

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA



QUARANTINE (COVID-19) GUIDELINES, 2021

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2021, No. 36

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ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
QUARANTINE (COVID-19) GUIDELINES, 2021
ARRANGEMENT OF GUIDELINES

GUIDELINE

PRELIMINARY

1. Citation and commencement 4

PART I

QUARANTINE (COVID-19) GUIDELINES

2. Quarantine COVID-19 Guidelines 4
3. Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Measures in Quarantine 8

PART II

**CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19) SELF QUARANTINE AND
GOVERNMENT QUARANTINE GUIDELINES**

4. Self-Quarantine 9
5. Self-Quarantine Guidelines 9
6. Quarantine at a government facility 11

SCHEDULE

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

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These guidelines are being issued by the Quarantine Authority by virtue of the powers contained in section 5 of the Quarantine Act, Cap. 361

1. Citation and commencement

- (1) This Order may be cited as Quarantine Guidelines for the Outbreak of COVID-19 in Antigua and Barbuda.
- (2) This Order shall be deemed to have come into force on the 14th day of May, 2021.

PART I

QUARANTINE (COVID-19) GUIDELINES

2. Quarantine COVID-19 Guidelines

2.1 Introduction

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is a new disease caused by the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). SARS-CoV-2 can be transmitted by droplets, aerosols and being in contact with contaminated surfaces. Affected persons can be asymptomatic or can have mild, moderate or severe disease requiring hospitalization and intensive unit care. There is no specific treatment for COVID-19. The only available methods to prevent and manage COVID-19 are public health measures such as social distancing, physical distancing, practicing cough and sneeze etiquette, handwashing, the use of personal protective equipment such as masks, quarantine and isolation. The most recent public health measure used for the prevention and management of COVID-19 is vaccination. There are a few COVID-19 vaccines that have been approved internationally and for use in Antigua and Barbuda. Some vaccines have a one dose requirement whereas others require two doses. A person is considered to be fully vaccinated two weeks after they would have received one dose of a one dose vaccine or two weeks after they would have received the second dose of a two dose vaccine.

Quarantine involves the restriction of movement, or separation from the rest of the population, of healthy persons who may have been exposed to the virus, with the objective of monitoring their symptoms and ensuring early detection of cases. The purpose of this document is to offer guidance to other ministries, institutions and organizations on implementing quarantine measures for individuals in the context of the current COVID-19 outbreak.

The Quarantine Act, Chap. 361, Revised Laws of Antigua and Barbuda provides the legal framework for persons to be placed in quarantine. They have also been developed in accordance with the International Health Regulations.

This document is informed by current knowledge of the COVID-19 outbreak which is limited and changes rapidly. The Ministry of Health Wellness and the Environment (MOHWE) will therefore update these guidelines as new information becomes available.

2.2 Quarantine in the context of COVID-19

(1) The objective of quarantine is to quickly detect COVID-19 in persons who may have been exposed to the virus, isolate them and in so doing limit the spread to others. Therefore, the following persons will be subject to quarantine in Antigua and Barbuda.

- (a) Contacts of laboratory confirmed cases of COVID-19
- (b) Contacts of suspected cases of COVID-19
- (c) Persons traveling to Antigua and Barbuda from countries where there are outbreaks of COVID-19.

(2) A contact is defined as a person who is involved in any of the following from 2 days before and up to 14 days after the onset of symptoms in the patient—

- (a) Having face-to-face contact with a laboratory confirmed COVID-19 patient within 1 meter and for >15 minutes;
- (b) Providing direct care for patients with COVID-19 disease without using proper PPE or using PPE incorrectly;
- (c) Staying in the same close environment as a COVID-19 patient (including sharing a workplace, classroom or household or being at the same gathering) for any amount of time;
- (a) Travelling in close proximity with (that is, within 1m separation from) a COVID-19 patient in any kind of conveyance;

(3) Persons travelling to Antigua and Barbuda are required to sign the Quarantine Directions in Form B.

