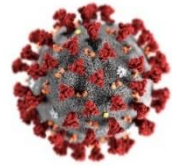


What will happen if COVID-19 comes to Gove Peninsula and nearby homelands?

Summary of the Nhulunbuy District Local Pandemic Plan



Currently there is no COVID-19 in East Arnhem Land. But someone might bring the coronavirus into the NT and into East Arnhem Land. We need to be ready to protect ourselves and control the virus if that happens.

The Northern Territory Government, the Land Councils and Aboriginal Medical Services Associated of the NT (AMSANT), working with local organisations like Miwatj Health, Laynhapuy Health, Rirratjingu, Gumatj and East Arnhem Regional Council, have made plans about what to do if coronavirus comes to the region. For the Miwatj region, this plan is called the Nhulunbuy District Local Pandemic Plan.

The people who worked on the Nhulunbuy district plan are sharing this summary of the plan so that everyone is informed and prepared.

The plans might change if the people steering the plan make new decisions about the pathways to keep people safe. The last time new information was added to this summary was in July 2021.

Goals of this plan

- Keep COVID-19 out of East Arnhem Land.
- Talking and listening to Balanda and Yolŋu about what is happening, so everyone knows what to do if someone brings coronavirus to East Arnhem.
- Plan for testing people who might have the virus, and looking after them until the test results are known.
- Plan for taking the people who have the virus to hospital in Nhulunbuy or Darwin
- Plan for quickly finding people who might have come into contact with the person who has the virus, looking after them and keeping them away from other people.
- Plan to keep the rest of the community safe and stop the spread of the virus.

Who is this plan for?

Everyone (Yolŋu and Balanda) living in

- Nhulunbuy
- Yirrkala
- Gunyaŋara
- and these homelands: Birritjimi, Baniyala, Barraratjpi, Barrkira, Bawaka, Birany Birany, Bukuḍal, Buymarr, Dhālinybuy, Dhaniya, Dhołtji, Djarrakpi, Galupa, Garrthalala, Gikal, Gurkawuy, Gurrumuru, Gutjaŋan, Małarrami, Maṭa Maṭa, Muthamul, Rorruwuy, Rurraŋala, Waṇḍawuy, Yāŋunbi, Nyinyikay and Yuḍu Yuḍu.

Who will steer the plan?

Police officers and a worker at the NT Government Department of Health will steer the plan. In the Nhulunbuy district, the Local Controller of the plan is the Officer-in-Charge at the Nhulunbuy Police Station. He will work with the Gove District Hospital to steer the plan. They will lead five groups with different jobs in the plan. Each group has its own leaders in the Gove Peninsula, who are workers for different NT Government Departments. These workers will work together with local organisations. These are the five groups:

	Medical Group	Public Information Group	Transport Group	Critical goods Group	Welfare Group
Lead Agency	Top End Health Service	Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet	Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics	Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade	Territory Families
Assisting organisations	Miwatj Health, Laynha Health, Marthakal, Careflight, St Johns, Gove Pharmacy	Miwatj, Laynha, East Arnhem Regional Council, DEAL, Nhulunbuy Corp and others	YBE, East Arnhem Regional Council, SeaSwift and others	Woolworths, ALPA, Laynha, YBE and local businesses	Housing, Anglicare, Miwatj Health, Centrelink and others.
What do they do?	Test people for the virus. Lead contact tracing. Plan to have enough medical staff and resources. Get people to hospital and provide medical care.	Tell everyone what is happening and what we need to do. Try to make sure the right information is heard, not rumours and misinformation which can create panic.	Help bring people who are sick, or who might be sick, to where they need to go.	Make sure we don't run out of things we need, like food.	Support people who need to quarantine, including old and vulnerable people, and make sure they are safe and have everything they need.

What can we do to prepare now?

There are things everyone can do to prepare, now. If we do these things, and someone brings the virus here without knowing it, fewer people will get the virus.

People who feel unwell

If you feel unwell with:

- Fever, chills or sweating
- Sore throat
- Dry cough
- Shortness of breath
- Or other symptoms like runny nose, headache, diarrhoea, loss of smell or taste, vomiting or fatigue

Call this number to book a COVID test: 1800 490 484. Don't go directly to the clinic or hospital.

Homelands residents, call

- Laynhapuy Health: 8939 1800
- Marthakal Homelands: 1800 758 854

Listen to good information

It is important to get true stories about COVID-19. Some people are putting stories on Facebook that aren't true, and they can make people very worried.

For Yolŋu matha information about coronavirus, like vaccines, go to ards.com.au/covid-19 or listen to Yolŋu Radio 88.9FM

Read news and rules about coronavirus on the Secure NT website:
<https://coronavirus.nt.gov.au/>

In Yirrkala, listen to the loudspeaker for news about about coronavirus. In other places, listen to Yolŋu Radio 88.9FM.

Everyone

Get the COVID-19 Vaccine

To get vaccinated, call your clinic.

- Miwatj Health Nhulunbuy Clinic: 8939 1999
- Miwatj Health Yirrkala Clinic: 8987 2650
- Miwatj Health Gunyajarra Clinic: 8987 3800
- Laynhapuy Health: 8939 1800
- Marthakal Homelands: 1800 758 854

Practice physical distancing

Follow this behaviour, with anyone you don't usually stay with:

- Stand 1.5m away from people
- Don't spend a long time with big groups of people
- Don't share drinks or ŋarali'.

