St. Lawrence's amendment**

The Council of Ministers wishes to formally acknowledge the second amendment to [P.68/2020](#) lodged by Deputy Morel regarding the pilot border testing programme. The second amendment is accepted by Ministers and, to this end, a review of the border testing trial is attached as Appendix 5 to this report. This includes the information requested by Deputy Morel in his second amendment to [P.68/2020](#).

Of particular note is that, as of 24th June, 93% of all arriving passengers had participated in the border testing trial, with 868 people receiving a PCR test on arrival. Those not participating are required to self-isolate for 14 days. No cases of COVID-19 have been identified (as of 24th June) in travellers arriving in Jersey during the border testing trial. The exercise has provided essential learning about how border testing can work in practice and about the likely low levels of infections that are anticipated in arriving passengers as safer travel resumes.

## **Recent developments**

In recent weeks, STAC has regularly discussed and reflected on the trial testing programme at Jersey Airport and the potential for re-opening borders. Updates have been provided to Ministers on 15th June and 23rd June, and these are attached as Appendices 3 and 4 to the report. As Members will see from the advice submitted on 15th June, STAC have considered the balance between the potential harm caused by an increased (but manageable) number of cases of COVID-19 in Jersey with the harms that restricting travel has both on the economy and the wider physical and mental health of Islanders.

The 15th June advice also notes that “there is a need to balance the risk of increased Covid-19 cases and the negative impact of losing air and sea links”. To this end, Ministers have received updated information from the Ports of Jersey with respect to Jersey's transport connectivity. This advice has made clear the need for the Government's travel and border testing policy, once travel is permitted for all (and not only essential) purposes, to be clarified and shared as early as possible to assist carriers, and especially airlines, to make decisions as to their network of routes that they would operate in July and August. Ministers have been cognisant of this in considering the timing of this proposition, although have been clear that the medical advice takes precedence in guiding their policy decision.

## **A policy for a safer travel period**

Policy officials have been developing proposals for a safer travel period in conjunction and in alignment with the considerations of STAC for the potential re-opening of borders. A policy proposal was submitted to STAC and advice received on 23rd June which endorsed the proposal. The policy statement is attached as Appendix 1 and in summary requires the following of passengers entering Jersey –

- to provide acceptable evidence of a negative PCR test for which a tested sample was taken no more than 72 hours before departure or;
- to undergo a PCR test on arrival in Jersey, or within 24 hours of arrival in certain defined circumstances or;
- to be in receipt of an exemption to the above criteria.

The policy proposes that any person who can adhere to the above requirements would not be required to quarantine upon their arrival in the Island, including for any period that they are waiting for the result of a PCR test. People displaying symptoms of COVID-19 should not travel, and anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 will be required to self-isolate for the required period in accordance with medical advice. Arrangements are in place for persons who may require assistance in order to meet quarantine requirements on receipt of a positive test.

Any person who cannot or does not wish to adhere to the above criteria will be required to quarantine for the period specified by medical advice (currently 14 days).

The policy also sets out the arrangements for close and continued contact tracing as part of arrangements to suppress the virus as and when it is identified within the community.

In addition, draft guidance for people travelling to Jersey is also attached as Appendix 2. This sets out the steps that will need to be followed before departure and on arrival, which include advice to limit social contact in the period before test results are received.

### **Medical advice**

Medical advice from STAC was considered and discussed by Competent Authority Ministers on 23rd June, and by the Council of Ministers on 24th June. Both bodies reflected on the importance, and the real benefits to Jersey so far, of following the objective scientific and technical advice provided.

In particular, Ministers discussed at length, and with input from the Medical Officer of Health and Deputy Medical Officer of Health, the advice from STAC that “given the current estimated prevalence of the virus in travellers coming from the UK and the current levels of virus on the island the current practice of all travellers being isolated, even for the short period waiting for test results, is not proportionate.”

Following their considerations, the Council of Ministers agreed to accept the advice and amend Government policy accordingly.

In accepting the advice of STAC, Ministers were cognisant that it is not possible to maintain a complete travel lockdown (permitting travel for essential purposes only) for an indeterminate period until a vaccine is found. Such a position would not be consistent with achieving a balance of harms and causing the least overall harms to our community.

Ministers recognise that it is important now, when infection rates within Jersey are consistently low and falling in our neighbouring countries, that Islanders are given certainty that they can visit friends and relatives and travel – whether to take a well-earned break or to take care of their interests away from the Island.

### **The proposition**

The proposition, at paragraph (a), requests that the Assembly endorses the Government’s updated policy for a safe travel period to operate as set out above from 3rd July 2020.

Paragraph (b) requires that, during this safer travel period, anyone entering Jersey must comply with the requirements of the border testing programme which are as set out in the points above, or self-isolate for the required period. Both the border testing programme and the self-isolation programme are to be guided by medical advice.

It is important to emphasise that the proposition is drafted so as to be sufficiently flexible to ensure that the requirements of the border testing programme can be amended if medical advice changes in the coming weeks and months. The same applies for the isolation period for anyone not participating in the testing programme.

Paragraph (c) aligns with STAC advice that pre-departure testing should be explored further, and co-ordinated accordingly with other jurisdictions.

Paragraph (d) ensures that the Government's policy is able to evolve in response to the operation of the safer travel period, in response to information and learning that is received from the initial operation of the safer travel period, and as we move through the summer into the autumn and the winter. It must be stated clearly that border policy, and testing measures, may be relaxed further in due course, if medical advice recommends such a course of action, and equally may be tightened and made more stringent. In any event, Ministers are required to advise the Assembly by means of a report before any significant changes to the current policy are made.

The final part of the proposition ensures that States Members receive regular and timely information on the operation of the safer travel period. This is to include updates on the border testing and contact tracing programmes and can also cover any other related areas that are of interest to States Members.

Ministers hope that the Assembly will recognise that the proposition upholds the substance of what was being proposed in the Amendment to [P.68/2020](#), with the addition of the request to endorse a clear policy position based on the latest medical advice. Adopting the proposition would reflect support for the Government's current policy position and also ensure an ongoing role for the Assembly as the policy is implemented and updated in the weeks to come.

## **Conclusion**

Ministers accept that this is a difficult and delicate decision. The policy position of the Government is based on clear medical advice, adherence to which has served our Island well throughout this crisis. The advice and policy take strong account of the balance of harms between the spread of COVID-19 and the wider impacts of keeping Jersey's borders closed.

The proposed safer travel period is not a return to business as usual – it still requires passengers to participate in a border testing programme, with subsequent robust contact tracing, or to self-isolate. The policy builds on the experience of the pilot testing programme which has been in place since the beginning of June for essential travel. It allows the Government to maintain its overall 'suppress, contain and shield' strategy. Members are asked to vote in favour of this proposition, and in doing so continue their support for the Government's approach to managing this crisis and demonstrate their ongoing confidence in the advice of our medical professionals.

### **Financial and manpower implications**

There are no direct or immediate financial or manpower implications for the States arising as a consequence of adopting this proposition. There may be financial and manpower implications arising from the implementation of the safer travel policy, and these may change over time.

### **Appendices for information**

1. Safer Travel policy statement.
2. DRAFT Public health guidance for people arriving in Jersey.
3. STAC Executive Memo 15th June 2020.
4. STAC Executive Memo 23rd June 2020.
5. Review of the Border Testing Trial.



# SAFER TRAVEL POLICY STATEMENT

## JUNE 2020

### Introduction

The Government of Jersey is pursuing a suppress, contain and shield strategy<sup>1</sup> to ensure the continued control and suppression of the virus in a safe and sustainable way that protects Islanders by causing the least overall harm.

The primary goal of the public health strategy was to delay and flatten the epidemic curve. This led us into a period of lockdown. The lockdown measures were necessary to avoid a sharp peak of COVID-19 cases, and thanks to the support of Islanders these measures have been very successful.

These measures although necessary have however had a negative impact on livelihoods, affected Islanders' mental and physical wellbeing, and limited their civil liberties. The Government has been clear these restrictions must not extend any longer than absolutely necessary and should be lifted as soon as safely possible.

The second goal of the public health strategy is, therefore, to exit the pandemic as quickly as we can safely do.

On 12 June, Jersey moved to Level 2 in the Safe Exit Framework<sup>2</sup>, and while many areas of island life have returned to some degree of normality, off Island travel remains restricted to necessary journeys provided by the Blue Islands lifeline service contracted by the Government<sup>3</sup>.

We cannot maintain a complete travel lockdown for an indeterminate period until a vaccine is found. The significant impacts of such restrictions on our lives and livelihoods would be felt for a long time.

