

# COVID-19: NSW and QLD border closure – what do I need to know?

FACTSHEET

*This factsheet is part of a series from Legal Aid NSW that aims to help answer your questions about COVID-19 and everyday law.*

You may be worried or confused about how COVID-19 will affect you and your everyday life. Sometimes a crisis can make legal problems worse or new problems might develop. Legal Aid NSW understands that there will be a lot of questions about money worries, fines, police, housing, Centrelink, employment, guardianship and mental health. This series of factsheets will give you helpful information and contacts to assist you to manage all the changes that are happening in our community.

## Who is this factsheet for?

This factsheet is for people who live in New South Wales who want to know their legal rights and responsibilities under the Queensland border closure.

If you live in Queensland or have a question about Queensland law, go to the [Legal Aid Queensland website](#) for more information.

## What are the changes?

The Queensland Government has made orders to slow the spread of COVID-19. They have been issued under the *Public Health Act* and will apply until the end of the declared public health emergency unless revoked or replaced.

Under the orders, the Queensland Government has imposed restrictions on people who have been in a COVID-19 hotspot within 14 days of trying to enter Queensland.

All parts of New South Wales outside of the Border Zone created by Queensland (see below for more information) are currently considered COVID-19 hotspots. This means that you will not be able to travel from New South Wales into Queensland unless you live in a Border Zone postcode or fall into an exemption category.

The orders will be enforced by Queensland Police at all border crossings by road, rail, air, foot or water.

If you have been in a COVID-19 hotspot within the past 14 days you will be turned away at the border, unless you have an exemption.

## Can anyone travel from New South Wales to Queensland?

Entry into Queensland is temporarily restricted under the [Border Restrictions Direction](#) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

You will only be permitted to enter Queensland in accordance with the Border Restrictions Direction. You may need to provide additional documentation and will need a completed [Queensland Border Declaration Pass](#).

A pass does not guarantee entry into Queensland. Border restrictions are constantly being reviewed so you will need to look at the current restrictions before planning to enter Queensland.

# COVID-19: NSW and QLD border closure – what do I need to know?

FACTSHEET

If you are seeking entry into Queensland and in the 14 days prior have been in a place which **at the time of entry to Queensland** is a COVID-19 hotspot, you will not be able to enter unless you have an exemption.

Changes to restrictions may mean that you are no longer eligible to enter Queensland or may be required to go into quarantine in [government arranged accommodation](#) at your own expense.

Under the current Border Restrictions Direction, you must not enter Queensland if you have been in New South Wales in the past 14 days unless you are:

- a Queensland resident (this includes if you are moving to Queensland as a new resident or are a border zone resident)
- attending court or complying with an order to attend a court or tribunal
- entering to comply with a shared parenting obligation
- entering to perform an essential activity (Schedule 1)
- in transit through a COVID-19 hotspot and did not leave the airport
- a student entering for education
- entering to obtain essential health care (see below for more information)

You may also need to comply with quarantine requirements.

## What is considered essential health care?

You can enter Queensland by road, rail or air from a hotspot for essential health care without an exemption when the health care cannot reasonably be obtained in New South Wales, or routine clinical care where there is a continuity of service with an established clinical relationship.

This includes:

- a Queensland Children's Hospital appointment confirmed in writing by the hospital; or
- an appointment at a Queensland Hospital and Health Service or associated outreach location, confirmed in writing by the service; or
- an appointment at a Queensland private health facility or ancillary clinic or service, confirmed in writing by the service; or
- an appointment at an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Health Service confirmed in writing by the service; or
- an appointment with a prescribed health practitioner at another premises, confirmed in writing by the practitioner or provider on a form approved by the Chief Health Officer for use as a confirmation of an essential health care appointment.

An appointment with a prescribed health practitioner may include services provided by a registered NDIS provider under an agreed NDIS Plan. An appointment at an ancillary clinic or service may include an appointment at a rehabilitation service.

You should speak with your health care provider to confirm if your health care needs meet the essential criteria.

Any person entering Queensland from a COVID-19 hotspot to receive essential health care will need to quarantine. The type and length of quarantine will depend on whether you receive treatment as an inpatient or outpatient.

# COVID-19: NSW and QLD border closure – what do I need to know?

FACTSHEET

More information about entering Queensland for essential health care can be found [on the Queensland Government website page – Entering Queensland for essential health care](#).

## Will I need to quarantine?

If you are eligible for an exemption to enter Queensland from a NSW COVID-19 hot-spot, you will be required to complete 14 days of mandatory quarantine in government arranged accommodation at your own expense unless exceptional circumstances apply.

You can find out more about the costs of quarantine on the [Queensland Government website page – Quarantine in government arranged accommodation](#).

There are some exemptions to quarantine in exceptional circumstances (like visiting a dying relative or attending a funeral) and for essential workers. See the [Queensland Government website page](#) for more information about the process you need to follow to make an application.

## What about people who live in border communities (border zone residents)?

A border zone resident is someone who lives in a NSW postcode found in [Schedule 3](#) of the Border Restrictions Direction or seen on this [map](#).

From 1 October 2020, a border zone resident will be permitted to enter and remain in Queensland for any reason.

You will not be allowed to enter Queensland if you have travelled to a COVID-19 hotspot outside of the border zone in the 14 days prior to entering, unless you meet the exemptions listed above.

## What happens if I break this public health order?

If you breach any of the requirements under the Border Restrictions Direction, you may receive an infringement notice fine from the Queensland Police for \$4,004.

Queensland Police can also issue infringement notice fines for other breaches of the Queensland public health orders for \$1,335.

The maximum penalty is \$13,345 or 6 months imprisonment.

## Where can I find more information?

For the most up to date information on what you can and cannot do under Queensland border restrictions go to the [Queensland government border restrictions website](#).

You can find a factsheet about [Policing in Queensland during the COVID-19 pandemic](#) on the Caxton Legal Centre website.

You can find a full list of Queensland coronavirus resources on the [CLC Queensland website](#).

## How can I get help?

If you receive a **Queensland fine contact the State Penalties Enforcement Registry (SPER) on 1300 365 635** to discuss payment options.

If you need **legal help with a Queensland fine contact Legal Aid Queensland on 1300 65 11 88** (Monday to Friday between 10am and 4pm).

If you need **legal help with NSW fines contact LawAccess NSW on 1300 888 529** (Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm).

If you need an interpreter, call the Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450 and then to call the service you need to speak to. If you find it hard to hear or speak, call the National Relay Service on 133 677 and ask for the service you need to speak to or visit [www.relayservice.gov.au](http://www.relayservice.gov.au).

There are a series of [factsheets about COVID-19 and the law](#) available on the Legal Aid NSW website to assist you to manage all the changes that are happening in our community.

This factsheet is intended as a general guide to the law. Do not rely on this information as legal advice. We recommend you talk to a lawyer about your situation. This information is correct at the time of writing, however, it may change.