

Media Release

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CCA agrees to reintroduce country and regional categories for travel from 23rd April

The Civil Contingencies Authority has agreed to reintroduce country and regional categorisation for travellers to the Bailiwick from the 23rd April.

Islanders will be familiar with the system which was in place before the start of this year, where all destinations fall into one of four categories. The CCA has decided to reintroduce a very similar system, however it will do so in a phased approach.

Currently all destinations are treated as 'Category 4'. This means all arrivals must test on their day of arrival and on day 13. They must self-isolate until they receive negative results from both tests, and if they decline to take one of the tests, they must self-isolate for 21 days.

From the 23rd April, 'Category 3' countries and regions will be reintroduced. This means any country (or in the case of travel to the UK, any region) with a prevalence below 100 cases of COVID-19 per 100,000 population, which also satisfies other Public Health criteria, can be considered Category 3. Arrivals from Category 3 destinations are tested on arrival and on day 7, and must self-isolate until they receive a negative result from both tests. They must continue to observe 'passive follow-up' rules for a further 7 days. Again, if they decline to have one of the two tests, they must self-isolate for 21 days.

It is the CCA's current intention that from the 14th May, 'Category 2' destinations will then be introduced. Broadly, category 2 will apply to destinations with a prevalence of below 30 cases per 100,000, which also satisfied other Public Health criteria. Category 2 travellers will be tested twice, on arrival and on day 7, but they will only need to self-isolate until their first result comes back negative. They can then leave their self-isolation and observe 'passive follow-up' rules until 14 days after their arrival.

Category 1 will continue to apply to any country or region where an 'air bridge' has been established.

Arrivals into the Bailiwick are again reminded that they must provide details on their travel history on the online Travel Tracker before they arrive. Full details on what is required for travel can be found at <https://covid19.gov.gg/guidance/travel>

The CCA has also agreed that, alongside the resumption of categorisation on the 23rd April, business tunnels will again be permitted, allowing controlled, short trips into the Bailiwick for business reasons that cannot be achieved remotely.

Importantly, the CCA is also making all travellers aware that it still intends to introduce a charge for COVID-19 tests taken for travel reasons. The intention is that charges should come into effect from 14th May, and all travellers will need to pay a fee of £25 for each test (test on arrival as well as the test on day 7 or day 13). This is to partially offset the very significant overall cost involved in providing the tests which have so far been at no cost to travellers.

Deputy Peter Ferbrache, Chair of the Civil Contingencies Authority said

“We are taking the first steps in significantly reopening our borders, and we do so with the intention of not closing them again. We cannot guarantee that, as we know this pandemic can throw up surprises, but given the progress of our vaccination programme we believe this can and will be a one-way journey towards more open borders.

We still intend to reduce travel restrictions further in July, by which time we hope to have the vast majority of adults in the Bailiwick protected with one, if not two, doses of the vaccine. When that happens our focus in terms of travel requirements will switch to look more at vaccination levels rather than prevalence levels of the virus as is currently the case. So in that respect I think we are seeing the beginning of the end of our very strict border restrictions, and a move towards what will be a more normal way of life going forward, where this virus is endemic, and where we no longer fear it as a potential cause of death but instead manage it as a part of life.

The most vulnerable in our community are already protected, and in the UK, Isle of Man and Jersey we know the situation is rapidly improving. We need to be cautious, but not overly fearful now, as we give back to our community the ability to travel in ways they’ve not been able to for many months.”