

STATES OF JERSEY



CORONAVIRUS: WAIVING CONTROL OF HOUSING AND WORK PROVISIONS WHILE THE ISLAND'S ECONOMY IS SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECTED

**Lodged au Greffe on 27th March 2020
by Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier**

STATES GREFFE

PROPOSITION

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

to request the Chief Minister to bring forward legislation to waive existing Control of Housing and Work provisions during the period he considers that the Island's economy is being significantly affected by the Coronavirus crisis, so that any person resident on the Island can apply for and undertake any paid role, irrespective of the length of time they have been resident in the Island.

DEPUTY I. GARDINER OF ST. HELIER

REPORT

The situation caused by Covid-19 is unprecedented in recent times and is presenting Jersey with challenges on a scale not seen since the Occupation. These difficult times require urgent action to help everyone in our Island so that we get through this crisis together.

We are seeing the closure of businesses, redundancies and loss of employment, particularly in hospitality, retail, beauticians and various other sectors which are regarded as non-essential. Essential businesses are also losing employees to illness, self-isolation, to care for relatives and, in some cases, people have returned to their home countries. In these circumstances, we need to do everything we can to make sure that people are available to work can work.

At the moment, people who have been in the Island for under 5 years cannot necessarily take on new roles. Some will find themselves unable to work because their employment has ceased and they are unable to take on a new role. The Income Support payments offered will not be enough in some cases to cover basic rent and food. Yet Jersey might need these people in work – earning enough money to look after themselves and not costing the States money in terms of Income Support payments.

So this proposition is simple: relax the rules during this crisis to enable anyone in the Island to apply for any role. This would be time-limited, for just a few weeks or months, for as long as the Chief Minister considered that Covid-19 was harming the Island's economy. Once that period comes to an end, we would return to the normal position in law.

Financial and manpower implications

There are no direct financial or manpower implications arising from this proposition. Ultimately I believe that this could reduce spending on Income Support.