



Current information on state and territory border closures

SUMMARY

Current information on state and territory border closures

Various states and territories have introduced border restrictions in an attempt to slow the spread of COVID-19 from infection epicentres.

These are constantly evolving, and governments are increasingly changing the restrictions and adding further detail on how the restrictions are being implemented. This includes tighter rules around FIFO workers, particularly in Queensland.

Many State Governments are now dealing directly with companies on their specific circumstances or applications for permits and exemptions. Much of this is being assessed on a case by case basis.

Ai Group has been pushing for urgent national coordination on this issue and is in the process of approaching state governments seeking a uniform adoption of exemptions.

The following is the current state of play as at **3:00pm Thursday, 2 April**.

Victoria and New South Wales

There are currently no moves to close borders in these states.

Queensland

Overview

Anyone who arrives in Queensland (via air, sea, rail or road) from another state or territory must self-quarantine for 14 days, unless they are an 'exempt person'. Exempt people still must self-quarantine if they have been to any 'hot spot' area of Australia in the previous 14 days. The hot spots are listed on the [Queensland Health website](#).

Queensland residents returning from a hot spot area must also self-quarantine. Queenslanders returning from other parts of Australian (that are not considered hot spots) do not have to self-quarantine.

From Friday April 3, people who arrive at the state border who do not qualify for exemptions from the border closure will be 'turned around' and not permitted to enter the state.

Exemptions

The quarantine exemption applies to people providing 'critical services' to Queensland in the following categories.

- National/state security
- Essential health services
- Emergency services

- Transport of goods or freight including food
- Critical maintenance/repair to critical infrastructure in Queensland
- Construction, mining/energy/agribusinesses (see below for specific requirements for FIFO workers in these sectors)
- Federal, state or local government workers who are required to enter to Queensland to perform official duties.

People providing these services need to [apply for an entry pass](#).

Queensland also has exemptions on compassionate grounds. Details of these can be found [here](#).

Treatment of FIFO workers

Currently, FIFO workers who live and work in Queensland in construction, commercial fishing, manufacturing, resources sector, energy or agribusiness industries are still allowed to travel within Queensland to work without having to undertake self-quarantine.

Additional restrictions are being added for these workers from 11.59pm on Saturday April 4. From that time, only 'critical resource sector employees' (see below definition) will be allowed to enter Queensland from interstate to their work. These are employees critical to the ongoing operation of a resource activity or the resource supply chain and will be detailed on the [Queensland Health website](#).

FIFO workers who live and work in Queensland can continue to work in any FIFO roles in Queensland (Queensland FIFOs are not restricted to critical resource sector employees). Additional restrictions about overseas travel or hotspots continue to apply to interstate and Queensland FIFOs.

Whether the FIFO worker comes from interstate or within Qld, they will be required to provide evidence that they are FIFO workers, who they are working for, and that they are entering Queensland to go directly to work.

The companies they work for in Queensland will also have to provide a health plan that complies with requirements set by the Chief Health Officer that ensures adequate hygiene and safety requirements to limit the transmission of COVID19.

The template health plan can be found [here](#).

For Queensland residents who perform FIFO work for a company interstate, that company does not have to comply with a health plan set by Chief Health Officer. However, if the FIFO work is in a hotspot declared by Chief Health Officer, the person must self-quarantine on return to Queensland.

Critical resources sector employee

A **critical resources sector employee** means a person that:

- a. is required to be appointed under the *Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999*; the *Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999*; or the *Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004* and the position is mentioned in the list published on the Queensland Health website; or
- b. has been approved by the Chief Health Officer as a critical resources sector employee.

More details, including a Q&A can be found [here](#)

Useful links

[Border Restrictions - Queensland Health](#)

[Queensland border restrictions fact sheet](#)

Western Australia

Overview

WA has implemented restrictions and arrival requirements on travellers from other states and territories who arrive by road, rail, air and sea. The Government has indicated that further restrictions are likely. Unless exempted, arrivals from interstate are being ordered to self-isolate for 14 days.

Enforcement of the border restrictions is policed at checkpoint stops. In addition, WA has implemented restrictions on travelling [within the state](#).

The WA and Federal Governments have also implemented restricted access to designated regions in Western Australia to protect the health and wellbeing of residents in the Kimberley and remote Aboriginal communities. Details of these zones and relevant exemptions are [here](#).

The WA Government has flagged that tighter border restrictions are likely to be announced this week.

Exemptions

The Western Australian Government has published a form that can be completed and emailed to seek an exemption from quarantine in WA. It is available [here](#). This link also has the detailed state emergency declarations that might be useful on specific questions.

In general, the following exemptions apply to interstate travellers to WA:

- Essential services and essential workers, including health and emergency services, defence and policing, mining industry workforces, flight crews and freight of essential goods, via ports and trucks – with strict guidelines in place to monitor and manage this.
- Exemptions granted on compassionate grounds and where people live near border communities.

More specific detail on exemptions are [here](#).

Treatment of FIFO workers

As part of the list of exemptions in the WA emergency declaration, there is a specific quarantine exemption for 'specialist skills critical to maintaining key industries or businesses'.

These include:

'Persons who ordinarily live or work in Western Australia and travel interstate for work purposes for regular periods according to establish work schedules (for example FIFO workers)'.

The detailed list of exemptions is in this [document](#).

