

COVID-19 information: International arrivals to South Australia

South Australia (SA) is part of a national repatriation plan for returning Australian citizens and permanent residents.

When you arrive in SA from overseas during the COVID-19 pandemic, you will be required to quarantine in a medi-hotel for 14 full days from your arrival. To help facilitate this process, you will be taken directly from the airport to a medi-hotel where you can quarantine for this period.

Quarantine fees apply for all international passengers arriving in SA from overseas.

What is coronavirus disease (COVID-19)?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is predominantly a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. Symptoms may include fever or chills, cough, sore throat, runny nose, shortness of breath, or loss of taste or smell. Good hand hygiene and wearing a mask can help prevent infection.

As COVID-19 can cause serious illness, there are various restrictions in place in SA, including mandatory quarantine requirements for international arrivals.

What does quarantine mean for me?

When arriving in SA from overseas, you will be required to quarantine for 14 full days and nights from your arrival in SA. You will be taken from Adelaide Airport to a designated medi-hotel for the quarantine period. When determining the 14-day quarantine period, the date of arrival is not to be counted. This means you will be able to leave quarantine from the morning of the fifteenth day.

You cannot leave your room, except under exceptional circumstances (i.e. a medical emergency) for a period of 14 days. In SA, you will be tested for COVID-19 during the first 24 hours of your arrival, day 5 and again on day 13 of your quarantine period. An extra test on day 9 will also be offered to all travellers.

Can I choose my hotel or stay in a private residence?

No, the Government has worked with the hotel industry to ensure a range of suitable accommodation is available for quarantine purposes.

If I have had a COVID-19 vaccination overseas am I still required to quarantine on return to Australia?

At this time, vaccination against COVID-19 does not change the Australian Government's requirement for mandatory quarantine for 14 days at the port of arrival.

Will meals be provided?

You will be provided breakfast, lunch and an evening meal each day. Tea and coffee will be provided to your room daily. Tap water in South Australia is good quality and safe to drink.

It is your responsibility to advise the medi-hotel of any special dietary requirements. Any additional costs will be at your own expense.

Does this mean I can order anything from the room service menu?

No, meals will be provided each day via a pre-set menu. Room service is currently unavailable in the medi-hotels. You are welcome to order meals or groceries from delivery services at your own cost.

Can I access other meals?

Should you wish to access other meals (i.e. delivery services) you may do so at your own cost. The service provider will need to deliver the meals to the hotel lobby for the hotel staff to deliver to your room.

Can I go food shopping for other meals?

No, you cannot leave your room to go food shopping. If you wish to order food and essential items (via phone or online) at your own expense, they can be delivered to the hotel lobby for hotel staff to deliver to your room. You are not able to leave your room during your quarantine period. Information on how to place an order is available in your room.

Where can I get medication or my prescriptions filled?

If you require prescription medication during your time in quarantine, speak to the medi-hotel health care team. A doctor may contact you via telephone and liaise with the pharmacist to help you receive the prescription medications you require.

There may be a cost associated with this from both the doctor and/or pharmacist, depending on whether you are covered by Medicare or have private health insurance. The pharmacy will arrange for medication to be delivered to the hotel.

You may also contact TerryWhite Chemmart on 8232 3123 for delivery to medi-hotel concierge.

If you are very unwell and need to attend a hospital, call the medi-hotel concierge who will call Triple Zero (000) for emergency care.

Are there any restrictions on medications?

The use of nebulisers, CPAP machines and humidifiers (which includes misters, vapourisers, diffusers, steamers and personal fans) within South Australian medi-hotels is prohibited. These devices cannot be used in rooms because of the greater generation of aerosols and the potential for spread of undetected COVID-19 virus. If you require additional asthma care, a GP consult can be arranged by the nursing team.

Will my room be serviced?

You will be provided clean linen, towels and bathroom supplies every three to five days and your room will have a cleaning pack provided to you on arrival. If you wish to receive fresh linen more frequently or require additional supplies, please contact the hotel reception and this can be arranged.