It is important now, when infection rates within Jersey are consistently low and falling in our neighbouring countries, that Islanders are given certainty that they can visit friends and relatives and travel – whether to take a well-earned break or to take care of their interests away from the Island.

The Government has established additional controls, including a proportionate border testing programme for all arrivals, that enable this travel to happen safely and in line with expert medical advice.

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<sup>1</sup>

<https://www.gov.je/Health/Coronavirus/SafeExitFramework/Pages/ExitFramework.aspx#StrategyFramework>

<sup>2</sup>

<https://www.gov.je/Health/Coronavirus/SafeExitFramework/Pages/SafeExitFrameworkForIslanders.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.je/Health/Coronavirus/Travel/Pages/CoronavirusTravelAdvice.aspx>

## **Where we are now**

The first coronavirus related travel guidance was issued in Jersey on 30 January. A series of further measures were put in place throughout February and March. By the end of March 2020 all significant sea and air passenger travel operators to Jersey had suspended services.

In early April the Government introduced an essential travel scheme. Applications made to Jersey Customs and Immigration Service (JCIS) are assessed against published criteria. Successful applications can secure passage on a lifeline flight provided by Blue Islands, under an exclusive contract negotiated by Government. The first of these 'lifeline' flights departed on 20 April 2020. JCIS approval is also required to enter the Island by private air or marine routes.

Currently, seven flights operate each week including medical flights, with three departing to Southampton and two to Gatwick. Over half of all passenger journeys are made on compassionate grounds.

Under the Covid-19 (Screening, Assessment and Isolation) (Jersey) Regulations 2020 any person arriving in Jersey, from late March, is required to self-isolate for 14 days from the date of arrival unless exempted from doing so. Exemptions from self-isolation apply only to the period during which the exempted person is undertaking specifically identified essential work.

In late May, with reference to advice from the Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell (STAC), Ministers agreed to establish a border testing trial.

The border testing trial is voluntary and passengers who choose not to participate must self-isolate for 14 days from the day of arrival, in line with the published guidance<sup>4</sup>. Checks are made to ensure people are well and that they understand what they have to do.

By the 24 June, 93% of all arriving passengers had entered the border testing trial. 868 people had received a PCR test on arrival and more than half had completed the full course of three PCR tests.

No cases of coronavirus have been identified in travellers arriving in Jersey during the border testing trial, and the exercise has provided essential learning about how border testing can work in practice and about the likely low levels of infections that are anticipated in arriving passengers as safer travel resumes.

## **A Safer Travel Period**

A Safer Travel period is implemented from 3 July 2020. A number of controls will be applied consistently throughout this period to ensure that commercial travel can resume in a safe and managed way.

The requirement to self-isolate on arrival will be retained during the Safer Travel period but will be waived for anyone that agrees to the terms of an enhanced and expanded border testing programme. The specific requirements of this programme will change over time in response to the COVID-19 risk profile and other considerations.

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<sup>4</sup> See: <https://www.gov.je/Health/Coronavirus/Travel/Pages/CoronavirusTravelAdvice.aspx>

The Safer Travel approach is set out below. It consists of four measures, which rest on three strong foundations.

In developing this approach time has been taken both to learn from local experience, through the border testing trial, and from the approaches taken to managing safe cross-border travel in other jurisdictions.

#### Measure 1 - Detailed Guidance

Detailed guidance will be published that sets out the arrangements for the border testing programme and stresses the importance of limiting social contact in the period before test results are received, and of the prevailing public health guidance (on hygiene and physical distancing).

All people travelling through Jersey's ports will receive public health guidance and information, both on arrival and pre-departure.

#### Measure 2 – Coordination with Travel Providers

There will be monthly forward coordination of all travel providers operating to and from Jersey with both Ports of Jersey and Public Health officials. Information about up to date public health intelligence will be shared and planned future travel will be kept under continual review in order to inform public health projections and the operations of the border testing programme.

All commercial travel providers are required to share details of planned services with both Ports of Jersey and Government of Jersey at least 14 days in advance, unless an exemption is granted.

Government will actively monitor and raise directly any concerns about future planned travel arrangements.

#### Measure 3 – Active Border Management

The default requirement to self-isolate on arrival will remain in place with regular monitoring, spot checks and enforcement as necessary.

Self-isolation will be waived for all passengers that opt-in to the border testing programme, the provisions of which may change over time. In addition to other requirements set out in the detailed guidance, the border testing programme will require all people arriving in Jersey to:

- Provide acceptable evidence of a negative PCR test for which a tested sample was taken no more than 72 hours before departure<sup>5</sup>
- Or undergo a PCR test on arrival in Jersey, or within their first 24 hours on island in certain defined circumstances
- Be in receipt of an exemption to the above criteria

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<sup>5</sup> Guidance is being developed on what constitutes acceptable evidence – uncertain currently if this will be available when the policy is published

People displaying symptoms of coronavirus must not travel, and anyone that tests positive for COVID-19 will be required to self-isolate in line with published guidance.

#### Measure 4 – Close and continued contact tracing

All people arriving in Jersey will be required to provide necessary contact information ahead of travel using a secure online service. Passengers may be required to provide additional information during their stay including about whether or not they are displaying symptoms of coronavirus.

Where any positive case of coronavirus is identified, a forensic contact tracing process will be instigated and all direct contacts that are identified will be required to be tested.

An industry-led approach to sharing practical public health advice will be established. It will support hotels and other travel accommodation providers to adopt best practice arrangements and help keep people safe during their stay.

#### Strong Foundation 1 – Data and reporting

There is close monitoring of public health intelligence and data, including daily case review by a team of clinicians and analysts.

Data relating to the border testing programme, including the number of people arriving, the number that are tested and test results, will be published on a regular basis to promote transparency.

#### Strong Foundation 2 – Island wide testing

The island-wide testing programme continues to deliver at scale. A planned screening programme of essential workers and care home residents is in place, with hundreds of tests undertaken each day. This scope of this screening programme is continually reviewed in order to proactively respond to any new information about how COVID-19 might be transmitting in Jersey.

Everyone that is admitted to the hospital, or into a care home, is tested in advance.

Anyone with flu-like symptoms should stay or go home immediately and call the Helpline on +44 (0)1534 445566 to request a test.

#### Strong Foundation 3 – Safe healthcare

Since March, we have developed greater capability in our health and community services to cope with the challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes a vital increase in capacity, with the building of the Nightingale facility, as well as improved infection control practices and supply of ventilators and personal protective equipment.

We have also been able to improve coordination through the landmark agreement to work with island GPs.

These improvements ensure the appropriate capacity is available for the duration of the pandemic.

During the Safer Travel period ministers will continue to explore opportunities for reciprocal Air Bridge arrangements to be put in place to allow Islanders to visit certain destinations more freely. These arrangements will be informed by public health criteria, such as the level of infections and the presence of robust local containment measures in the partnering jurisdiction.

Work is also continuing to establish whether it is scientifically and operationally viable for a system of antibody diagnosis and certification to further reduce barriers to travel in the future.

### **A responsive approach**

Jersey's Safe Exit Framework recognises that our response to the coronavirus pandemic must continue to change in response to new situations and new understanding. A key principle of the framework is that these changes must be easy to understand and relatively easy to implement, with guidelines issued where appropriate.

The Safer Travel approach will need to respond to a range of changes in the coming weeks and months. In particular, it will respond to any uncontrolled rise in cases of COVID-19, to how we understand best practice in tackling the virus, and to the implementation of the border testing programme.

In addition, the public health guidance for people arriving Jersey, which is published alongside this policy statement, will remain under review on an on-going basis.

### Responding to any uncontrolled rise in cases

No border arrangements – even those that severely restrict travel and require universal self-isolation for the small number of arrivals – can be entirely effective in mitigating the risk of external seeding of coronavirus cases.

It is important to be clear that a return to travel – even during a safer travel period – is likely to lead to a rise in cases. It is important that this rise is controlled and does not threaten the capacity of the healthcare system to provide safe care where unfortunately it may be required. Restricting travel indefinitely will have serious adverse effects that will impact the lives and livelihoods of Jersey residents and lead to on-going mental and physical ill health over the medium and longer term.

The primary factors that influence the degree of risk posed by travel are the number of current infections in the country from which people are travelling (which may be different to the country they travel to Jersey from); and how effectively we stop any infections that do arrive in Jersey from being passed on to other people. The number of people arriving in Jersey and the effectiveness of our border testing measures also impact the number of likely potential

infections but have less of a ‘gearing’ effect that could lead to larger rises in cases.

