



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, 1 April 2020 COVID 19 Update

- Out of 22 new tests, eight have tested positive and 14 negative.
- The British Airways flight will depart with passengers from Cayman Islands on Tuesday next week (7 April 2020).
- 109 persons have sought to return to London on the BA flight that will bring vital equipment, returning Caymanians and persons with the right to work.
- The hard curfew will be extended beyond 3 April, when it is set to expire.
- Government is choosing life over economics at the present time.
- All Easter camping and social hanging out are officially cancelled.

Grand Cayman (GIS) – Eight new cases have tested positive from 22 new tests conducted.

At the press conference today (Wednesday, 1 April 2020) to update the nation on COVID 19 developments, Cayman's leaders underscored the need to practise social distancing, wash hands and above all **stay home** and follow the requirements of the soft and hard curfews.

The press conference opened with a prayer led by Bishop Nicholas Sykes.

Chief Medical Officer, Dr. John Lee reported:

- Out of 22 results, 14 tested negative and eight have tested positive. One of these has no travel history. Of the seven other positives, they have had contacts with travellers or been travellers themselves.
- All others previously tested positive are doing well.
- Those testing positive range from across Grand Cayman and 20- 82 years.

- Total tested so far are 251 persons, 228 of whom had negative results and 22 positive.
- It is imperative people **stay home** so as not to either spread the virus to others or be in danger of getting the infection from others.
- The authorities are actively examining creation of homemade masks by local seamstresses.

Commissioner of Police, Mr. Derek Byrne reported:

- With no significant issues and crime stable, the curfews are generally working well with only food delivery personnel seen traversing roads until 9 pm.
- Overnight during the hard curfew, **Little Cayman** had **no** issues; **Cayman Brac** saw **four** interceptions by Police but no breaches of curfew; on **Grand Cayman**, there were **131** interceptions, but only **three** found in breach – **one** was arrested and **two** were warned for prosecution for breach of curfew provisions.
- Being found in breach of curfew provisions would result in prosecution, including being charged and having to Summary Court in due course.
- Business at supermarkets, pharmacies and banks was well managed and controlled. A small number were on the beaches but maintaining social distancing.
- Commissioner said he would discuss with the Governor and Government the need to extend the hard curfew between 7 pm and 5 am daily beyond the Friday, 3 April current end date.

Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin said:

- World statistics continue to remain bleak. In the **US**, the total number of cases had reached 205,036, up 16,506 since overnight; with 4,516 deaths, up 463 overnight; **Italy** has a total of 110,574 cases, up 4,782 overnight; deaths – 13,155, up 727 overnight; **Spain** total 102,136, up 6,213 overnight; deaths – 9,053, up 589 overnight; **China** – 81,554 cases, only 36 new cases overnight, deaths – 3,312, up 7 overnight; **UK** – total 29,474 cases, up 4,324 overnight; 2,352 deaths, 563 overnight; **Philippines**- 2,084 total cases, 88 deaths; **Jamaica**: 36 total, 1 death; **India** – 1,685 cases, 38 deaths; Canada – 7,695 cases, 89 deaths; **New York State** –total cases – 83,712 cases, up 7,729 overnight; deaths – 1,941, up 227 overnight.

- The eight new positive cases should cause no surprise as COVID-19 is in the community.
- Every interaction with others increases the risk of getting the infection.
- The numbers infected are still small but people have to remember they have been in contact with others so the numbers of infected are likely to increase.
- Government is still hopeful of containing the virus to households and the small pockets of the community where they reside.
- Clearly, the community is in a dangerous position.
- People need to stay home and avoid spreading the virus through public contact.
- Contrary to rumours, Government is not placing the Cayman Islands in a full lockdown. Full lockdown is impractical.
- However, Government is considering extending the alphabetic division of the Islands right across the board of all activities.
- All Easter camping and hanging out socially on beaches and elsewhere are officially cancelled. People should celebrate Easter as a religious festival staying at homes and in a socially distant way.
- Do not go out, work from home and stop the spread of the disease.
- The requests from businesses still seeking exemptions were disappointing. All businesses were not essential and pool businesses were not exempt as they are not an essential service.
- Those deemed essential in the private sector such as electricians, plumbers or air-conditioning and refrigeration personnel are allowed to deal only with emergencies that they are called to deal with night or day.
- Government is working diligently to grapple with the hard questions behind the scenes including the economic wellbeing of the nation.
- Therefore the alternatives do we focus on funerals or try to keep as many alive as possible; Government is focusing on the latter, choosing life over the economy.
- Access to soft loans through the Cayman Islands Development Bank for small business is under consideration.
- Also tourism is not going to return any time soon. So those businesses should take a very hard look at their staff requirements. Those expats unemployed in the industry

should go home. Government does not have the wherewithal to support thousands not working within the industry in the medium term.

His Excellency the Governor, Mr. Martyn Roper said:

- Two deaths in the **UK** – one a 13-year-old and another 19 years, neither with any prior health issues - reveal any and all can get the virus.
- Isolating, tracing and suppressing remain the best tools in curbing the virus' spread.
- The BA flight would bring in UK-funded, HSA ordered and CIG sourced from South Korea medical equipment as well as some freight for supermarkets.
- The flight will leave on Tuesday afternoon. So far, 109 persons have sought to depart on the flight to London. More seeking to leave should contact 244-3333.
- The cost per ticket is £500. Existing BA ticketing cannot be transferred since this flight is a UK-charter flight. However, BA would give vouchers for existing booking.
- Looking for who are the positive persons or where they live is completely unacceptable and an erosion of patient confidentiality. This is already an extremely worrying time for the patients and their families as they grapple with this unpleasant virus. The public should display Caymankind spirit in the way they handle this.

Health Minister Hon. Dwayne Seymour said:

- Blood donations are urgently required, including for cancer, urgent surgeries and trauma cases. In particular, O negative blood is needed.
- Giving blood at blood banks will not spread or increase the danger of acquiring the disease as COVID-19 is not a blood borne disease. So blood donations are safe.
- One donation can save three lives. Generally, men can donate once every three months and women, once every four months.
- Individuals wishing to donate can contact the blood bank at the Health Services Authority Monday-Saturday by calling 244-2674 or emailing info@bloodbank.ky. For more info visit <https://bloodbank.ky>.
- Those donating blood will get exemption letters to drive to and from the Blood Bank.
- The options are six feet apart or six feet under. So stay home and stay safe.

For the official Cayman Islands Government web portal, www.gov.ky:

Web title: Wednesday COVID 19 Update

Web blurb: Eight more test results are positive bringing total positive to 22 out of 251 tests.