Can I purchase additional services or request a different room?

You can request some additional services, including extra meals, which will need to be paid for on departure. The SA Government works with the medi-hotel providers to allocate rooms that are appropriate for your circumstances and requests for changes can be considered, but may not be available. Room change requests are considered by the State Control Centre-Health and will incur an additional fee.

Can I smoke in my room?

All forms of smoking, including shisha, is not allowed in your medi-hotel room.

Can I have visitors?

No, visitors are not permitted during the quarantine period, including those staying in other rooms in the hotel. This is for your own safety, and the safety of other quarantining guests, staff and the community. SA Police and security staff are in attendance at all times.

Can I go outside?

No, while you are in hotel quarantine you will not be able to go outside.

Rooms with balconies or windows that can be opened are provided where possible. Where balconies are available, items must not be dropped or thrown off balconies and fines will apply.

Am I allowed to open my door?

Your door must remain closed at all times unless you are collecting items left at your door (e.g. food packages or other deliveries), or when staff are checking on your wellbeing, including to have your COVID-19 swab test.

If you are collecting an item delivered to your door, you must wait for at least 3 minutes after the delivery occurs before opening the door. If your room has a balcony or an external window, please make sure it is closed before you open the room door.

You must wear a mask if you need to open your door.

What do I do if I become unwell with COVID-19 symptoms during (or immediately after) my quarantine period?

When in quarantine, monitor yourself for symptoms including fever, chills, cough, sore throat, runny nose, shortness of breath, or loss of taste and smell. Other symptoms may include body aches, diarrhoea, vomiting, fatigue or muscle pain.

During your hotel quarantine period, the medi-hotel health care team will contact you daily as part of your health assessment and management. If you develop any symptoms of COVID-19, even if mild, please discuss this with the medi-hotel health care team.

In a medical emergency, call the medi-hotel concierge who will call Triple Zero (000).

For quarantine enquiries, including if you develop any COVID-19 symptoms immediately after leaving quarantine, please email covid.medihotel@sa.gov.au.

How can I access medical care?

All international travellers at the medi-hotels will be contacted by a member of the General Practitioner Assessment Team (GPAT) for an initial phone assessment. Nurses from the medi-hotel team are available from 9.30am to 8.30pm via the medi-hotel concierge. Non-urgent medical appointments can be arranged via the medi-hotel health care team. Please contact the medi-hotel concierge for further information.

Will I be tested for COVID-19?

All travellers, including infants, are swabbed within the first 24 hours of arrival in the medi-hotel. You will be tested for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. The test is done as a combined deep nasal and throat swab. You will be notified of your result within 72 hours of collection via SMS (if you have an Australian sim card) or you can contact the medi-hotel health care team to follow up on your behalf.

If you have previously been COVID-19 positive please inform the health care team at the time when the swab is taken, so that this can be noted on your swab request form. All travellers are swabbed, regardless of whether they have had COVID-19 previously.

You will be tested again on day 5 and day 13 of your quarantine period. An extra swab on day 9 will also be offered to all travellers.

You must wear a mask and have your passport ready before opening the door for a COVID-19 test.

What happens if I test positive to COVID-19?

To make the medi-hotel system as safe as possible, if you test positive to COVID-19 in any of your tests you will be moved safely and securely by ambulance to a dedicated facility.

The dedicated facility will be staffed exclusively by SA Health and SA Police for nursing and security purposes. The facility does not allow the use of CPAP machines or other aerosol generating machines, to minimise the amount of virus circulating in the hotel room.

What happens on day 14 of the quarantine period?

If you are feeling well and you have tested negative in your day 13 test, you will be able to check out from the medi-hotel on day 15, unless otherwise advised. You will be provided with a quarantine clearance certificate prior to check out. Please remember to wear your face mask at all times during the departure check out process.

If you test positive for COVID-19, you may need to remain in the medi-hotel until advised by SA Health.

