

COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions: 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 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 12 of your quarantine period.

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.

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 SA 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 nursing/midwifery 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 med-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.

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 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.

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. 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 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, fatigue or muscle pain.

During your hotel quarantine period, the medi-hotel nursing/midwifery 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 nursing/midwifery team.

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

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 nursing/midwifery 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 nursing/midwifery team to follow up on your behalf.

If you have previously been COVID-19 positive please inform the nursing/midwifery 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 12 of your quarantine period.

What happens on day 14 of the quarantine period?

At the end of your quarantine period, and you have tested negative in your day 12 test, you will be able to check out from the medi-hotel on day 15, unless otherwise advised.

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

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.

Are there costs for hotel quarantine?

From Saturday 18 July 2020 ACST, international arrivals are required to pay the cost recovery fee 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 nurses/midwives, 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.

What are the costs for hotel quarantine?

Travellers are charged \$3000 for one adult. Additional occupants can be added as follows:

- Additional adults: \$1000 each
- Each additional child: \$500 each
- Children under 3: no additional cost.

For example: a family of 2 adults and 2 children over the age of 3 pays \$5000.

For example: a family of 2 adults and 4 children over the age of 3 pays \$6000.

At the end of quarantine, travellers will receive an invoice for the cost recovery, to be paid within 30 days.

Will I be charged more if I must stay longer in quarantine?

The quarantine fees are a fixed price. You will not be charged more if you are required to stay in quarantine longer.

Do all international arrivals have to pay?

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

The fee will not apply to travellers who purchased their flights before 12.00pm 13 July 2020 ACST. Evidence will need to be supplied. These travellers will still be required to quarantine in government-arranged accommodation.

Are all Australian states and territories charging for quarantine?

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

How do I make a payment?

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
- 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 can apply to have all or part of the quarantine fee waived. Once the quarantine fee invoice is issued you have 30 days to have the amount waived.

You must be an Australian citizen or Permanent resident to apply for this waiver.

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 fee waiver is on the invoice.

How to apply to have the quarantine fee waived

Once the quarantine fee invoice is issued you have 30 days to apply to have the quarantine fee waived. 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 medium 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.

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

In an emergency, always 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

For more information

SA COVID-19 Information Line 1800 253 787
Department for Health and Wellbeing
SA Health
Government of South Australia
www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/COVID2019



www.ausgoal.gov.au/creative-commons