In 2019, 64% of visitors to Jersey were from the UK. The level of live infections in the UK has been falling recently, as measured by the Office for National Statistics, with current estimates showing that an average of 1 in 1,700 individuals in England had COVID-19 at any given time between 31 May and 13 June 2020<sup>6</sup>.

To mitigate the risk that these cases spread, a robust system of testing, contact tracing and monitoring and enforcement of self-isolation is now in place. This is in addition to improved infection control practice across the health and care system, with robust stocks of PPE, and expanded healthcare capacity. Jersey is well prepared to find and contain any future spread of infection.

Physical distancing, good public health hygiene measures and on-going controls on hospitality and business activities – which form the ‘new normal’ under Level 1 of the Safe Exit Framework – also provide enhanced protection against the risk of on-island transmission.

In addition to these robust arrangements that mitigate the risks associated with greater travel, arrangements are also in place to act swiftly should any uncontrolled rise in cases be identified. A daily clinical and analytical cell actively monitors all confirmed cases, associated contact tracing and emerging intelligence on a daily basis, escalating any concerns to the Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell and to Ministers where necessary. A detailed Health and Community Services plan is also in place, setting out the operational response that will follow any rapid rise in cases.

Additional public health plans, under the Safe Exit framework, also provide the necessary measures to mitigate an uncontrolled rise in cases, including the potential for: changes to the Safer Travel guidance; the reintroduction of stronger guidance for Islanders; re-focusing of testing, tracing and isolation programmes (such as changes to the border testing regime, planned screening programme or to self-isolation guidance; and increased monitoring and enforcement); enhanced infection control targeted at key institutions, sectors and environments; whole-population measures as a last resort, including the re-introduction of increased physical distancing, restrictions on trade or restriction on travel and movement.

Neither stasis nor the reintroduction of travel to and from Jersey is entirely risk free. The Safer Travel arrangements establish a proportionate approach to mitigating these risks and are backed by a clear understanding of steps that must and will be taken if action is required.

### Understanding best practice

Much continues to be learned about both the scientific basis and microbiology of COVID-19, and about the most effective healthcare and wider public policy

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<sup>6</sup> See:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/bulletins/coronaviruscovid19infectionsurveys/pilot/18june2020>

responses to it. Indeed, Jersey has benefitted throughout the pandemic as much from learning drawn from other jurisdictions as from improvements in our understanding of how the virus has developed in the Island.

As we progress through the Safer Travel period we will continue to learn more from these local and international sources. In particular we will learn what type and scale of effect the increase in travel might have on infection in Jersey. The Safer Travel guidance will change as a result, as will the requirements of the border testing programme, and other testing, tracing and isolation programmes.

#### The border testing programme

The border testing programme builds on existing testing, tracing and isolation management capabilities. The infrastructure for the programme is being enhanced, with additional investment in new IT systems – to provide a joined-up arrivals experience – and in new testing centres and an expanded workforce.

Next day turnaround of off-island testing is now in place, and work is also underway to identify the best on-island technologies to provide additional scale and faster results. Improvements are expected to be made as a result to the speed and resilience of the programme.

## DRAFT

# Safer Travel guidance for people arriving in Jersey PUBLIC HEALTH POLICY ADVICE

The following guidance applies to all persons travelling into the Bailiwick of Jersey including Jersey residents. It applies to all passengers regardless of the length of their intended stay in Jersey and regardless of the frequency of travel to and from Jersey.

### Arriving Passengers

To reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission into Jersey and to manage the risk of community transmission on the island all arriving passengers are required to:

- Complete a pre-departure registration form to opt into the Safer Travel testing programme;
- Self-Isolate for 14 days on arrival **or**:
  - a. Prior to departure present documentary evidence of a negative Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) COVID-19 test conducted within 72 hours of arrival in Jersey **or**.
  - b. Undergo a PCR test on arrival in Jersey.
- Follow Public Health guidance for the duration of their stay in Jersey.

### Considerations before travelling to Jersey

Before arranging to travel to Jersey, passengers should consider the following:

- If a passenger receives a positive PCR test on arrival or at any point during their stay in Jersey, they will be required to self-isolate from the time of the test result; they will not be able to travel during this self-isolation period and will have to make arrangements to remain in Jersey if their planned stay is shorter than the self-isolation period.
- If a passenger is staying in a shared household in Jersey and receives a positive PCR test result, the other people in the household will be required to self-isolate for 14 days from the time of the test. As such, passengers should consider the potential implications of their travel for those in their household and discuss this with them before travelling.



- If you have been identified as having had close contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case while in or travelling to Jersey, you may be required to self-isolate for 14 days from the time of last contact.

### **Pre-Departure Registration and Declaration**

People planning to travel to Jersey are required to complete an online registration form before departure, stating their personal details including but not limited to:

- contact information
- type of transport
- travel dates
- address(es) they will be staying at throughout their stay in Jersey.
- Details of travel within the 14 days before arrival in Jersey

The online pre-departure form also includes a declaration of health, passengers are required to provide information on countries they have visited before arrival, whether they have any symptoms of COVID-19, whether they have been diagnosed with COVID-19 before their arrival, or if they have been in close contact with an infected individual.

The specific requirements of the Safer Travel testing programme may change over time and are not set out in full in this guidance. Be certain to read the terms of the testing programme closely at the time you register.

At the same time as completing the pre-registration process, passengers will be able to provide documentary evidence of a negative PCR test result conducted in their jurisdiction of departure; this test must have been taken within the 72 hours before arrival in Jersey.

Passengers will be required to confirm the authenticity of any documentation uploaded or referred to as part of the pre-registration process.

The information provided by passengers will be shared with monitoring and enforcement agencies for the purposes of contact tracing.

Individuals who develop symptoms of COVID before travel but after filling in their declaration form MUST follow the advice of their jurisdiction about self-isolation and referral for testing. Individuals with symptoms of COVID must not travel to Jersey till they have been symptom free for at least 48 hours and must observe their local Public Health guidance.

### **Self-Isolation Legal Requirement**

Under the [Covid-19 \(Screening, Assessment and Isolation\) \(Jersey\) Regulations 2020](#) all passengers arriving in Jersey will be required to self-isolate for 14 days after their arrival unless exempted from doing so.

The requirement to self-isolate on arrival restarts on each and every occasion a passenger arrives in Jersey regardless of the frequency of their travel or the length of their stay on or off island.

Information on how to self-isolate is available on the [Gov.je](https://www.gov.je) website. Failure to self-isolate when required to is a criminal offence punishable by a fine of up to £10,000.

Passengers may be exempted from the statutory self-isolation requirement in one of two ways, by either:

- Prior to departure, presenting evidence of a negative Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) COVID-19 test conducted within 72 hours before arrival in Jersey or:
- Undergoing a PCR test on arrival in Jersey.

The following groups will not be required to undergo testing:

- Children under the age of 11
- Commercial passenger transport crews
- Those with a previous positive PCR test result conducted in Jersey. If you are in this last category you should contact the helpline on +44(0) 1534 445566 in advance of travelling.

### **Accessing Testing Programmes at Points of Entry**

Testing will be offered on arrival at Jersey International Airport and St Helier Harbour Elizabeth Terminal.

Passengers arriving by other points, including private maritime and air travel, are required to pre-register before departure and contact the helpline on +44(0) 1534 445566 in advance of travelling to book a PCR test to be conducted within 24 hours of their arrival in Jersey. Passengers are required to self-isolate from the point of arrival until their test is conducted, only leaving their residence for the purpose of being tested.

### **Type of Testing at the Border**

The type of test offered at Jersey International Airport and St Helier Harbour Elizabeth Terminal is a Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) swab. This procedure will involve a swab being taken from the back of the throat and nose and this will be sent for virology testing. The test takes less than a minute to complete and is conducted by a medical professional; you cannot swab yourself.

Once the PCR test has been conducted, you will be informed verbally that you are exempt from the self-isolation requirement and will be notified of this exemption by email or text message as soon as possible after the test being conducted; this exemption will also apply to the people within your household.

It remains important to follow good hand and respiratory hygiene and remain vigilant for any known symptoms. Guidance on COVID-19 symptoms and how to stay safe is available on the [Gov.je](https://www.gov.je) website.

### **While waiting for test results**

Passengers can expect to receive their test result within 48 hours. Passengers do **not** need to self-isolate while waiting for their test result but are encouraged to take reasonable steps to limit the time they spend away from their residence and to limit their social contact during this time. Steps to achieve this would include:

- Working from home when possible
- Avoiding public transport when possible
- Avoiding indoor gatherings, including bars and restaurants if at all possible

As a minimum, all travelers should follow Public Health guidance while waiting for their test result.