In line with national advice, SA Health requests that you have a COVID-19 test on day 17 from your arrival in SA. There is no requirement to isolate while awaiting your results, unless you have symptoms. This additional testing will help protect you, your loved ones and the Australian community. This does not apply to people who have recently tested positive for COVID-19.

You will need to arrange and pay for your own onward travel for when you leave.

If you are arranging flights from Adelaide on the day your quarantine period ends, speak to the hotel reception if you would like assistance to book your travel to Adelaide Airport.

Can my child travel into South Australia from overseas unaccompanied?

Yes. Children under the age of 18 are able to travel unaccompanied from overseas to South Australia, however, they must quarantine with a carer for the full 14-day period.

Carers must apply to quarantine with the unaccompanied minor using the essential traveller health exemption application. Applications can be made online at www.covid-19.sa.gov.au.

Are there costs for hotel quarantine?

From Saturday 18 July 2020 ACST, international arrivals are required to pay for their hotel quarantine accommodation.

The fee includes meals and hotel room costs and contributes to the essential services provided by the SA Government including SA Police, SA Health health care team, telehealth medical care, mental health and wellbeing support, transport, logistics and security.

Travellers who purchased flights before 12.00pm 13 July 2020 ACST will be excluded from quarantine fees. Evidence needs to be supplied and these travellers are still required to quarantine in government-arranged accommodation.

Travellers who stay in a medi-hotel on more than one occasion may incur a higher quarantine fee.

What are the costs for hotel quarantine?

For travellers in a room not shared with other travellers, the cost will be \$3000.

For travellers in rooms shared with others, the cost will be \$3000, plus:

- \$1000 for each additional adult
- \$500 for each additional child
- No additional cost for children under 3.

Please note: The total cost invoiced will be divided by the total number of adult travellers.

For example: a family of 2 adults and 2 children over the age of 3 in shared accommodation pays \$5000. In this example, the invoice will reflect a cost of \$2000 per adult.

For example: a family of 3 adults and 1 child over the age of 3 in shared accommodation pays \$5,500. In this example, the invoice will reflect a cost of \$1666 per adult.

Travellers who entered quarantine as part of a group but elect to quarantine in a single room will be charged \$3000. Requested room changes may incur additional cost.

Is the charge a flat rate?

The quarantine fee is fixed and includes meals and hotel room costs. You will not be charged more if you are required to stay in quarantine longer.

If you purchase additional food or drinks from the hotel or arrange deliveries with hotel reception, these will be at your own cost in addition to the quarantine fee.

If you stay less than 14 days for any reason, you will be charged a portion of the fee depending on the length of your stay.

Do all international arrivals have to pay?

Fees apply to all international passengers including Australian citizens and Australian permanent residents in hotel quarantine.

Are all Australian states and territories charging for quarantine?

All states and territories currently accepting international travellers have introduced quarantine fees.

How do I pay?

Invoices will be posted or emailed to travellers following medi-hotel check out. If a residential or postal address or email is not available, invoices will be delivered to the traveller's medi-hotel room prior to departure.

If travellers enter quarantine as part of a group, the eldest traveller in the group will receive the invoice from SA Health, with others in the group identified on the invoice. Invoices can be split at request.

Payment and support details are noted on the invoice. Payment must be made in Australian dollars.

A range of payment options are available:

- Telephone payment with Visa or Mastercard
- BPAY (the BPAY name will display as "Oracle Operating" or "DHW")
- Cheque

What payment plans are available?

You will have 30 days to pay the invoice. In that time you can arrange a payment plan of three to six months, with weekly, fortnightly or monthly payments.

What if I can't afford to pay?

If a payment plan is still not affordable, you may apply for a financial hardship agreement. Once the quarantine fee invoice has been received from the South Australian government, travellers can apply for a financial hardship agreement.