2.3 Place for Quarantine

(1) Quarantine will be at a designated government facility, hotel, private home, yacht or sea vessel, dormitory or any facility that can allow persons to be safely separated from others and monitored for symptoms of COVID-19.

(2) The MOHWE will conduct a risk assessment and determine where persons will be quarantined. This assessment will take the following factors into account—

- (a) Overall maturity and responsibility of the person
 - (b) The facility where the quarantine will take place
 - (c) The level of supervision available for quarantine
 - (a) The level of exposure of the person to COVID-19 and their potential to develop symptoms and spread the disease.
- (3) Any facility used for quarantine must provide the following for the entire duration of the quarantine period —

- (a) A suitable place for persons to be housed.
- (b) Personnel to monitor persons for symptoms of COVID-19.
- (c) Equipment for monitoring symptoms of COVID-19 such as a thermometer.
- (a) Adequate food, water and hygiene provisions.
- (e) Psychosocial support
- (j) Security.
- (g) Personal Protective Equipment

2.4 Quarantine Period

The generally recommended quarantine period for COVID-19 is 14 days for a person who has not been vaccinated or who is not fully vaccinated and 7 - 10 days for a fully vaccinated person. However, this period may change in the following circumstances:

- (a) If a person develops symptoms of COVID-19 or tests positive for the disease, using a test approved by the MOHWE, quarantine will cease and he/she will be moved to isolation.
- (b) If, on day 5 after arriving in Antigua and Barbuda, a fully vaccinated person tests negative for COVID-19 using a RT-PCR test approved by the MOHWE he/she may be released from quarantine on day 7.

2.5 Special Populations

There will be special considerations for quarantine for certain populations. These include the following:

I. Returning Nationals and Residents of Antigua and Barbuda

Returning nationals and residents of Antigua and Barbuda may be allowed to self-quarantine at home depending on the assessment of factors listed in Section 3. Such persons can monitor their symptoms at home and report to the MOHWE daily or a healthcare provider may visit to check their temperature and/or examine for signs of COVID-19.

II. Students

Students, particularly university students, may be allowed to self-quarantine at their dormitories or private residences. They will be required to monitor their symptoms at home and report to the MOHWE at least once daily or as instructed by the MOHWE. A healthcare provider may visit to check their temperature and/or examine for signs of respiratory disease. The university can assist with temperature checks and monitoring as part of their school health program. Any student who develops symptoms must be immediately isolated and the case reported to the MOHWE's Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit.

III. Elderly Persons

Elderly persons who require special care may be allowed to self-quarantine at home if appropriate care is not available at the government's quarantine facility.

IV. Children

Persons less than 18 years will be placed in a government quarantine facility only if there is supervision from a family member or guardian.

V. Persons with Disabilities

There will be special provisions for persons with disabilities at any government quarantine facility. If these cannot be provided, special arrangements will be made for self-quarantine at home.

VI. Persons with Underlying Medical Conditions

Persons with certain underlying medical conditions may be allowed to self-quarantine at home. This will be determined by the MOHWE and will be dependent on the medical condition and factors outlined in Section 3.

VII. Visitors

Special arrangements will be made for visitors and non-residents to be housed in approved and certified hotels and guest houses. These special measures include:

- (a) Dedicated rooms or sections for quarantine
- (b) The understanding that all visitors exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 will be isolated.
- (c) Daily monitoring of guests for symptoms of COVID-19 by an on-site nurse.
 - (i) An on call physician must be engaged to monitor and manage visitors and hotel guests under quarantine.
 - (ii) There must be daily reporting to the MOHWE Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit on each visitor/hotel guest.

- (iii) The on-site nurse and on call physician must immediately notify the MOHWE's Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit of any guest who develops symptoms of COVID-19. They must also ensure that the appropriate sample is taken and packaged for testing.