### **Reporting of test results**

Passenger can expect to receive their test result within 48 hours. Passengers will receive a negative result by text message to the mobile phone registered at pre-departure.

### **Reporting positive COVID-19 test results**

Passengers who test positive will receive a phone call with their result and will receive guidance on the support available to them from the Contact Tracing Team. The passenger will be notified in writing that their exemption from self-isolation has been withdrawn and will be instructed to self-isolate.

Passengers who receive a positive test result must provide information to the contact tracing team about whom they have come into close contact with in the days prior to them receiving their test result.

Non-Jersey residents who are required to self-isolate and do not have access to a suitable location where they can do so should raise this when they receive their positive result, or should contact the helpline at the earliest opportunity on +44(0) 1534 445566.

### **Self-isolation requirements**

All information on self-isolation requirements is available on the [Gov.je](https://www.gov.je) website. All passengers are reminded that failure to self-isolate when required is a criminal offence punishable by a fine of up to £10,000.

## **General Public Health measures while in Jersey**

Arriving passengers should remain vigilant about their health. Those who become ill or think they may have symptoms of COVID-19 should contact the helpline on +44(0) 1534 445566.

COVID-19 symptoms are a new continuous cough and/or fever which may be accompanied by one or more of the following:

- Headaches
- Tiredness
- Muscle ache
- Respiratory symptoms besides cough such as a sore throat, blocked or runny nose
- Gastro-intestinal symptoms can also be a feature of COVID 19 and these are more common in children than adults
- Loss of smell and taste (in some cases this may be the only symptom present)

If you experience any of the accompanying symptoms listed above, regardless of having a new continuous cough and / or fever, and are concerned that you may have COVID-19 you should self-isolate and call the helpline on +44 (0) 1534 445566.

Throughout their stay in Jersey, all passengers should familiarise themselves with and follow local public health guidance and act on the universal public health messages of:

- safer hygiene
- safer at a distance
- safer in smaller groups
- safer outside

### **Safer hygiene**

Everyone is strongly encouraged to continue to strictly follow these simple steps:

- wash your hands or use sanitising gel
- avoid touching your face
- catch your cough or sneeze in a tissue, bin it and wash your hands
- clean surfaces and shared toilets regularly; close toilet seats when flushing
- cloth masks are advised in enclosed public spaces such as shops and on public transport

These measures are required because the virus seems to be transmitted mainly via small respiratory droplets through sneezing, coughing, or when people interact with each other for some time in close proximity. These droplets can then be inhaled, or they can land on surfaces that others may come into contact

with, who can then get infected when they touch their nose, mouth or eyes. The virus can survive on different surfaces from several hours to a few days. If you have flu-like symptoms, stay or go home immediately and call the Helpline on +44 (0) 1534 445566.

### **Safer at a distance**

There is no time limit on how long you can spend outside your home. It's important everyone enjoys social interaction – but maintaining physical distance is an important measure to suppress the spread of the virus. You should maintain the physical distance advised at the time.

As a last resort, if someone is willfully putting others at risk by compromising their safe distance, that individual may be prosecuted and fined. We hope this power never needs to be used.

### **Safer in small groups**

During Level 2, keeping a smaller social circle than usual is a simple way to help suppress a possible outbreak of COVID-19: the fewer people you see – even when maintaining a safe distance at all times – the fewer people you might catch COVID-19 from or transmit it to. You're encouraged to work from home where possible.

- social gatherings, especially in private settings, such as parties, barbecues or informal get-togethers should be limited to a maximum of 20 people in Level 2. These gatherings should only occur if you're confident everyone will maintain physical distancing
- more controlled events such as marriage and funeral ceremonies, organised sports, community and group activities should be limited to a maximum of up to 40 people in Level 2. These are subject to separate guidance, including maintaining safe distancing

### **Safer outside**

The risk of transmitting COVID-19 is significantly greater indoors than outdoors due to: confined spaces (and potentially less room to physically distance), building up of airborne virus carrying droplets, less natural ventilation, more air re-circulation, less ultraviolet rays and more shared surfaces. Indoor transmission risk also increases over longer periods of time.

Due to the increased risk of transmission indoors compared to outdoors, you're advised against social gatherings inside people's homes. If you meet people or organise a gathering or an event, you should do it outdoors where possible.

You should also continue to think carefully about whether to allow small numbers of people inside your own home, and whether to enter the homes of other people. Parties and social gatherings indoors in particular, remain a risk and are discouraged.

## Guidance for travel providers

As part of the arrangements to establish secure safe travel to and from the Island, carriers will be asked to put in place measures that reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19.

These measures should be consistent with the:

- Current relevant industry standards regarding biosecurity
- World Health Organisation (WHO)
- Government of Jersey Public Health Policy and Legislation.
- Guidance provided by industry regulators

Commercial Carriers will share their planned travel schedules with Ports of Jersey and Government of Jersey public health officials at least 14 days in advance; and will provide necessary information to enable contract tracing.

As further clarity is achieved in terms of additional measures such as effective COVID-19 testing and immunity, new measures should be incorporated into the passenger process to further mitigate the risks and further build confidence in air travel.

### Commercial Carriers information:

#### Aviation:

Easy-Jet:

<https://www.easyjet.com/en/policy/biosecurity-faqs>

British Airways

<https://www.britishairways.com/en-gb/information/the-ba-experience/welcome-on-board>

Blue Island

<https://www.blueislands.com/flying-with-us/news/news-stories/enhanced-wellbeing-measures-for-blue-islands-passengers>

#### Maritime:

Condor:

<https://www.condorferries.co.uk/help-info/travel-safely-confidently>  
<https://www.condorferries.co.uk/help-info/travel-safely-confidently>



## STAC Executive Memo of Advice

**Date:** 15/06/2020

**Chair:** Patrick Armstrong

**Memo issued by:** Patrick Armstrong, Medical Director

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**Topic of Advice:** Border opening

**Advice provided to:** Ministers for Health, Economic Development and External Relations

**Recommendation:** Reopen borders with robust testing and contact tracing in place

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### Discussion

STAC has held multiple discussions over the previous weeks of the potential of reopening borders. There is recognition that the long term impact of restricting travel will have huge negative effect on both the economy and wider physical and mental health to the island and its residents. The discussions initially were focussed on reducing the risk of travellers coming to the island being Covid-19 positive and creating a surge of cases on island. There is now acceptance and understanding that there is some inevitability of the virus increasing in prevalence on the island due to travel. This cannot limit the opportunity for an increase in capacity of travel in the long term. There is a need to balance the risk of increased Covid-19 cases and the negative impact of losing air and sea links. To facilitate a safe opening of the borders there are critical processes that need to be in place.

The number of people able to enter the island will depend on the ability to perform testing. The policy of testing on day 0, 4 and 7 continues to be discussed. Currently the day 0 swab can take between 48 hours and 4 days to return a result and on island testing capacity is limited. There are also anticipated limitations within the supply chain of testing equipment in larger volumes.

To support arrivals testing, pre departure testing should be further explored. There may also be a need to be selective in the port of departure to prioritise testing, not just by country but region within that country. The capacity of testing also needs to continue to cover activities such as pre-treatment screening, symptomatic cases, contact tracing and the healthcare worker screening schedules. This along with a need to return to larger volumes of travellers will require any testing and tracing processes put in place to be flexible in scalability. It is likely that as visitor numbers increase a point will be reached where it will not be practical or possible due to

volumes, to test all visitors. At that point an approach that involves testing sample numbers of visitors rather than all visitors would be the approach.

There are expectations for physical distancing, good hygiene practices and a limitation on larger gatherings to be in place for the foreseeable future. This in itself will limit the activity of visitors that can take place during their visit and which may continue to affect the tourism and hospitality industry. It is anticipated this will however assist in managing the transmission of Covid-19 that may be introduced through arrivals to the island.

From a consideration of statistical models of seeding and onward infection it is clear that no testing-based border control will be 100% effective in identifying live infections, the best possible pick-up rate is likely to be in the region of 60%. The key factors that determine the impact of new on-island infections are therefore:

- The prevalence of infections in the country of origin (which may be different to the country of departure)
- The nature of any border control measure, and
- The conditions in Jersey – including the nature of public health advice and guidance, and adherence to that advice by islanders - which will impact on the rate of transmission on-island.