You will need to provide evidence that it would cause financial hardship to repay the debt in full. Appropriate documentation includes, but is not limited to, copies of you most recent:

- Payslips
- Statement of any Commonwealth/Centrelink benefits received
- Statements showing any other income received
- Bank account statements
- Your latest rental agreement showing rent paid or mortgage repayment schedule letter
- Schedule of loan repayment for loans held with any other institution
- A copy of your recent utility bills, including gas, electricity, telephone and water
- Council rates/school fees and any other regular expenses

You can get help from a financial counsellor by contacting the National Debt Helpline on 1800 007 007. Financial counsellors provide free, independent and confidential advice to help you manage your debts or negotiate with creditors.

More information about applying for a payment plan or a financial hardship agreement is available online at www.covid-19.sa.gov.au.

How can I apply for a financial hardship agreement?

Once the quarantine fee invoice is issued you have 30 days to apply for a financial hardship agreement. Applications can be made online at www.covid-19.sa.gov.au.

It will take approximately three weeks to process your application and to notify you of the outcome.

Will my travel insurance cover the quarantine fee?

Please contact your travel insurance company directly for more information.

Does GST apply to the quarantine fees?

GST does not apply to a fee or charge associated with the mandatory quarantine regime after entering SA.

I travelled to SA for work, can my employer be invoiced for my quarantine fee?

The quarantine fee invoice will be issued to the individual who was in quarantine. It cannot be re-issued in your employer's name. It is the responsibility of the individual and employer to determine who will pay the invoice.

Do I have to pay for the hotel food if I provide my own?

Yes, daily meals are included in the quarantine fee and there is no option to exclude them. All medi-hotels cater for a wide variety of dietary requirements. Please tell hotel staff if you have dietary requirements when you arrive.

Taking care of your health and wellbeing in quarantine

Being in quarantine may be stressful, frustrating and boring.

There are some things that you can do to look after yourself during this time:

- Keep up your daily routine as much as possible, such as keeping your regular sleeping hours, eating healthy meals, and drinking enough water.
- Stay connected with family and friends via telephone or online (e.g. Skype, Facetime).
- Consider finding an exercise or yoga video online (e.g. YouTube).
- Avoid over-indulging in alcohol or comfort foods.
- Arrange to work from quarantine if this option is available to you.
- Ask your child's school to supply assignments or homework by e-mail.
- Do things that help you relax and use isolation as an opportunity to do activities you don't usually have time for.
- Be aware of overexposure to news sources and social media. Keeping informed can be helpful, but repeated bulletins about COVID-19 may be overwhelming.
- Be aware that you may experience changes in your mood or feelings, including periods of sadness, anxiety, frustration or uncertainty. If these feelings become severe or are not going away, please seek help. Internet or phone based supports are available.
- Visit www.openyourworld.sa.gov.au/staying-home for information and resources to look after your wellbeing at home.

Mental health support

Visit the SA Health website for more information, contact one of the services below for support, or talk to the GPAT medical team (doctor).

For urgent mental health assistance, contact the Mental Health Triage Service (24/7) on 13 14 65.

In an emergency, contact the medi-hotel concierge who will call Triple Zero (000).

South Australia COVID-19 telephone and online supports:

- SA COVID-19 Mental Health Support Line (8am - 8pm, 7 days) 1800 632 753
Online chat: www.SACOVIDMentalHealth.org.au
- Lived Experience Telephone Support Service (5pm - 11:30pm, 7 days) 1800 013 755
(a peer support line delivered by people with lived experience of mental health)
Online chat: www.letss.org.au
- ASKPEACE (9am - 5pm, Monday - Friday) 08 8245 8110
(a mental health support line for people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities)
www.rasa.org.au/services/all-services/askpeace
- Thirrili (9am - 5pm, Monday - Friday) 1800 841 313
(a mental health support line for people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities) www.thirrili.com.au
- Support for Carers – Uniting Care Wesley Bowden 08 8245 7196
(9am - 5pm, Monday - Friday) customer@ucwb.org.au

Translated resources

Information on COVID-19 testing, how to self-isolate and other COVID-19 information has been translated into a number of languages. These resources include videos, audio recordings, fact sheets and posters.

- You can find these resources at www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/COVIDtranslated
- Multicultural Youth SA is also available to provide guest support: www.mysa.com.au/contact

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