VIII. Transit and In-Transit Passengers

Transit and in-transit passengers will be quarantined until their next flight.

3. Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Measures in Quarantine

The following IPC measures must be used to ensure a safe environment for quarantines persons and to also reduce transmission of COVID-19—

- (a) Any person in quarantine who develops febrile illness (fever) or respiratory symptoms at any point during the quarantine period should be treated and managed as a suspected case of COVID-19. They must be isolated and the case reported to the MOHWE.
- (b) Hand hygiene must be performed frequently, particularly after contact with respiratory secretions, before eating, and after using the toilet. Hand hygiene includes cleaning hands with soap and water and using an alcohol-based hand rub. Alcohol-based hand rubs are preferred if hands are not visibly dirty; hands should be washed with soap and water when they are visibly dirty.
- (c) All persons in quarantine must practice respiratory hygiene and be aware of the importance of covering their nose and mouth with a bent elbow or paper tissue when coughing or sneezing and then immediately disposing of the tissue in a wastebasket with a lid and then performing hand hygiene.
- (a) Persons in quarantine should refrain from touching their eyes, nose and mouth.
- (e) A non-medical mask must be worn when interacting with others.
- (j) All personnel working in the quarantine facility will be trained by the Central Board of Health (CBH) on standard infection prevention and control precautions.
- (g) Both staff and quarantined persons should understand the importance of promptly seeking medical care if they develop symptoms
- (h) Frequently touched surfaces, such as bedside tables, bed frames and other bedroom furniture, should be cleaned and disinfected daily with regular household disinfectant containing a diluted bleach solution (that is, 1-part bleach to 99 parts water). For surfaces that cannot be cleaned with bleach, 70% ethanol can be used.
- (i) Bathroom and toilet surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected at least once daily with regular household disinfectant containing a diluted bleach solution (that is, 1-part bleach to 99 parts water).

- (j) Clean clothes, bed linens, and bath and hand towels using regular laundry soap and water or machine wash at 60-90 °C (140–194 °F) with common laundry detergent, and dry thoroughly.
- (k) Cleaning personnel should wear disposable gloves when cleaning surfaces or handling clothing or linen soiled with body fluids, and they should perform hand hygiene before putting on and after removing their gloves.

PART II

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19) SELF QUARANTINE AND GOVERNMENT QUARANTINE GUIDELINES

4. Self-Quarantine

4.1 Self-Quarantine is a transparent self-restriction of persons' activities when they are not ill with COVID-19. This protects unexposed members of the community from contracting the disease if the at-risk person becomes sick and facilitates early detection of the disease for rapid implementation of response measures. It therefore helps to prevent the spread of the disease to close friends, relatives and community members.

4.2 At-risk persons include travellers coming from countries/territories/areas with active transmission of COVID-19 as designated by the Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment and any individual who has been in close contact with a confirmed or probable case with COVID-19.

4.3 Infection and Prevention Control Measures must be practiced at home, in the hotel room or any designated accommodation without mixing with the general public or family members for 7 or 14 days, as the case may be, since the last contact with the confirmed case. Self-quarantined individuals will be followed up by surveillance officers either via phone or via physical visits, in appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), during the period of quarantine.

4.4 Individuals who breach the self-quarantine guidelines will be placed under quarantine in a government facility and are punishable by law.

5. Self-Quarantine Guidelines

You have been identified as a contact to someone diagnosed with COVID-19, have returned from a country with local transmission for COVID-19 or have been assessed by the Ministry of Health Wellness and the Environment as a person who can introduce or spread COVID-19 in Antigua and Barbuda. In order to protect the public, you are being placed in self quarantine. You must follow these guidelines for self-quarantine for 14 days from your last potential exposure to COVID-19 —

- (a) You are required to provide your name, physical address and telephone contact to authorities.

