



GOVERNMENT OF BERMUDA

COVID-19 update Minister Wilson - 18th June

Thursday, June 18th, 2020



Today there were 123 test results received by the Ministry of Health; and none were positive for COVID-19.

Bermuda continues to have 144 total confirmed positive cases. Their status is as follows:

- there are 7 active cases, of which
- all are under active public health monitoring, and
- none are hospitalized or in critical care.
- A total of 128 have recovered, and
- the total deceased remains 9.

The average age of all of our confirmed positive cases is 61 and the age range of all of our positive cases is from 18 to 101 years.

Overall, 56% of all cases are Black, 41% are white and 3% are other or unknown.

The source of all local cases is as follows:

- 41 are Imported
- 85 are Local transmission, with known contact
- 12 are Local transmission with an unknown contact, and
- 6 are under investigation

Bermuda's country status remains "Local Transmission – Cluster of Cases". The seven-day average of our real time reproduction number is below 1.

Our reopening scorecard is updated today, and we are extremely pleased that HealthIQ now has over 7,700 users, which is excellent progress. Please register so we can get to 10,000 and get a green light on this indicator. If you have already signed up, please encourage your friends and contacts to join too.

On the down side, I have to highlight that mask wearing and physical distancing have deteriorated. The Bermuda Health Council is working with HealthIQ to monitor reports and we can see that while overall mask wearing has increased, over the past week it has definitely deteriorated. We need to get better and more consistent about this.

With respect to physical distancing, the reports show that our collective behaviour is deteriorating, and we are not even hitting 75% compliance, which is too low to get us to a green light on this indicator.

Physical distancing is extremely important. If you are not wearing a mask stay 6 feet apart. If you have to be closer than 6 feet wear a mask and try to stay at least 3 feet apart.

We can also see from HealthIQ that a higher number of persons are reporting potential symptoms. I'm very encouraged that people are availing themselves of our testing capability through the pop-ups, the drive-through and the mobile testing. This gives us assurance that we don't have persons unknowingly spreading COVID in the community.

As we enter the new phases of re-opening during the COVID-19 pandemic, many of our private healthcare colleagues (GPs, dentists, hygienists, dental assistants and nurses) will no longer be available to volunteer alongside the Department of Health as they have been over the past few months.

Without them volunteering their time and services, the Department of Health would not have been able to cover the ground that we did, and in such a short space of time. For this, we are eternally grateful. Therefore I would like to acknowledge them today for their willingness to serve our community without compensation. This was a huge task and their contribution was very much appreciated.

I'd like to call out by name the following individuals (alphabetically):

- Dr. Chris Allington
- Dr. Kyjuan Brown
- Dr. Gordon Campbell
- Dr. Helen Christopher
- Dr. Richard Fulton

- Dr. David Galloway
- Dr. Stanley James
- Dr. Shaina Kelly
- Ms Catherine Kempe
- Dr. Stephen Kenny
- Dr. Ben Lau
- Dr. Christine McFeely
- Dr. Laura Murphy
- Dr. Amne Osseyran
- Dr. Hamish Reid
- Dr. Constance Richards
- Dr. Fiona Ross
- Dr. Joanna Sherratt-Wyer
- Dr. Danielle Simons
- Dr. Nicola Terceira
- Dr. Wilbert Warner
- and Dr. Len Wedlich

I would like us all to raise a banner of thanks to these generous and caring professionals. Thank you, truly, for all that you have done.

I now want to draw your attention to some of our Phase 3 Guidance and Directions which have been recently created and posted to the Government website: coronavirus.gov.bm.

In particular, I want to go over some of the points from the *Directions for Gyms, Exercise Facilities, Health Clubs and Dance Studios*; namely the information for patrons.

As a patron, specific instructions should be given to you before you even enter the facility so you're aware of its expectations and requirements.

It's highly likely that you will have to pre-book visits and that these are time-limited. You may be asked to sign a declaration saying that you have read and understood their obligations.

You should be screened for illness prior to entry. This may include temperature checks and questions about your health.