#### **Suggestions for success**

To ensure mitigation of risk there are suggestions to be considered when making a final decision. These are as follows:

- The support and significant further development of contact tracing is essential to ensure a robust system is in place
- Increased capacity of testing on island is a necessity
- To meet capacity and demand it should be considered that the port of departure will influence a requirement for testing
- The potential of pre departure testing should be further explored
- There needs to be a recognition that measures may have to be reintroduced and/or visitor numbers reduced if island prevalence increases and begins to impact on the ability of our healthcare systems to cope.
- Continue to promote the importance of hygiene and physical distancing

#### **Conclusion & summary recommendation**

The short, mid and long-term impact of continued closure of borders would be extensive, and have material impact on physical and mental health and wellbeing, again in the short, medium and long term, that need to be balanced against the potential public health risks associated with increasing travel to and from the island.



It is essential that a robust system for testing and contact tracing is in place before increasing the number of arrivals to the island. These processes need to be scalable. It is however recognised that it is likely that as visitor numbers increase there will become a point where the capacity of our testing capability will be exceeded and we will need to consider further how testing can be targeted on higher risk groups or considering sampling of arrivals to provide assurance around the number of travellers entering Jersey who may be carrying the virus.

A plan needs to be in place to react if a surge in cases occurs. This plan would be likely to require changed behaviour from islanders in order to slow the rate of transmission; and / or the reintroduction of restrictions on inbound travel.

A controlled reopening of borders should be possible in a way that supports the return of economic and social activities and mitigate future potential health harms whilst continuing to monitor the safety of Islanders is maintained.



## STAC Executive Memo of Advice

**Date:** 23/06/2020

**Chair:** Patrick Armstrong

**Memo issued by:** Patrick Armstrong, Medical Director

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**Topic of Advice:** Border opening

**Advice provided to:** Competent Authority Ministers

**Recommendation:** Move to changes within the Safe Travel Proposal

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### Discussion

STAC were asked to offer their advice to Ministers in relation to:

- A. How well the safer travel proposal addresses the balance of harms, in line with the COVID-19 Strategy
- B. The proposal to begin the Safer Travel period at the level recommended for when on-island transmission is controlled (single PCR at day 0; see slide 8)
- C. Any other relevant factors they feel ministers should consider

In addition and drawing on the interim review of the border testing trial, STAC were asked to discuss and offer advice on:

- D. the safer travel proposal to move immediately to replace the current border testing regime with the regime proposed for when enhanced border management is required (specifically, PCR at days 0 and 5; with quarantine until results are available).

### Advice

STAC are in support of the Safer Travel Proposal to facilitate increased travel to and from the island for tourism and business movement. The proposal addresses the balance of harms in relation to the short and long term effects on the economy and health and wellbeing.

The tests at the airport to date, have not identified any Covid-19 positive travellers arriving onto the island. The cost to business and tourism in lost working days by applying the same regime to all is not proportionate to the risk of introducing a Covid-19 positive traveller onto the island. The current estimated prevalence of people carrying the virus in the UK has fallen from 1 in 500 to 1 in 1500-2000 in recent weeks and is expected to fall further. Therefore the consensus is that the requirement for

testing on arrival along with a period of quarantine is not supportive in facilitating an increased capacity of travellers and should not be the continued regime.

The advice is to move to the proposed longer term testing strategy whilst traveller numbers are still low. This regime being a PCR test on arrival or with a certified negative test result within 72 hours of arrival, with no quarantine period. This relies on a robust contact tracing system should a result be returned as positive. Consideration should be given to allow exemption from testing for those who have are IgG positive on serology testing for a time limited period.

Moving forward it is likely that numbers of travellers will outstrip the islands capacity to test all arrivals and testing strategy is likely to move to one of testing travellers from higher risk countries or higher risk areas within countries particularly within the context of the UK.

Should an increase in cases occur, the tolerance will be based on capacity of the healthcare system and its demand to meet other island health needs including exceptions such as winter pressure. The actions to be taken to react to any case surge will need to be agreed and this could take the form of reducing traveller numbers and/or re-introducing protective measures on island.

STAC have taken into consideration the scientific evidence along with local and National metrics. STAC have, in particular, taken note of the very significant potential impact on the economy of not opening borders for Jersey as described to them and the relationship between flight availability that has developed because of both the finance and tourism sector. In other words, in order to secure increased flight availability for the finance sector the tourism sector would also have to open up.

STAC have considered the relationship between any jurisdiction's economic success and the health system it can support. Any long-term damage to the economy will inevitably have consequences on the level of publicly funded health provision and as a result an impact on the health and well-being, both mental and physical, of islanders for many years to come. These considerations applied to the Jersey context would support an increase in travel at this time.

STAC are clear that they would expect to see some cases being introduced onto the island because of increased numbers and this message to the public needs to be carefully managed. Very robust contact tracing along with continued enhanced infection control measures, particularly within the high risk areas of the hospital and care homes, will be key to the success of this strategy.

**Suggestions for success**

- Continue to support development of contact tracing
- Continue to explore availability of departure testing
- Continue to support development of PCR testing at the airport
- Develop strategy to support increased testing and/or quarantine should cases surge
- Introduce targeted testing when there is confidence that travel is not causing a significant rise in confirmed case in Jersey

**Conclusion & summary recommendation**

The advice is to support increased safe travel with the use of arrival PCR testing and without any initial quarantine period. There is acknowledgment of the harm that is being caused by continued limitation to traveller numbers both for business and leisure sectors and as a consequence the negative impact on islanders' health and well-being. Given the current estimated prevalence of the virus in travellers coming from the UK and the current levels of virus on the island the current practice of all travellers being isolated, even for the short period waiting for test results, is not proportionate. The island's capacity to manage positive cases along with increased testing capacity and increased ability to contact trace have very significantly increased since the beginning of the pandemic. If cases surge then more restrictive measures may have to be reintroduced however with early intelligence and successful containment these would hopefully be less restrictive than full lockdown. Clear communications to ensure public confidence is maintained will be important.



## Review of the Border Testing Trial

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This review addresses the first three weeks of the Border Testing Trial's (BTT) operation from 29 May to 19 June, though it includes some data up to 24 June 2020. For context purposes, narrative is provided on the period of the project's early conception through to implementation.
- 1.2 This review draws on input from the BTT project team and project leads, and on volume and clinical data provided by the Contact Tracing Service (Environmental Health). User feedback has been gathered via an online survey of participants.

### 2. Background

- 2.1 In response to the coronavirus pandemic, by the end of March 2020 all significant sea and air passenger travel operators to Jersey had suspended services. To maintain a degree of essential connectivity, in early April the GoJ negotiated an exclusive contract with the Blue Islands airline to provide a limited number of flights initially between Jersey and Southampton with a Gatwick leg being added in early May. The first of these 'lifeline' flights departed on 20 April 2020; passengers were charged £100 per journey.
- 2.2 Over the same period, coordinated through the work of the COVID-19 Travel and Borders Working Group (TBWG), Ministers approved the introduction of the Essential Travel Scheme. The scheme limited the ability to enter Jersey to the following criteria:
  - essential government workers or contractors travelling to/from Jersey for the purposes of their work
  - essential private or voluntary sector workers travelling to/from Jersey for the purposes of their work
  - travelling to/from the UK for medical treatment;
  - travelling to reach a permanent home in Jersey or the UK,
  - travel on compassionate grounds
  - travelling to reach a permanent home outside the UK

- 2.3 In early May, with reference to advice from the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC), and to meet increased demand from reasonable applications and to facilitate the progression through the Safe Exit Framework, the criteria was extended to include:
- Specialist non-essential workers
  - Travelling to prevent significant financial loss
  - Extended compassionate grounds
- 2.4 The essential travel scheme remains in place. Since the commencement of the Blue Islands contract to 14 June a total of 1355 people have arrived into the island on the service (see Appendix 1 for breakdown); a proportion of these will be repeat travellers moving between the UK and Jersey to complete essential work.
- 2.5 In recent weeks the system has come under increasing pressure through an increase in credible applications to travel into and out of Jersey. The point has been reached where the demand for travel within the essential travel criteria has outstripped the supply within the existing Blue Islands capacity.
- 2.6 The policy considerations and potential drivers for facilitating travel are helpfully summarised in the criteria and principles diagram below, taken from the European Union communication: *Towards a phased and coordinated approach for restoring freedom of movement and lifting internal border controls — COVID-19*<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> See: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/communication-commission-tourism-transport-2020-and-beyond\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/communication-commission-tourism-transport-2020-and-beyond_en.pdf)

# Criteria and principles of a coordinated approach for removing restrictions on free movement and lifting internal border control

