

COVID -19 Information relating to the visitation of small craft and superyachts:

The following information is detailed to assist and answer some questions evolving around the current restrictions.

Vessel currently in transit to NZ

In relation to small craft entering NZ, on Thursday 19 March the Government announced at short notice that only NZ Citizens, residents and their dependents could come to NZ post 2359 hrs on the 19th. The new rule meant that the craft the traveller was on needed to have departed the foreign landfall for NZ by 2359 hrs (NZ time). If it departed after this time only NZ Citizens, residents and their dependants could come to NZ. All others are ineligible. Self-isolation of 14 days (commencing from departure from last landfall) still applies.

Vessel departed after NZ border was closed

If a cruising vessel (small family craft or superyacht) arrives in our waters that departed an overseas port after our border was closed. Would they be turned away etc (with all the Pacific Island and Australia borders closed) and could they provision.

Reply - The reality is health and safety remains paramount and turning a small craft away could endanger the travellers. There potentially could be examples of small craft that weren't aware of the border changes but it is understood the small number of yachts intending to come to NZ (from Australia and the Pacific Islands) have been in contact early to check on the border status and Customs have been able to communicate with them. With superyachts it would be expected with the communication equipment they have on board and constant speed they are capable of that they would be aware of NZ's border requirements.

Crew flying in to join a superyacht – Engineer etc

The issue is if they are not a NZ Citizen or resident, they will not be able to board the aircraft to travel to NZ. (If they are a NZ'er they will need to go directly to the vessel and self-isolate for 14 days.) It also needs to be remembered that the Government exempted working crew so that trade (goods shipments) and commercial passengers (air and did apply to sea – cruise) could continue to operate as they are essential to NZ.

Visa Extensions

If the Island nations ban entry then cruisers will need to extend their NZ visas.

NZ Immigration 19th March 2020

NZ Immigration are sympathetic to individuals who are currently in New Zealand and are unable to return to their home country due to the COVID-19 outbreak and current travel restrictions. Individuals who are currently in New Zealand are able to apply for a further visa, which will be assessed on a case by case basis against immigration instructions, taking into account the current COVID-19 outbreak and any relevant travel restrictions.

COVID-19 TIE Extension

Our past experience has shown NZ Customs are considerate of applications to extend the TIE period where there is a genuine reason presented. We are currently awaiting an updated response:

The qualifying criteria may also be extended, on a case by case basis, to craft used for charter, provided the charter work is less than 65 per cent of the vessel's time in New Zealand.

Yachts or small craft that meet the required criteria can be temporarily imported for up to two years.

What are the exceptions to the border measures that took effect on 19 March 2020?

Exceptions may be made on a case by case basis and, in particular, for

- humanitarian reason
- essential health workers
- citizens of Samoa and Tonga for essential travel to New Zealand
- those on visitor visas who are the partners or dependants of a temporary work or student visa holder, and who normally live in New Zealand.

Update Passenger arrival card March 20:

The passenger arrival card has been revised to include a series of questions identifying if the passenger may be at risk of COVID-19. It also requires the passenger to identify the address they will be self-isolating for 14 days after they return to New Zealand. Healthline will call people in self-isolation to ask about their health and welfare. Spot checks are being made to verify people are observing self-isolation. Illness is expected to be reported as part of the advance notice of arrival process submitted at least 48 hours before the vessel arrives and the health status update 12 to 24 hours before arrival.

Ministry of Health officials will inform the Customs Strategic Coordination and Integrated Targeting Operating Centre of any suspicion of possible COVID-19 cases on vessels, and this will be forwarded to border agencies nationally.

Ruling applicable to balance of self-isolation period

The self-isolation period – March 20

The self-isolation period for ships' crew commences when the vessel departs the last overseas port prior to arrival in New Zealand. (Note that this could be the time the departure pilot disembarks, or if any crew fly in after the ship has departed i.e. the last external contact.) If the voyage is over 14 days then the self-isolation is deemed to have been undertaken – provided of course that the crew have not presented the signs and symptoms of COVID19. If a crew member is ill then the normal pratique clearance process applies – which may subsequently result in a requirement to self-isolate. It is a medical decision.

If the voyage is less than 14 days then the duration of the voyage is deducted from the 14-day period, the balance requiring self-isolation.

Noonsite March 20 Updated Situation Pacific Islands:

SOUTH PACIFIC

19 March, 2020: Fiji has declared a very practical approach to yachts entering Fiji in this current time of uncertainty, making them one of the only countries in the South Pacific now open to yachts. French Polynesia has just closed its doors, as has Niue and the Galapagos, Cook Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu remain closed. NZ and Australia are also closed.

Australia: CLOSED (from 18 March)

See [Australia Formalities](#) for details

Cook Islands: CLOSED (from 18 March)

See [Cook Islands Biosecurity](#) for details

Fiji: OPEN (with health screening)

See [Fiji Biosecurity](#) for details

French Polynesia: (as of 20 March non-residents must return home)

See [French Polynesia Biosecurity](#) for details

NB The [French Polynesia High Commissioner announced](#) on 18 March that all non-residents will be refused access to the territory. Any non-residents currently in FP will be sent home.

Galapagos: CLOSED (from 14 March)

See [Galapagos Biosecurity](#) for details

New Caledonia: CLOSED (from 18 March)

See [New Caledonia Biosecurity](#) for details

New Zealand: CLOSED (from 18 March)

See [New Zealand - Biosecurity](#) for details

Niue: CLOSED (from 19 March)

See [Niue Biosecurity](#) for details

Pitcairn Island: CLOSED (anchoring possible)

See [Pitcairn Island Biosecurity](#) for details

Samoa: OPEN (with restrictions)

See [Samoa Biosecurity](#) for details

Solomon Islands: OPEN (with restrictions)

See [Solomon Islands Biosecurity](#) for details

Tonga: CLOSED (from 18 March)

See [Tonga Biosecurity](#) for details

Vanuatu: CLOSED (18 March)
See [Vanuatu Biosecurity](#) for details

NORTH PACIFIC

Federated States of Micronesia: OPEN (with restrictions)
See [FSM Biosecurity](#) for details

Marshall Islands: CLOSED (from 17 March)
See [Marshall Islands Biosecurity](#) for details

Palau: OPEN
See [Palau Biosecurity](#) for details

What is the difference between isolation and quarantine?

The terms have been used interchangeably and, for the purpose of the COVID-19 response, it means the separation of cases, contacts of cases, suspected case and those arriving to New Zealand from all other people. In public health terminology:

- quarantine is used to separate and restrict the movement of well persons
- isolation is used to separate ill persons from those who are healthy.

More information on the COVID-19 state

- [New Zealand Ministry of Health website](#)
- <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/novel-coronavirus-china-2019-ncov>
- [Radio New Zealand website](#)
- [Immigration NZ Website](#)
- [Customs NZ COVID-19 Updates](#)
- [NZ Official COVID-19 website](#)
- <https://covid19.govt.nz/>