
Travel Advisory

Te Marae Ora Cook Islands Ministry of Health hereby issues this travel advisory in response to the 2019 novel coronavirus acute respiratory disease (2019-nCoVard) outbreak in China that has been reported in 25 countries around the world.

This is a rapidly evolving situation with at least 10,000 confirmed cases of 2019-nCoVard reported (99% in China), and over 200 related deaths in China. Human-to-human transmission has been established in some countries and data suggests those infected can transmit the virus during the incubation period.

The National Health Emergency Taskforce (NHET) is active and strengthening response measures to minimise the impact of 2019-nCoVard should it arrive in the Cook Islands. The NHET acknowledges WHO's declaration that 2019-nCoVard is a Public Health Emergency of International Concern, and WHO's concerns regarding the potential spread of the virus to countries with fragile health systems.

The Cook Islands has established 2019-nCoVard as a notifiable disease under Schedule 2, of the Public Health Act (2004).

The Cook Islands is home to a large population of aged persons as well as those with non-communicable diseases, and the health system lacks advanced tertiary respiratory health care services. The introduction of the virus to the Cook Islands poses a threat to the health of the Cook Islands population (morbidity and mortality), and could quickly overwhelm national resources.

Pursuant to s9A of the Entry Residence and Departure Act 1972 the following travel restriction is in place:

Persons intending to travel to the Cook Islands who have been in China within the last 14 days prior to travel will be denied entry into the Cook Islands. In addition, all Cook Islanders and residents of the Cook Islands should avoid non-essential travel to China.

For those travelling overseas, please take all practical measures to avoid close contact with people with flu-like illnesses, wash your hands regularly, when coughing or sneezing cover your mouth and nose with a fixed elbow or tissue and avoid touching your face.

Do not travel if you have fever, cough and/or difficulty breathing.

Travellers should prepare for travel delays at some airports as some countries have implemented health screening processes that may include passenger temperature checks and requests to complete a special questionnaire. Travellers with signs and symptoms of illness (fever, cough, or difficulty breathing) may require additional health assessment.