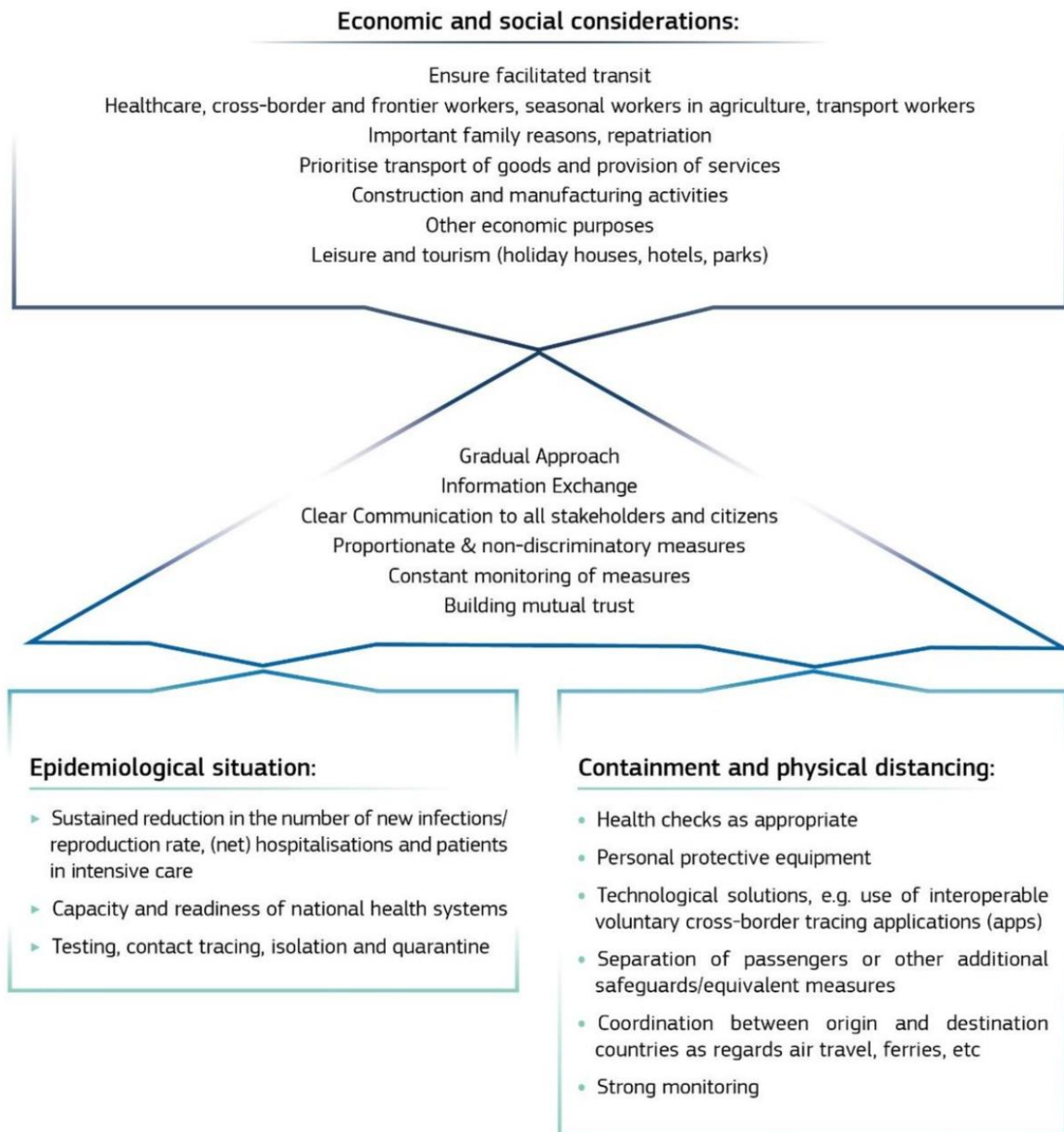


Figure 1: EU Border Restriction Framework

### 3. Self-Isolation Requirement

- 3.1 Under the [Covid-19 \(Screening, Assessment and Isolation\) \(Jersey\) Regulations 2020](#) from the 28 March 2020 any person arriving in Jersey is required to self-isolate for 14 days from the date of arrival unless exempted from doing so. Prior to the introduction of the Border Testing Trial, exemptions were only granted for essential workers for the purposes of them completing their essential work. Applications for an exemption required supporting information on the mitigation steps the essential worker would take to reduce the risk of transmission while working; the exemption only applied to the period of time the person was physically at work with them being required to self-isolate at all other times within the first 14 days of arrival.
- 3.2 As an example, exemptions were granted in the case of the specialist Nightingale Wing construction workers who travelled to Jersey from the UK. These workers were granted exemptions to allow them to begin work immediately for the short period of time they were in the island.
- 3.3 During the BTT, compliance with the self-isolation requirement was monitored by a combination of follow up telephone calls by the Contact Tracing Service (Environment Health), and a series of home visits by Honorary Police Officers.

### 4. The Booking Process

- 4.1 Access to the Blue Islands Service is managed by the Jersey Customs and Immigration Service (JCIS). To travel, individuals must first apply for essential traveller status to JCIS. If approved they receive a unique code which allows them to book with Blue Islands. If travelling to Jersey, at the point of booking they are asked to indicate whether they are seeking an exemption from self-isolation. If so, they are required to submit a separate application for approval prior to arrival outlining the grounds for exemption and the risk mitigations in place while working. The application is considered by JCIS with support from Public Health if necessary.

### 5. The Border Testing Trial

- 5.1 In mid-April, it was noted by the TBWG that the essential travel/Blue Islands arrangements represented a combination of risk and opportunity for future planning. In terms of risk, it was agreed that a reliance on a blanket self-isolation requirement left gaps in infection mitigation which would be improved by a coordinated testing regime, particularly for the cohort of essential workers exempted from self-isolation. It was also acknowledged that the self-isolation requirement would be a barrier to the island's longer-term recovery in terms of connectivity and that the essential travel scheme provided an opportunity to trial an alternative, testing based approach to inform future policy, providing learning about the operational challenges of establishing a border testing programme, passenger views about such programmes and about the prevalence of COVID-19 in a random cohort of travellers.



5.2 On 26 May, Ministers agreed the proposed border testing trial, with reference to advice from STAC. The trial began with a ‘soft’ launch on Friday 29 May 2020 before full operation on Monday 1 June.

6. The Testing Regime

6.1 Participation in the BTT is voluntary. Passengers have the opportunity to opt in to the trial up to 24 hours before departure, although arrangements are in place to accommodate participation on arrival if they have missed this deadline.

6.2 Passengers who choose not to participate in the BTT are required to self-isolate for 14 days from the day of arrival, in line with the published guidance<sup>2</sup>.

6.3 The BTT comprises a three-step testing regime consisting of four separate tests over a maximum seven-day period. Figure 2 provides a skeleton outline of the testing regime; more detail is provided in [Annex 1: Information for participants](#).

Day	Test	Result	Outcome
0	PCR	Positive	Must SI and exits the testing programme. Followed up for contact tracing and support.
		Negative	Can exit SI until Day 4 tests
4	Antibody	Negative	No need to SI until Day 7 test
		IgG positive	Exits the testing programme and free from SI requirement for stay in Jersey
		IgM (+IgG)	Must SI until Day 4 PCR test result
	PCR	Positive	Must SI and exits the testing programme. Followed up for contact tracing and support.
Negative		No need to SI until Day 7 test	
7	PCR	Positive	Must SI and exits the testing programme. Followed up for contact tracing and support.
		Negative	Exits the testing programme and free from SI requirement for stay in Jersey

Figure 2: Border Testing Regime

<sup>2</sup> See: <https://www.gov.je/Health/Coronavirus/Travel/Pages/CoronavirusTravelAdvice.aspx>

7. The laboratory/analysis process

7.1 Once PCR swabs are taken they are packed on site by laboratory trained staff, either at the arrivals hall on day 0 or at the airport drive through on days 4 and 7. These swabs are sent to a UK lab for processing, with results received by the tested person, on average, within 36-48 hours. These results are electronically shared with our local pathology laboratory, who in turn electronically share the results with the Contact Tracing team. All negative results are provided automatically by text message. Any positive cases are contacted by phone by Contact Tracing officers who will provide support and guidance and begin the contact tracing process.

7.2 The day 4 antibody test involves a finger prick sample being taken at the airport drive through. The result is available within 15 minutes. While this relatively short turnaround has clear benefits, the 15-minute period dramatically reduces the number of tests which can be conducted and is a major barrier to upscaling.

8. Volume Data 29 May to 24 June

<b>Jersey Airport Border Testing Programme</b>		
Statistics accurate at:	24/06/2020 10:18	
Total number of arriving flights	23	
Total arriving eligible passengers	938	
Total number of arriving passengers tested	868	93%
Total number of arriving passengers choosing 14-day self-isolation	70	7%
Total PCR positive tests	0	0%
Average time to process all arriving passengers	00:47	
Passengers failing to present for 4 or 7 day follow up tests as required	34	4%

Figure 3: BTT Live Data

8.1 Figure 3 provides basic volume data on passengers and PCR test results.

8.2 93% of travellers opted into the testing regime.