It should be noted that even with physical distancing, during exercise droplets containing COVID-19 may travel longer distances and a gym workout is a high risk activity. Therefore all patrons must ensure they maintain 6 feet (2 metres) distance between themselves.

Masks should not be worn during gym activities of high exertion. However, for lower intensity activities, patrons may wear a mask as long as it can be tolerated. If a patron is struggling to breathe, feeling faint or dizzy or experiencing chest pain or other discomfort they should remove the mask.

As a reminder children younger than 2-years-old must not wear masks at all.

Gym patrons must always wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (or use hand sanitizer) on entering the building, at regular intervals and after using equipment.

If it is necessary to cough or sneeze, you should do this into a clean tissue which is safely discarded, or into your elbow.

Please note that personal towels should not be used to wipe equipment – single-use paper towels or wipes should be provided to you by the gym, which can then be properly disposed.

There will be limitations on Group Classes. Group exercise classes should be conducted outdoors, limited, or canceled to the greatest extent possible.

In the event group exercise classes are held, such classes may only take place if they can be completed in accordance with the following:

- More than 6 feet (2 metres) of distance maintained between participants at all times;
- no shared equipment during the class, unless sanitized between users;
- and sufficiently adjusted class schedules to allow for deep cleaning between classes.

Martial arts and other contact activities should be completed without any person-to-person contact.

Limitations on group sizes should be adhered to (the current maximum is 20 persons). Please do not arrive more than 10 minutes prior to class and no close-contact socializing with your fellow gym-goers. Keep your masks on and 6 feet apart.

Also, sweat-absorbing equipment such as yoga or exercise-mats should not be communal. Customers should bring their own if required for their exercise.

Water fountains (unless hands-free bottle filling) are not allowed; therefore patrons should bring pre-filled drinks/water bottles.

Gyms should consider closing off showers, locker rooms, and lockers (although access to restrooms should be provided).

Clients should come to the facility in their gym or dance clothes and shower at home afterwards. If showers are used, they should be disinfected after each use. If towels are provided, they should be stored in covered sanitized containers, clearly marked: “clean and used” and hot temperatures should be used when laundering these items.

And, finally, gym staff should be encouraged to take the *Infection Prevention and Control Training* located on the Government website.

I would like to commend those businesses that have had their employees complete the Infection Prevention and Control Training. More than 3,500 individuals have completed the training from a wide cross-section of businesses.

Infection Prevention and Control Training is incredibly important. No matter where you work or which industry you work in, the risk of spreading infections in the workplace is ever-present. It's important that everyone knows the risks, how to stay safe, and keep themselves and everyone around them healthy.

This online training covers the fundamentals of infection prevention and control for COVID-19 and similar type diseases. It takes approximately 50 minutes and is for all employees and management.

I would like to encourage those who have not yet done the training to do so by going to coronavirus.gov.bm and look under the 'Workplace Guidance' link.

As closing, I want to remind the public of the COVID-19 pop-up testing taking place around the island this weekend:

- Friday - Anglican Cathedral - 9am to 1pm, 3pm - 7pm & Shelly Bay MarketPlace 3pm - 7pm
- Saturday- Somerset MarketPlace 3pm to 7pm
- Sunday - Shelly Bay MarketPlace- 12pm - 5pm

In order to ensure that wait times at pop-up testing venues are as minimal as possible, I would encourage residents wishing to get tested, to please ideally book an appointment. This makes it a faster, more convenient experience for you.

You can book online via the government website coronavirus.gov.bm or call the COVID-19 hotline 444-2498 between 9am and 9pm and one of our helpful telephone operators will be happy to make a reservation for you. A full schedule of testing days and times has been posted to the Government website.

For more information about pop-up testing, you can call 444-2498.

Thank You, Bermuda, and, please, wear your mask and keep six feet apart if you are not wearing one.

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Contact Information

Ministry of [Health](#)

Department of [Health Headquarters](#)

Physical Address

Continental Building
25 Church Street
Hamilton HM 12
Bermuda

(441) 278-4900

[Send us an email](#)

Mailing Address

P.O. Box HM 380
Hamilton HM BX
Bermuda

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