



Important Updates from Cabinet

(Announced by the Hon Prime Minister, 01/11/2021)

The national Cabinet has decided that Solomon Islands cannot stay locked up from the rest of the world forever and must work toward the reopening Solomon Islands' borders.

90 percent vaccination coverage to reopen our borders

The national Cabinet has set the target vaccination coverage to re-open our borders at 90 percent of the total eligible population of 414,327 people which is 372,895 people.

This level of coverage would provide adequate level of protection including for those that had not been vaccinated such as children under 18 years of age.

The Cabinet has directed the Oversight Committee to develop the framework for the reopening of our borders. The Oversight Committee has established a 'Border Reopening Subcommittee' to undertake the analysis and recommend options to be considered by Cabinet.

The Subcommittee will submit its report to the Oversight Committee for presentation to the Cabinet for its deliberation and decision on a target date to reopen international borders.

Lifting of suspension in incoming international flights

The national Cabinet has lifted the suspension on incoming international flights as part of the measures to slowly reopen our borders.

The the lifting of suspensions means, the Oversight Committee can now schedule incoming flights to the country.

It does not mean that any person can travel from any country at any time they wish to enter Solomon Islands.

Only the people approved through the Oversight Committee's 'border reopening subcommittee' will be allowed to enter the country.

The oversight committee is currently compiling a schedule of flights through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs covering the period from November 2021 to January 2022. Once finalised it will be published so that approved travelers can have confirmed travel dates.

All foreign nationals holding letters issued from Immigration stating you can enter the country are advised that those letters mean you have fulfilled the requirements by immigration to enter the country. However, during the period of the State of Public Emergency only those approved

through the oversight Committee and its 'border reopening subcommittee' will be allowed to enter the country.

Full vaccination - a mandatory requirement to enter Solomon Islands

Any traveller to Solomon Islands that is 18 years and older must be fully vaccinated before they can enter the country. The final dose of the vaccination must be 4 weeks prior to the travel date. No one 18 years and older is allowed to enter the country if they are not vaccinated.

As children of older age groups become eligible for vaccination, this provision will also apply to them if they are travelling to Solomon Islands.

Changes in the regulations on 'Covid-19 risk profiles for countries' and associated pre-departure and post-arrival arrangements

The national Cabinet has approved the recommendation by the Oversight committee to group countries into three risk categories – COVID-19 free, moderate-risk and high-risk.

This recategorization of risk is another measure to prepare the country on its journey toward the full reopening of our borders. The key change is the reduction of post arrival quarantine period across all three risk categories and a reduction in pre-departure and post-arrival COVID-19 testing regimen based on scientific analysis and the fact that all returning adults must be fully vaccinated.

The requirements for each of the 3 new risk categories in the regulation are as follows:

A. For travellers from COVID-19 free countries

1. One Pre-departure test within 72 hours of arrival
2. 7 days quarantine post arrival
3. One test during quarantine on day 6 or 7 and discharge on day 7 if negative
4. If traveler transits through moderate risk country – 10 days quarantine and two tests
5. If traveler transits through high-risk country – 14 days quarantine and three tests

B. For travellers from moderate risk countries

1. One Pre-departure test within 72 hours of arrival in Solomon Islands
2. 10 days quarantine post arrival
3. Two tests during quarantine on day 2 and days 9-10 and discharge on day 10 if both tests are

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negative

4. If person transits through high-risk country – 14 days quarantine and three tests

### **C. For travellers from high-risk countries**

1. Two Pre-departure test between days 9-11 days before departure and within 72 hours of arrival
2. 14 days quarantine post arrival
3. 3 tests during quarantine on day 2, 7 and days 13-14 and discharge on day 14 if all 3 tests are negative

For each of the 3 categories, the IC may increase the pre-departure and post arrival requirements based on risk assessments.

## **Families travelling with Children under 18 years of age**

As children under 18 years of age cannot be vaccinated, the duration of quarantine for families traveling with children under 18 years old will generally be longer as follows:

1. Families with children travelling from COVID-19 free countries – 10 days quarantine and 2 tests
2. Families with children travelling from moderate risk countries – 14 days quarantine and 3 tests
3. Families with children travelling from high-risk countries – 21 days quarantine and 4 tests

## **Implementation of mandatory vaccination for public servants**

As of 1 November 2021, public servants who have chosen not to be vaccinated will no longer attend their workplaces.

Government will respect their decision if they wish to remain unvaccinated and they be put on half pay with no benefits from today till end of January 2022.

If they get vaccinated between today and end of January 2022, they will return to the workforce. However, if they remain unvaccinated by the end of January 2022, they will self-terminate their employment with the public service.

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SOLOMON ISLANDS CHAMBER  
OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

Suite 223, 1st Floor, Hyundai Mall, Central Honiara  
PO Box 650, Honiara, Solomon Islands

**Tel: (677) 39542**

**Web: [www.solomonchamber.com.sb](http://www.solomonchamber.com.sb)**