8.3 To date, no positive PCR tests have been recorded within the arrivals cohort.

- 8.4 During the trial period to date, 34 participants dropped out and failed to attend at Day 4 or 7. Information from follow up calls is being analysed to further understand the reasons.
- 8.5 From 29 May to 14 June, 32% of participants received their first PCR test result outside the 2 day standard; this delay caused considerable operational difficulty. Nevertheless, the available evidence indicates a marked improvement through the course of the pilot; From 15th June to date there has been a marked improvement, with fewer than 10% of results being received on average outside the 48 hours turnaround, mainly due to the gradually increasing use of the Micropathology lab in Warwick, and fewer samples being sent to Public Health England in London.
- 8.6 A feedback survey was distributed to all participants to date on 19 June. Key points from the 68 responses received so far (7% of all 938 arriving passengers to date) included:
- 90% of responses 'satisfied' to 'extremely satisfied' with the scheme overall
  - 94% of passengers agree that the scheme is an effective response to COVID-19
  - 96% of passengers agree that the scheme will help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Jersey
  - Negative comments largely around time taken to receive test results and perceived lack of robust enforcement

## 9. Operational Learning

- 9.1 As demonstrated in Figure 2, the BTT testing regime involves an extremely rigorous testing process. An analysis of international approaches indicates that through the BTT, Jersey has deployed one of the most comprehensive COVID-19 border screening approaches in the world.
- 9.2 The rigor of the process introduces a very high level of complexity. The evidence from implementation and the first two weeks of delivery is that this complexity introduces serious operational challenges. The complexity also presents considerable challenges for participants in terms of understanding the requirements of the scheme and the basic logistics of attending multiple tests. The staged, multiple test approach also has financial implications to the overall cost of the scheme and is a barrier to upscaling.
- 9.3 The BTT was established in remarkably short timescales; the period of time from final approval to go live was around six days. While the front facing operational aspects of the project are becoming increasingly embedded, there remain significant issues with back end processes such as data reliability and integration. Significant resource is now deployed to address these challenges and will need to continue to be prioritised in order to create appropriately stable foundations.
- 9.4 The BTT required a new testing centre within the airport arrivals area. This created resource challenges as testing staff were redeployed from existing testing centres to manage airport arrivals.

9.5 While the speed of test result returns is improving, a delay in Day 0 PCR results beyond 48 hours caused considerable operational difficulty in the first two weeks of operation.

9.6 The BTT process is underpinned by the default 14-day self-isolation requirement. In the early stages of the trial it became clear that additional resource and coordination was required to properly monitor the levels of compliance with the requirement, particularly for participants who drop out of the testing regime unexpectedly.

## 10. Interim Conclusions and Recommendations

10.1 At this interim stage, the BTT can be considered to have been a limited success. A functioning, high specification border testing regime has been established in an exceptionally short period of time and has strengthened our public health arrangements in the immediate term. The level of uptake from travellers has been far higher than anticipated and is evidence of an appetite for border testing in Jersey. Finally, based on two weeks of operation alone, we have gained priceless insight into the clinical profile of travellers to Jersey and the operational realities of border testing.

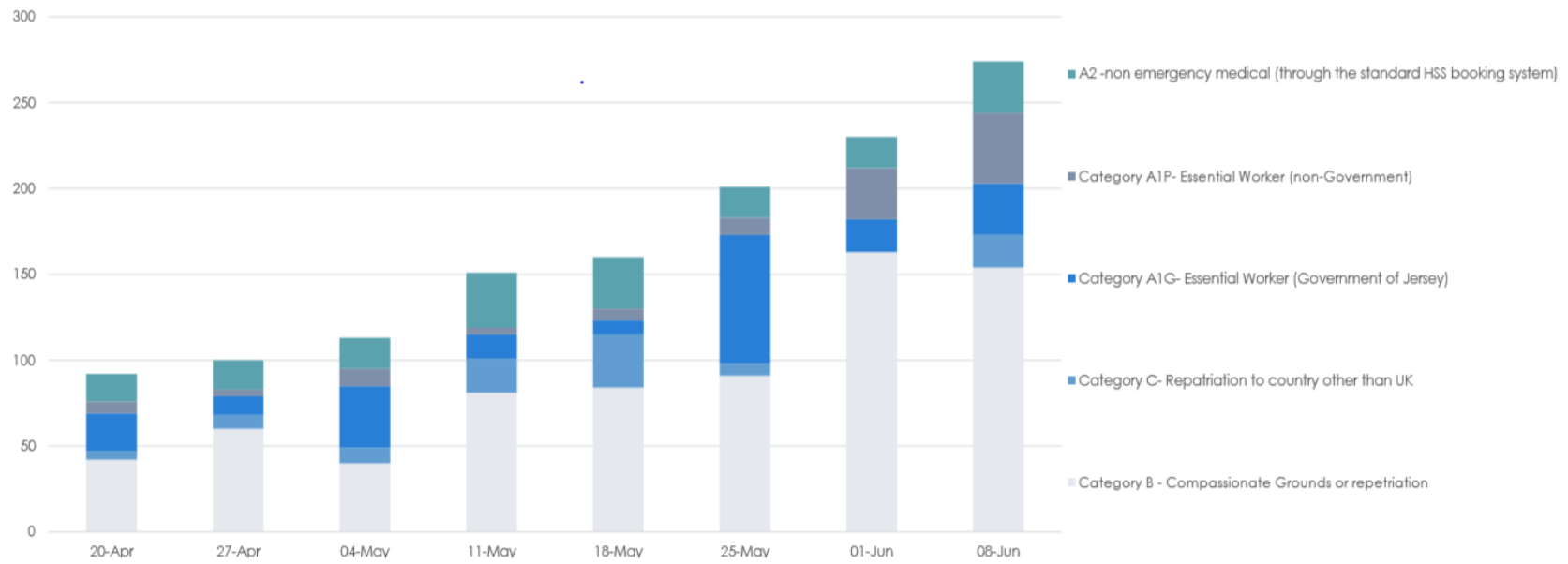
10.2 Notwithstanding the gains above, there is operational consensus that the BTT regime has only been achievable within the limited volume of the essential travel/Blue Islands arrangements. Upscaling border testing will require both significant investment across a range of areas, and simplification of the clinical testing regime.

10.3 In considering a scalable solution, the early learning from the BTT points towards the following possible steps:

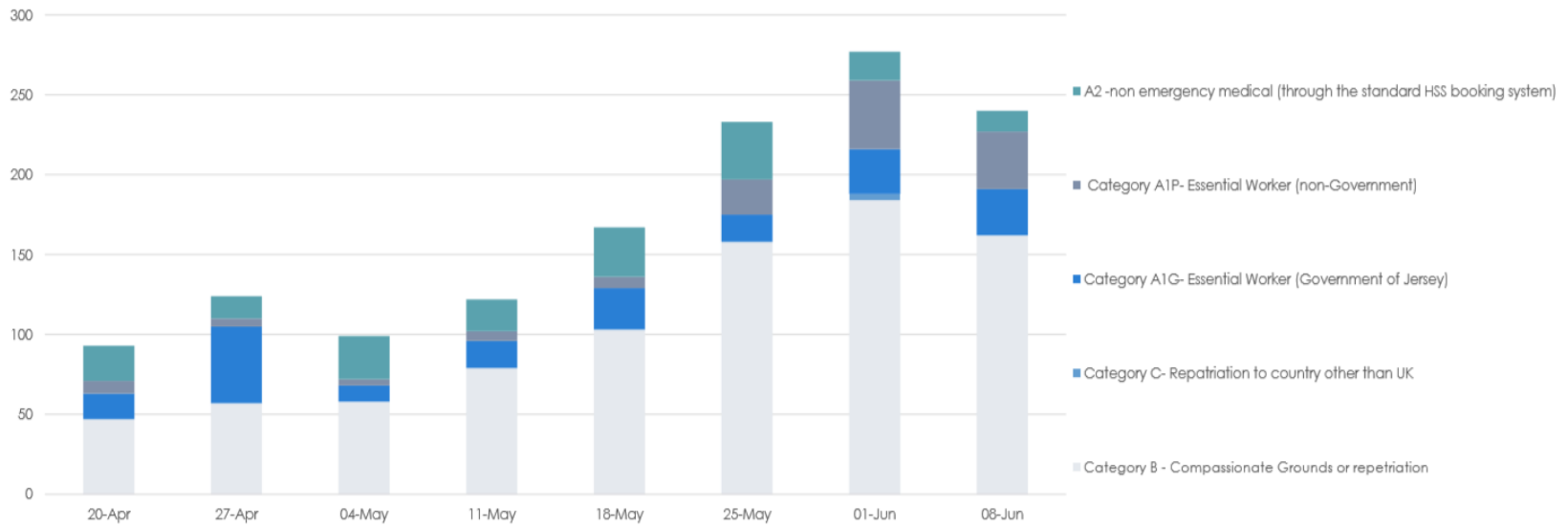
- The move to a single step testing regime on day of arrival only.
- The removal of antibody testing from the regime.
- The introduction of a pre-departure negative PCR certification process to reduce the load on arrival testing.
- The rapid development of on-island laboratory resources to reduce turnaround times.
- Resource deployed to stand up state of the art IT infrastructure to support border testing.
- Resource allocated to monitoring/enforcement of self-isolation requirement.
- Resource allocated to recruitment and training of front-line testing staff.

