

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES  
BY DEPUTY I. GARDINER OF ST. HELIER  
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 25th JANUARY 2021  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 1st FEBRUARY 2021**

**Question**

Will the Minister state –

- (a) the number of requests for exemption from self-isolation that were made between 15th October 2020 and January 2021 and, of these, how many were granted and how many were refused;
- (b) the reasons for granting any such exemptions, specifying the industries / categories involved;
- (c) the number of positive tests, if any, subsequently obtained from those who had been granted exemptions, specifying the industries / categories involved;
- (d) if any employees working in healthcare and / or medical professions were granted exemptions, whether they were required to wait for a first negative result prior to starting work with Jersey residents;
- (e) whether there is a mandatory requirement to have a negative P.C.R. test 72 hours prior to arrival in Jersey as a pre-requisite for exemption from self-isolation and, if not, whether there is any plan to introduce this measure;
- (f) the number of people required to self-isolate as a result of being a direct contact;
- (g) what protocols, if any, are in place for testing contacts within identified groups should this happen; and
- (h) whether those contacts have then to self-isolate until a negative test result comes through?

**Answer**

- (a) For clarification, individuals granted an exemption are only granted the exemption for a specified reason. They are not granted exemption from general requirements to self-isolate.

At all other times this exemption does not apply and the person must self-isolate as required by self-isolation guidance. For example, the exemption allows only for the individual to travel to work, attend work and return directly home.

The Contact Tracing, Monitoring and Enforcement team, in partnership with colleagues from Jersey Customs & Immigration Service and States of Jersey Police, undertakes checks to confirm the individual is in self-isolation outside of the exemption allowance.

The Contact Tracing, Monitoring and Enforcement Team took on the role of administering the processing of requests for exemptions for workers to attend their premises of work on 26/10/2020.

For the period 26/10/2020 to 21/01/2021, 477 exemptions were approved, representing 841 workers\*

\*The 841 are not all individual workers; many of these are the same individuals granted exemption on more than one occasion as employers make repeat applications for the same workers. For example, we have identified ~80 workers from the construction sector working on a rotation.

(b) The reasons why exemptions are granted are the following:

- The person is travelling to Jersey for the purpose of completing critical work
- The worker's presence is critical to keep the island or a business running
- The worker's skills are not available in Jersey
- It would be impossible, unreasonable or dangerous for the worker to complete the isolation period before attending their workplace.

The main sectors are construction, sewage and critical healthcare (engineers/maintenance support, specialist visiting consultants).

The list of industries applying for exemptions includes, but is not limited to:

- Animal welfare
- Aircraft engineering
- Removals
- Repair of critical equipment (factory, general hospital)
- Marine engineering
- Geotechnical engineering
- Pharmacy

The application must include details of how the worker will self-isolate outside of work and what provisions are in place to support this, how they will get to and from work without using public transport / shared lifts, what measures are in place to ensure they isolate away from Jersey residents when in the workplace and how they remain Covid-secure when interacting with other colleagues. The Health and Safety Inspectorate undertakes inspections of businesses to assess levels of compliance with the exemption application.

(c) Fewer than 5 individuals who have been granted an exemption have tested positive for Covid-19.

(d) All workers are required to be tested on arrival in Jersey and to isolate until they receive a negative test result before they undertake any work. In very exceptional circumstances, such as a medical emergency, if they've had a negative PCR test result within 72 hours prior to their arrival in Jersey and provided all the necessary precautions are taken i.e. full PPE etc, they may not be required to isolate until they receive a first negative result. Any such instances are dealt with on a case by case basis with a thorough review of the circumstances, including any risk mitigations that may be in place. If such a situation is identified within the healthcare sector, this is undertaken in conjunction with the Acting Medical Officer of Health.

(e) Following medical advice, from 11 February critical workers will be required to provide evidence of a negative pre-arrival PCR test as a condition of their permission to leave isolation for the purposes of work; they will still be required to wait for a negative arrival (day 0) result before attending the workplace. The pre-arrival test requirement will be waived in exceptional or emergency circumstances.

(f) Fewer than 5 individuals have been isolated as a result of being a direct contact of a person granted exemption.

(g) Should anyone who has been granted an exemption subsequently test positive or become a direct contact, the exemption is immediately withdrawn and exactly the same protocols that apply to the general public are applied.

(h) They are instructed to isolate and undergo a series of PCR tests on days 0, 5 and 10. If they choose not to be tested, they will be instructed to isolate for the full 14 days.