

Date: 11 September 2020

England - CCA approves the introduction of regional variations

At its meeting on Thursday 10 September 2020, the Civil Contingencies Authority (CCA) agreed to vary the self-isolation requirements for A and B Countries to include regions for England with effect from 00.01 on Tuesday 15 September 2020.

Deputy Gavin St Pier, Chair of the Civil Contingencies Authority said:

‘The CCA took this decision yesterday after considerable discussion based on the evidence provided by the Director of Public Health Services following an analysis of prevalence data across different regions in England.

CCA members were cognisant of the prevalence data regarding incidence of COVID-19 in England as a whole rising rapidly to the point where a decision would have to be made to classify England as a Group A country (i.e. travellers would have to self-isolate for 14 days on arrival).

Classifying the whole of England as Group A in the knowledge that there is currently considerable variation across some regions in prevalence rates felt disproportionate, when we had satisfied ourselves that regional classifications could be introduced swiftly to avoid a blanket Group A designation for England at this time.’

Whilst these measures will not necessarily be able to provide confidence for travel plans in what is a rapidly changing landscape, the introduction of 9 regional classifications for England will be kept under regular review daily to ensure the Bailiwick continues to balance the risks of COVID-19 with ensuring that restrictive methods of travel are kept to a minimum.

Dr Nicola Brink, Director of Public Health said:

‘Public Health Services monitor the prevalence data on a daily basis. It is likely that regions in England will move between Group A and Group B classifications over the next few weeks.

It is important, therefore, that anyone who is considering travelling to the Bailiwick understands that circumstances can change at very short notice and they may need to self-isolate for longer than they might have originally anticipated or, in the event

that they test positive for COVID-19 or are identified as a close contact of a positive case, that they may need to stay in mandatory quarantine in the Bailiwick for longer than their planned period of travel.’

The CCA also determined that travellers needed clear guidance regarding travel that included more than one country or region, or transiting through Group A regions in England and how this would impact on their requirements to self-isolate.

Transit through a Group A country or region (or country from the broader group B list) will not count as spending time in that country or region (and therefore will not require travellers to self-isolate for 14 days) subject to the following:

- Direct Transit in a private vehicle (which includes a taxi) where:
 - The private vehicle does not stop at all in the Group A country or region; or
 - The private vehicle only stops in the Group A country or region and
 - No new people get into the vehicle
 - No one gets out, comes within 2 metres of any other person (other than those they are travelling with) and gets back in again

These restrictions should allow travellers to transit through Group A countries or regions and fill up with petrol (where you pay at the petrol pump rather than in a shop or kiosk) or use public conveniences etc (subject to the 2 metre social distancing requirement).

The CCA noted that the actions of third parties also using public transport could influence the self-isolation outcomes for travellers. It is acknowledged that the definition of direct transit for those using public transport was likely to render many options unsuitable as the majority could potentially stop in a Group A country or region and would require travellers to self-isolate for 14 days. This had to be balanced with the aim of trying to achieve clear messaging for inbound travellers in order that their travel history could be recorded, tracked and enforced by those responsible for carrying out checks and enforcement.

- Direct transit on public transport – coach, train or bus – where:
 - The public transport that does not stop AT ALL in the category A country or region.

Travellers will be required to self-declare the countries or regions they have travelled to (or through) for the 7 days prior to their travel. Information has been provided online to help passengers determine regions using a detailed map of UK towns.

Where travellers arrive in the Bailiwick and their travel history is unclear due the complexity of their journey they will not be delayed unduly at the border. Staff of the Guernsey Border

Agency will, in these circumstances, issue a mandatory 14 day self-isolation notice to those passengers to enable them to return home or travel to their accommodation whilst in the Bailiwick. Over the following day(s) border representatives will make contact with the travellers to review their exact travel history and then, if appropriate change that self-isolation requirement to 7 days when it is determined that the passenger has not travelled to a Group A country or region.

Deputy St Pier said:

‘It is possible there will be initial teething problems following the introduction of regional variations for England. We will be heavily reliant on travellers being honest with regard to their recent travel history although there will of course be penalties for false declarations. The situation will be monitored closely following the initial implementation and we ask for patience and understanding as passengers and staff adapt to the new requirements.

A frequently asked questions document is currently being compiled to support travellers who will need to consider these changes. This document will be released later today.’

Full details on the introduction of regional variations for travel can be found here <https://covid19.gov.gg/guidance/travel/countries>

Ends