# ESSENTIAL TRAVEL

## OUTBOUND TRAVEL by WEEK COMMENCING



## INBOUND TRAVEL by WEEK COMMENCING



## Annex 1 – Information for Participants

### **About the Coronavirus testing programme**

All passengers travelling on Blue Islands Services to Jersey airport from the UK can choose to participate in the Government of Jersey's COVID-19 border testing programme. The programme is part of the Government of Jersey's Coronavirus Safe Exit Framework.

Travel to Jersey remains limited to necessary travel only. The eligibility criteria to travel can be found on **the Gov.je website**.

### **If you don't want to take part in the testing programme**

If you do not take part, you have to self-isolate for 14 days from the date of your arrival in Jersey.

### **Failing to self-isolate when required to do so**

If you fail to self-isolate without reasonable excuse you could face prosecution and a fine of up to £10,000.

### **How the testing programme works**

You must complete a legal declaration and register to participate in the programme before you travel to Jersey. The latest you can register to participate is 24 hours before travel.

You must complete all required tests, if you don't you will exit the testing programme and have to self-isolate for 14 days from the date of your arrival in Jersey. This is a legal requirement.

If you develop COVID 19 symptoms during the testing programme you must self-isolate and call the helpline on [+44 \(0\) 1534 445566](tel:+4401534445566).

There is no charge for the tests during the initial trial phase of the border testing programme.

### **The tests you'll have to take**

There are three stages to the testing programme over the first seven days after you arrive. You will be given guidance on what to do at each stage.

The results of your tests will decide how many of the stages you must complete.

### **Day 0**

When you arrive at the airport, you'll be offered a Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test. This will involve a swab being taken from the back of your throat and your nose. The test takes 5 minutes to complete and you should get the results of this test within 48 hours, though it may take longer.

Before you leave the airport, you will be booked in for further tests on Day 4 and Day 7 after your arrival.

If the result of your test is positive, you have to self-isolate, you'll be given specific guidance and you will exit the testing programme.

#### Day 4

You will do another test at a testing centre. You should get the results within 48 hours, though it may take longer.

At the same visit, you will also take an antibody test, known as a serology test. This identifies the presence of IgG and IgM antibodies in blood. You'll have a blood sample taken from a finger-prick. You'll get your results in 15 minutes and we will explain what it means for you.

There are four possible results from your antibody test. They are:

Test result	Outcome
<b>IgG+</b>	You will be exempt from self-isolation immediately and you will exit the border testing programme
<b>IgM+ and IgG+</b>	<p>You will be advised to self-isolate until you receive the results of your Day 4 PCR test.</p> <p>If the result of the day 4 PCR test is negative, you are exempt from self-isolation until you take a final PCR test on Day 7.</p> <p>If the result of the day 4 PCR test is positive, you will have to self-isolate and will be given specific guidance; at this point, you will exit the border testing programme.</p>
<b>IgM+</b>	<p>You will be advised to self-isolate until you receive the results of your Day 4 PCR test.</p> <p>If the result of the day 4 PCR test is negative, you are exempt from self-isolation until you take a final PCR test on Day 7.</p> <p>If the result of the day 4 PCR test is positive, you will have to self-isolate and will be given specific guidance; at this point, you will exit the border testing programme.</p>
<b>Control Line (Negative)</b>	<p>You will not need to self-isolate while you are waiting for the results of your Day 4 PCR test.</p> <p>If the result of the day 4 PCR test is negative, you are exempt from self-isolation until you take a final PCR test on Day 7.</p> <p>If the result of the day 4 PCR test is positive, you will have to self-isolate and will be given specific guidance; at this point, you will exit the border testing programme</p>



## **Day 7**

You will take a final test. You don't need to self-isolate while you wait for the result.

If your result is negative, you're exempt from the self-isolation requirement for the duration of this stay in Jersey and you will exit the border testing programme.

If your result is positive, you will have to self-isolate and will be given specific guidance; at this point, you will exit the border testing programme.

### **Receiving your test results**

If you test positive, a member of the Contact Tracing team will be in touch to advise that you that you have tested positive.

They will explain what this means and what action you need to take and will also ask for details of anyone you have been in contact with.

If you test negative, you'll receive a text message to confirm this.

### **Testing for healthcare workers**

There are special arrangements in place for healthcare workers, which are different to the requirements for other passengers, due to the specific requirements of healthcare work. If you are a healthcare worker travelling to Jersey, you should contact the Department you will be working in for guidance.

### **Information for essential workers**

If you are travelling as an essential worker and the duration of your stay is less than 72 hours, you should not take part in the testing programme and should apply for an exemption from self-isolation for the purposes of your work at the time of booking.

If you're travelling as an essential worker and your stay is longer than 72 hours you can take part in the testing programme. You can also apply for an immediate exemption from self-isolation in the following exceptional circumstances:

- if it is critical that you begin your essential work immediately on arrival
- if the total duration of your visit to Jersey for the purposes of completing essential work is less than 7 days

Exemptions granted under these circumstances are solely for the purposes of completing essential work and for the periods of time when essential work is being completed. At all other times the person must self-isolate. You will also be asked to provide details of how you will minimise the risk of COVID-19 transmission while you are at work to support your application for exemption at time of booking.

## **If you're staying for a short amount of time**

You should not enter the testing programme if your stay in Jersey is less than 72 hours.

If you're visiting Jersey for a short period on compassionate grounds, you can apply for an immediate exemption from the self-isolation requirement when you book to travel. This exemption is limited to the period of time when you are fulfilling essential compassionate functions, such as attending a funeral.

You should think carefully about entering the testing programme if your visit to Jersey is less than 2 weeks.

If your test results indicate you are actively infected with COVID-19 and infectious at any point in the process you will be required to self-isolate for a fixed period of time and will not be able to travel during that time. This may mean you have to extend your stay in Jersey until it is safe for you to travel.

If you plan to leave Jersey before completion of the testing programme, you must notify the Health Helpline on [+44 \(0\) 1534 445520](tel:+4401534445520).

You must complete all aspects of the testing programme that are scheduled to take place during your time in Jersey. Failure to do so would mean you would automatically be required to self-isolate.

## **Families and groups**

Members of a family or group can choose to take part in the trial individually. Before entering the trial, you should consider that the test results for one family or group member may have an impact on other members if staying together, by requiring them to have to self-isolate.

People under 16 can take part in the PCR tests provided they have the permission of their parent or guardian to do so.

Passengers under the age of 16 will not be required to undergo antibody testing

## **Staying with other people or family in a household**

Your test results may have an impact on people in your household, as they may also have to self-isolate if you test positive. This will be a legal requirement on all affected persons.

You should consider this carefully, and ideally discuss it with other people in your household, before you decide whether to take part in the testing trial.

## **Information for frequent visitors to Jersey**

This depends on the result of your previous tests. If your previous PCR results were negative, then you will have to go through the testing programme each time you arrive unless you choose to self-isolate for 14 days.

**If you have already tested positive for COVID-19 in a PCR test taken in Jersey:**

You should contact the Health Helpline on 01534 445520 prior to travel. Provided you have already completed 14 days self-isolation and you are no longer symptomatic, you do not have to participate in PCR tests as part of the border testing programme, but you will have to take an antibody test after your return to the Island. You will have a time-limited exemption from self-isolation on arrival back into Jersey, conditional on you taking an antibody test. The Health Helpline team will help you to book the test.

**Coronavirus helpline**

For more information you can call the helpline on [+44 \(0\) 1534 445566](tel:+44(0)1534445566).