- (b) You must take your temperature with a thermometer at least two times a day or anytime you feel like you may have a fever and monitor yourself cough or difficulty breathing.
- (c) Follow the Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environments instructions on reporting your temperature and any symptoms.
- (a) Do not go out in public.
- (e) Stay home from school and work.
- (j) Do not take public transportation, taxis, or ride-shares.
- (g) Employees: Discuss your work situation with your employer before returning to work.
- (h) Avoid contact with others. Stay alone in a well-ventilated room.
- (i) Avoid sharing toothbrushes, utensils, dishes, drinks, towels, clothes or bed linen with anybody in your home.
- (j) It is essential for you to have someone bring you supplies.
- (k) Do not have any visitors during this time. Tell potential visitors that you are under COVID-19 quarantine.
- (i) Keep your distance from others (about 6 feet or 2 meters).
- (m) Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing. Dispose of the tissue into a covered bin then wash or sanitize your hands.
- (n) Avoid touching eyes and mouth especially after sneezing or coughing.
- (c) Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds to avoid spreading the virus to others. If soap and water are not readily available, you can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains 60%-95% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- (f) Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces such as doorknobs/handles, bedside tables, bedframes, light switch and phones with regular household disinfectant (Lysol, Pine-sol & 62-70% Alcohol). Clean daily and allow to air dry.
- (q) Clean floors weekly using soap and water first, and then use mild disinfectant like Pine-sol or 5% bleach (Mix one cup bleach to nine cups of water in a bucket for mopping and in spray container), allowing to air dry.
- (r) Change and wash linen weekly or as needed if soiled.
- (s) Restrict members of the household from utilizing the same bathroom. If you share the same bathroom and toilet facilities, ensure you disinfect it after use using regular household disinfectant or soap and water.

- (i) If you get sick with fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other signs of respiratory illness, call the COVID-19 Support Hotline at (268) 462 6843 (46COVID). Tell them you are under COVID-19 quarantine. If available, wear a mask if experiencing respiratory symptoms or caring for someone who is sick.
- (ii) Seek medical advice if you need to seek medical care for other reasons, such as dialysis, call ahead to your doctor and tell them your symptoms and that you are being monitored for COVID-19. Avoiding contact with others and visits to medical facilities will allow health care providers to quickly direct you to the right health facility and help protect you and others from possible spread of COVID-19 and other viruses.
- (iii) If you develop signs and symptoms of COVID-19, members of your household MAY be classified as close contacts depending on your interaction with them and will be required to self- quarantine. It is therefore important to implement effective self-quarantine.
- (iv) Find healthy ways to reduce anxiety and fear during quarantine. Keep a routine to include fun activities, reassure children, connect with others, take breaks from news stories and social media, take care of your body (take deep breaths, stretch, or meditate; eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep, avoid alcohol and drugs).

Quarantined persons can be released from quarantine if no symptoms show within 5 or 7 days, as the case may be, and consultation with Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment of Antigua and Barbuda confirms their release. Any person who contravenes or fails to comply with regulations for quarantine is in violation of the law of Antigua and Barbuda and shall be guilty of an offence punishable to a fine of ten thousand dollars and to imprisonment for 6 months.

6. Quarantine at a government facility

(1) A person who is not permitted to self-quarantine will be quarantined at a government facility for up to fourteen (14) days but may be released from quarantine prior to the expiration of fourteen days if a fully vaccinated person, on being tested for SARS CoV-2 using RT PCR on the fifth day, tests negative on the fifth day of quarantine.

(2) A person who is informed that he or she must be quarantined at a government facility shall complete and sign the Government Quarantine Facility Information Form in Form A and must also complete the Quarantine Directions in Form B.