Useful links:

[WA COVID-19 response site](#)

[WA restricted biosecurity areas](#)

[Announcement on biosecurity areas](#)

South Australia

Overview

There are formal restrictions in place on entry to South Australian borders. Non-essential travellers are required to self-quarantine for 14 days.

More detailed information is [here](#).

Exemptions

Essential travellers to SA include:

- National and state security and governance
- Health services
- Essential medical treatment
- Transport and freight services
- Skills critical to maintaining key industries or businesses
- Emergency Services workers
- Cross border community members
- Passing through (travellers will need to make their own enquiries about entry into their final state destination)
- Compassionate grounds

While police will be present at checking points across the state, members of the public travelling into the state may also be stopped by police patrols and enquiries made about their movements and reason for travelling into the state to ensure compliance with the direction.

People who live or work near or across the border and wish to seek an exemption should email sacovid19exemptions@sa.gov.au and include as much information as possible in the email.

Treatment of FIFO workers

The SA Department for Energy and Mining (DEM) has urged companies to continue to reduce total staff movements, including ceasing non-essential tasks and lengthening rosters. It keeps reiterating that 'non-essential movements that result in unnecessary exposure pathways must stop'.

In preparation for worst-case conditions, companies have also been urged to continue strengthening contingency plans for additional constraints.

Companies are also urged to provide their transmission prevention control, isolation and contact tracing measures to SA Health for advice. These plans can be emailed to angela.lee@sa.gov.au.

Further advice from DEM says:

- Where overnighting between connecting flights is unavoidable - transiting FIFO staff are able to move from the airport direct to a hotel and remain in their room in isolation until return to the airport for their connecting flight. Airport hotels are preferable.
- **SA-based FIFO workers returning to SA** (subject to having no COVID-19 symptoms and no contact with COVID-19 cases) are exempt from self-quarantine requirements.
- Freight of critical materials and project infrastructure components is exempt under the State Coordinator's Direction and may continue provided companies have implemented infection control protocols.

In general, the wording of exemptions for FIFO workers is the same for SA as for WA. As part of the list of exemptions in the SA emergency declaration, there is a specific quarantine exemption for 'specialist skills critical to maintaining key industries or businesses'.

There are regular updates and a place to sign up for alerts and new information [here](#).

Full details of the SA emergency declaration are [here](#).

Useful links

[SA police direction on interstate travel](#)

Tasmania

Overview

Tasmania introduced border restrictions on March 20, requiring all non-essential visitors to Tasmania to quarantine for 14 days. All passengers are being screened on arrival and must demonstrate that they meet the essential traveller criteria to avoid quarantine.

If people arriving are deemed non-essential, they will be directed to quarantine themselves at their stated place of address. Tasmania Police and Biosecurity Tasmania will ensure compliance with the quarantine measures, helping people to access support and follow up to ensure compliance.

Exemptions

The quarantine period does not apply to 'essential travellers'. Essential travellers are defined as health care workers, emergency workers, defence personnel, air and ship crew, specialists, and essential freight personnel (truck drivers/spirit freight). Full details on essential travellers are [here](#).

Travel restrictions do not apply to Tasmanian residents on the state's islands, such as King and Flinders, flying into mainland Tasmania. They do apply to anyone travelling inbound to the islands from mainland Australia including residents returning home to the island. Mainland Australians flying into the islands then onto mainland Tasmania need to self-quarantine when they arrive.

Treatment of FIFO workers

FIFO workers who believe they have grounds for exemption can apply through this form on [this page](#).

The Tasmanian Government has said each case would be assessed individually based on its merits.

Useful links

[Tasmanian travel restrictions Q&A](#)

[Tasmanian quarantine restrictions for essential travellers](#)

Northern Territory

Overview

Anyone arriving in the NT from interstate or overseas is required to self-isolate for 14 days unless they qualify for an exemption. People flying into the Territory will have to declare at the airport that they are planning to self-isolate for 14 days and provide details of where they are staying.

The NT Government and police have established police checkpoints at border crossings. Travellers are required to sign a declaration about their health and ability to self-isolate. Those who arrive by boat have to sign a similar declaration. The travel form that everybody must complete before entering the NT is available online through [this link](#).

These measures will tighten later this week. From midnight on April 1, the Northern Territory will require anyone entering the state to go into forced quarantine for 14 days at a hotel 'secured by us and guarded by us'. This includes Territory residents returning home from elsewhere. From midnight Friday, April 3, people placed in forced quarantine will also be required to pay for the cost of their accommodation. The exemptions previously announced will continue to apply.

Exemptions

Exemptions from self-quarantine in the NT include:

- National and Northern Territory security and governance
- Health and emergency services
- Transport, freight and logistics
- Defence and policing
- Flight crews and freight (with strict guidelines in place to monitor and manage this)
- People with specialist skills that are critical to maintaining key government services, industries or businesses.

There are more details about exemption categories [here](#). Details on how to apply for an exemption can be found [here](#).

Treatment of FIFO workers

FIFO workers who believe they fall into an essential traveller category can apply for exemption using [this form](#). The form can be submitted to an authorised officer when you arrive in the NT or be emailed to doh.pcc@nt.gov.au. The application will be assessed on its merits by the Chief Health Officer or appropriate delegate.

Do you require further advice?

Ai Group has set up a special [section on our website](#) to provide access to Ai Group advice and assistance relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Shane'.

Shane Rodgers
Head of Operations (National)

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information or assistance, please contact the Ai Group Workplace Advice Line on 1300 55 66 77.