

# COVID-19 Fact Sheet

## Health Exemption Panel: Decision making process

### Health Exemption information for travel into South Australia

South Australia's management of COVID-19 has allowed the Government to ease restrictions throughout South Australia. This has only been possible by ensuring the virus is not unknowingly brought into South Australia and this is why there are restrictions on movement of people into South Australia from areas of high community transmission. These considerations are reviewed regularly and may change based on community transmission rates in other jurisdictions.

#### Who can apply for an exemption?

- > People from Victoria can only enter South Australia if they are considered to be an essential traveller or they have been approved an exemption from SA Health
- > Please refer to [www.police.sa.gov.au/online-services/cross-border-travel-application](http://www.police.sa.gov.au/online-services/cross-border-travel-application) for information on 'essential travellers'.

#### Who is responsible for making the decision regarding exemptions?

- > All applications for an exemption are considered by a panel of health experts, chaired by the Deputy State Controller – Health. This is called the Health Exemptions Committee.
- > Decisions made by the panel are generally considered final. In exceptional circumstances an Appeal will be considered. This will be arbitrated by two senior health officials independent of the Health Exemptions Committee.

#### How do I make an application to the Health Exemptions Committee?

- > To seek an exemption, please submit a comprehensive explanation of your reason/s to enter South Australia along with any supporting documentation to the following email address: [HealthExemptions.Covid19@eso.sa.gov.au](mailto:HealthExemptions.Covid19@eso.sa.gov.au)
- > Additional information may be requested and this will be advised by return email.

#### What general factors are taken into consideration when assessing an application?

- > The key factor in assessing an exemption is the Public Health risk of introducing COVID-19 virus into South Australia. This is based on regular review of the number of active cases and level of community transmission in other jurisdictions.
- > Ability to provide and implement a risk mitigation plan.
- > Ability of the applicant/s to follow strict adherence to quarantine, supervised or self-quarantine.
- > Advice from industry experts regarding the need for travel into South Australia and whether alternative arrangements can be made from low community transmission zones.
- > Evidence that a health condition requires urgent management and that this health care is not available in the high community transmission zone, cannot be delayed or that alternative arrangements such as telehealth will not suffice.

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### I am a specialised worker in an essential sector. What exemptions do I need to apply for?

- > Essential sectors with the need for individual specialist workers to enter and exit South Australia need to have a Workplace Risk Mitigation plan for COVID-19.
- > This should include identifying potential risks, hazards and what controls are in place to mitigate potential risks.
- > For more information on Risk Mitigation plans go to [www.sahealth.sa.gov.au](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au)
- > Risk Mitigation plans need to be submitted to the following email address: [Health.COVID19RiskMitigation@sa.gov.au](mailto:Health.COVID19RiskMitigation@sa.gov.au)
- > Employers need to submit their Risk Mitigation Plan to SA Health and wait for approval before applying to SA Police for Cross Border Travel Registration and approval to enter South Australia.

### Information for specific groups

#### Requests for secondary school students to return to boarding school in South Australia from high community transmission zones

- > Requests will be considered for students going to or returning from boarding school at the beginning or end of the term, but will not be granted for returning home on weekends other than in exceptional circumstances.
- > Information in the application must include residential address in the other jurisdiction, distance from the South Australian border, length of time in isolation from others at this residence and details of any other locations travelled to whilst in the other jurisdiction over the past two weeks.
- > Students travelling from a high community transmission zone will require strict quarantine either in supervised hotel quarantine or organised through the school, with clear indications on how this will be managed (e.g., provision of food and other essentials, adult supervision, mental health support).
- > Students or their school will be required to pay associated costs.

#### University students

- > Requests for existing tertiary students to return to South Australia to continue studies, currently residing in high community transmission zones, will be considered.
- > Supervised hotel quarantine for 14 days will be required.
- > Students or their university will be required to pay associated costs.

#### Requests to relocate to South Australia from Victoria

- > Any requests to relocate from Victoria to South Australia at this time will only be considered in very exceptional circumstances.
- > Persons who have already purchased a property or have a rental agreement in place may be considered for permission of entry, depending on other circumstances, such as essential employment or compassionate grounds.
- > Proof of property purchase/rental agreement will be required.
- > Other supporting documentation such as a contract of permanent or substantial employment in South Australia should also be included.
- > You may be directed to undertake quarantine at a government-approved location at your expense.

# COVID-19 Fact Sheet

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### Medical Exemptions

- > Requests for medical, dental or health treatment in South Australia made by residents of Victoria will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- > The Health Exemption Committee will make a clinical assessment based on the information provided in the request.
- > Further information may be sought including direct discussion with the referring and/or treating clinician (with permission of the applicant).
- > The urgency of the treatment/procedure and ability for the procedure to be delayed or potentially provided within the home jurisdiction will be explored, including whether care can be safely delivered by telehealth.
- > The ability to mitigate risk of COVID-19 transmission will be assessed in consultation with the proposed health care service/hospital.
- > Depending on the current COVID-19 epidemiology in Victoria, requests for medical exemptions will not be approved unless considered urgent and an alternative arrangement cannot be made.

### Compassionate ground requests for end-of-life-related travel

- > Exemptions for end-of-life visits may be granted on compassionate grounds for people from Victoria if the predicted life expectancy of the family member is less than two weeks.
- > Evidence of clinical urgency is required from a registered medical practitioner.
- > There must be agreement by the facility (hospital, hospice or aged care facility) to permit the visit including written agreement by the facility of their ability to put in place risk mitigation procedures.

### Compassionate ground requests for funeral travel from Victoria to South Australia

- > Only in very exceptional circumstances will exemptions for funerals on compassionate grounds be considered on a case-by-case basis (e.g., death of spouse, parent or child).
- > If approval is granted, a full 14 day quarantine period is required on arrival prior to attending the funeral.

### Requests to attend a funeral in Victoria from South Australia

- > South Australians can leave SA to attend a funeral in Victoria, however they will be unable to return.
- > Exemption to return to SA will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and be considered on a case-by-case basis (e.g., death of spouse, parent or child).
- > If an exemption to return is granted, a full 14 day quarantine period is required upon return to SA.

### Requests to travel from Victoria to South Australia to provide general support to immediate family members

- > Exemptions will generally not be granted for people wishing to provide support to family members (e.g., older person shifting house, supporting family with new baby).
- > However, the Health Exemptions Committee will seek to provide advice about other forms of support available in South Australia in such circumstances.

# COVID-19 Fact Sheet

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### For more information

SA COVID-19 Information line 1800 253 787

[sahealth.sa.gov.au/COVID2019](https://sahealth.sa.gov.au/COVID2019)

[covid-19.sa.gov.au](https://covid-19.sa.gov.au)

Department for Health and Wellbeing

SA Health, Government of South Australia

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