SCHEDULE

FORM A - Government Quarantine Facility Information Form

FORM B – Quarantine Directions

FORM A**MINISTRY OF HEALTH WELLNESS AND THE ENVIRONMENT
(QUARANTINE AUTHORITY)****Government Quarantine Facility Information Form**

The outbreak of COVID-19 continues to evolve in Antigua and Barbuda. The Ministry of Health Wellness and the Environment is continuing its control measures to prevent the introduction of the disease to new areas or to reduce human-to-human transmission in areas where the virus that causes COVID-19 is already circulating. These measures include quarantine, which involves the restriction of movement, or separation from the rest of the population, of healthy persons who may have been exposed to the virus, with the objective of monitoring their symptoms and ensuring early detection of cases.

In Antigua and Barbuda, The Quarantine Act, Chap. 361 gives the Quarantine Authority the power to make rules for implementing and carrying into effect any regulations in force to prevent the spread of infectious disease and to supplement those regulations by introducing measures in respect of any matter that the Quarantine Authority deem necessary to prevent the spread of the infectious disease. The Quarantine Authority is the Chief Medical Officer.

You will be required to sign the Ministry of Health Wellness and the Environment's Quarantine Directions.

You are being placed in quarantine because you are coming from a country where COVID-19 is circulating. You will be kept in quarantine for a maximum of 14 days. During that time, you will:

Not be able to have direct physical contact with family and friends

Be confined to your room at the designated quarantine facility.

Be monitored on a daily basis for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath).

Please complete the attached questionnaire.

QUARANTINE INFORMATION FORM

Please complete as accurately as possible and ask for assistance if there is something you do not understand.

Name: _____ Gender: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Age: _____

Emergency Contact (Name): _____

Emergency Contact (Telephone number): _____

1. Dietary Restrictions: Yes No

• If Yes, Please explain _____

2. Allergies: Yes No

• If Yes, please state what you are allergic to _____

3. Do you currently smoke Yes No

4. Do you have any of the following pre-existing medical conditions:

Asthma or a history of lung disease Yes No

Diabetes (high blood sugar) Yes No

Hypertension (high blood pressure) Yes No

Heart disease Yes No

Sickle Cell Disease Yes No

Cancer Yes No

High cholesterol Yes No

Please state any other medical condition you have that is not listed above

5. Current medication: _____

I _____ understand that this information is to protect and ensure my health while I am in quarantine and I hereby certify that the above information is correct.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

FORM B**MINISTRY OF HEALTH WELLNESS AND THE ENVIRONMENT****(QUARANTINE AUTHORITY)****QUARANTINE DIRECTIONS**

Name: _____ Address: _____

Passport: _____ Gender: _____

Date of Arrival: _____ Nationality: _____

Directions:

1. You have been assessed as a possible risk for the transmission of the Novel Coronavirus known as COVID-19. The Chief Medical Officer of Antigua and Barbuda, who is the Quarantine Authority, in accordance with the powers vested by section 6 of the Quarantine Act, Cap.361 and Quarantine Order No. 17 of 2020, has directed that you be quarantined in your home or a designated facility for observation.
2. **The recommended quarantine period for COVID-19 is 14 days. However, a fully vaccinated person (a person who would have received the second dose of an approved two-dose vaccine or a single dose of an approved one-dose vaccine more than two weeks prior to arrival in Antigua and Barbuda) may be released from quarantine on day 7 if the result of a RT-PCR test, approved by the MOHWE, applied on day 5 after arrival in Antigua and Barbuda is negative.**
3. You are not allowed to leave your home or the designated facility during this period. Failure to comply with these quarantine directions you will be liable on conviction to a fine of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) or imprisonment for six (6) months or to both.
4. During your quarantine period, you will be in contact with an officer of the Quarantine Authority.
5. If you develop a fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing you may require hospitalization and must immediately contact the officer of the Quarantine Authority assigned to you or call the COVID-19 hotline.

I have read, understood and I am willing to comply with the instructions stated above.

Name of Passenger

Signature of Passenger

Name of Officer
For and on behalf of the Quarantine Authority

Signature of Officer

Made this 14th day of May, 2021

Dr. Rhonda Sealey-Thomas
Quarantine Authority