Practice good hygiene

- Wash your hands with soap often
- Cough into your elbow.

Think about people who are old or unwell.

Do they need a place to stay by

What happens when doctors think someone has COVID-19 in East Arnhem?

What will the sick person do?

- Call the Miwatj clinic or hospital to get tested. Homelands residents will call Laynhapuy Health or Marthakal Homelands.
- If health staff are worried that person has COVID-19, they will take them to Gove District Hospital or Royal Darwin Hospital.
- If health staff are waiting for a test to know if that person has coronavirus, they will help that person to stay by themselves. This could be at the clinic or hospital, at their home, or somewhere else in community. The test results might be available within two hours but it could also take up to two days.

What will the sick person's family do?

If doctors find out a person has the virus, health staff will start 'contact tracing'. This means they will try to find all the people the sick person usually stays with, and any other people they have been close to in the past few days. Health workers call people who have been close to a person sick with coronavirus, 'close contacts'.

- They will ask many people questions to find the 'close contacts' people. They will ask things like who that sick person lives with, where they have gone recently, and who they have visited.
- All of these 'close contacts' will be taken to Nhulunbuy to stay together for a few hours. This might be in the Nhulunbuy Town Hall or somewhere else. Then they will be taken to the quarantine centre in Howard Springs near Darwin, or to hospital if they are sick. These people might have received coronavirus from that first sick person, so we need to take them away from community quickly so they don't make anyone else sick.
- After staying in the Town Hall for a few hours, they will be taken to a place like a motel in Howard Springs near Darwin. They will then stay here for two weeks and maybe longer.
- When they are staying at Howard Springs, workers will bring food, drink, medicine and other things to their door. They can buy tobacco and other things online from shops like Coles and Big W, which will be delivered to their room. No visitors are allowed. They will have TV and wifi, but will need to bring their own phones and chargers. They are allowed to sit on the verandah for fresh air, and they are allowed to walk around a small area outside for 20 minutes two times a day.
- They will have health check-ups each day in their room. They can ask for a Yolŋu interpreter to help over the phone or face-to-face, when they want to speak to a health worker or someone else.

What will everybody else do?

As soon as health workers know someone in the region is sick with coronavirus, some people will be told to stay at home. There are two different ‘staying at home’ pathways that will be followed for people in this Nhulunbuy District region. One pathway is called ‘lockdown’ and the other is called ‘community quarantine’.

People in Nhulunbuy will only ever follow the ‘lockdown’ pathway. People in Yirrkala, Gunyaṅara or homelands in this Nhulunbuy District region might follow a ‘lockdown’ pathway or a ‘community quarantine’ pathway at different times.

What happens in ‘Lockdown’ and what happens in ‘Community Quarantine’?

Lockdown	Community Quarantine
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You will stay at home <u>most</u> of the time. 	<p>You will stay at home <u>all</u> of the time. You can sit in your yard, but you cannot go outside it.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You can leave your home only for the reasons that the Chief Health Officer says are allowed. This might be for buying food, going to the doctor or hospital, and for essential work. <p>If there is a lockdown, there will be information shared about the lockdown rules, on Facebook and Yolṅu Radio and Gove FM.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The police, army and many health workers will come to the community and work with local organisations to help everyone through this difficult time. These workers are called the ‘Rapid Response Team’. <p>The Rapid Response Team will bring food and other things people need to their houses. They will make sure people have power, water and can use their phones</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To start with, lockdown will last for 3 days. It could continue for more days to help keep people safe. <p>Health workers will use this time to find ‘close contacts’.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To start with, Community Quarantine will last for 14 days. It could continue for more days to help keep people safe. <p>The ‘Rapid Response Team’ will use this time to test everyone for COVID-19. They will do this work with Yolṅu workers.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If someone is found with COVID-19 in Nhulunbuy township, then Nhulunbuy, and all the other communities and homelands who this plan is for, will all go into Lockdown. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If someone is found with COVID-19 in Yirrkala and Gunyaṅara, only that community will go into Community Quarantine. <p>If someone is found with COVID-19 in a homeland, that homeland might go into Community Quarantine.</p>

- If Community Quarantine happens in Yirrkala or Gunyaṅara, the whole district – Nhulunbuy Township, Yirrkala, Gunyaṅara, and the homelands – might go into Lockdown. This is to keep people safe and find people sick with the virus.

- People in Nhulunbuy won't follow a Community Quarantine pathway because there are too many houses to bring food and essential services to. And because important services like Woolworths and the hospital need to stay open for everyone living in this region.
- For more information about **Community Quarantine**, watch this video in Yolṅu matha here: vimeo.com/516531547.

These Lockdown and Community Quarantine pathways are two of the best tools we have to protect everyone and stop the virus from spreading all over Arnhem Land.

But they only work if everyone follows the rules about staying at home. If you leave your home or community, you might make your family very sick.

To get more information about this plan, email eastarnhem.covid19@nt.gov.au

To book a COVID-19 test, call: 1800 008 002 or 1800 490 484.

To get news about COVID-19 travel rules and other important information from the Government, go to <https://coronavirus.nt.gov.au/> and www.health.gov.au