



BELIZE PRESS OFFICE

• Phone: 822-0094 or 0092

• Fax: 822-2671

• website: www.belize.gov.bz

PRESS RELEASE

New Measures Announced to Protect Against COVID-19

Belmopan. March 20, 2020. The COVID-19 National Oversight Committee held its second meeting today, March 20th, and agreed to take additional measures to further protect the health of Belizeans and reduce the threat of transmission of COVID-19 in Belize.

As of today, March 20th, Belize does not have any confirmed case of COVID-19. The developments on the international and regional fronts, however, have informed the Committee's decisions.

Effective 11:59 p.m. on Saturday, March 21st, the Northern Border of Belize, which includes the Corozal Free Zone, will be closed for traveling but will remain open for cargo transportation. This means that only Belizean nationals, residents, and diplomats residing in Belize will be allowed entry into Belize subject to inspection and possible quarantine for 14 days. Similarly, the Northern Border will be closed for nationals and residents wishing to travel outside of Belize except for emergencies.

The Philip S.W. Goldson International Airport will be closed effective Monday, March 23rd, after the last scheduled flight departs.

Again, these measures only apply to the movement of people and do not apply to cargo trucks or cargo planes.

Social gatherings will now be limited to 25 people. This includes wakes, funerals, weddings, and other social events. This limit does not apply to places of employment that should have business protocols for social distancing and business continuity plans in place.

Preventing the virus from entering Belize and practicing self-isolation are the two most important steps that can be taken to avoid community outbreak. The Government

stresses the importance of respecting and abiding by the self-isolation instructions issued by the Ministry of Health.

These restrictions will all be reviewed after 30 days.

The public is reminded to take preventative measures to reduce the risk of transmission. The Government continues to encourage the washing of hands regularly with soap and running water for 20 seconds. When coughing or sneezing, cover the mouth in the inside of elbows or inside a tissue to be disposed immediately. Avoid close contact with persons who have flu-like symptoms. Avoid sharing personal items and disinfect common surfaces. If you have travelled to areas where COVID-19 is circulating and you are experiencing fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, seek medical attention immediately.

The Government advises the public to be guided by facts. To stay informed and updated on the evolving COVID-19 situation, follow the Facebook pages of the Ministry of Health, the Office of the Director of Health Services, and the Government Press Office. Updates can also be viewed at www.pressoffice.gov.bz. The dedicated hotline is 0-800-MOH-CARE (0-800-664-2273). Queries can also be emailed to info@covid19.bz.

Ends