

MEMO

FROM: Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Immigration and Trade
TO: Heads of Missions
DATE: 29th April 2020
REF: 22/46

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA GOVERNMENT: FURTHER RELAXATION OF CURFEW RESTRICTIONS

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda, on the advice of health officials including PAHO, and with positive reports on its efforts to control the spread of COVID-19 infections, has considered several prudent measures to reopen the economy for the well-being of its citizens, as well as to meet its internal and external obligations. Although the 24-hour curfew remains in place under the current State of Emergency, the extended hours of 6 AM – 6 PM daily in which the public can engage in permitted activities also remains in place.

As of current date, Antigua and Barbuda has recorded twenty-four (24) confirmed cases of COVID-19 infection (including 5 patients re-tested) with three (3) COVID-related deaths. Fifteen (15) patients have so far recovered from the disease. Additionally, there are fifty-six (56) persons in quarantine facilities and twenty-five (25) in self-quarantine. Since the current total is

the same as last week, the results show **NO NEW CASES** of COVID-19 infection in Antigua and Barbuda.

Curfew restrictions already imposed for the past four (4) weeks under the State of Emergency will continue until May 15. However, Cabinet had agreed to expand the list of essential services allowed to operate within the stipulated 6am - 6pm time frame to include:

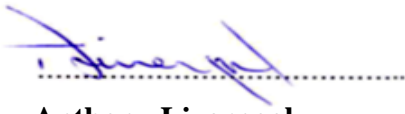
- Retail and variety stores, effective Thursday April 30, 2020 at 6 AM. The use of home deliveries and curb-side service is encouraged to reduce crowding. Social distancing protocols continue to be in force for both employees and customers.
- All other businesses and activities previously allowed under current lockdown provisions

Further, the Cabinet has approved, as of Tuesday 5th May 2020, the use of beaches by the public **only** for the purposes of exercise, therapy and relaxation. However, in order to reduce crowding, beach use is restricted to two (2) persons per household at any one time, and only on weekdays between 6 AM – 6 PM. Picnics, food and music are **NOT** allowed. Beaches are closed to the public on weekends and public holidays. Use of private leisure boats by owners is limited to fishing **only**, in which no more than three (3) persons may join the captain.

Local testing for COVID-19 will be available to the public by mid-May. The Infectious Disease Centre (IDC) has been commissioned and equipped to treat COVID-19 patients in need of critical care. Additionally, the NTTC Learning Centre on Nugent Avenue has been repurposed into a 75-bed mini-hospital to augment existing health infrastructure.

Existing health protocols of limiting gatherings to two (2) persons, funeral protocols, social distancing provisions of 1.5 meters between persons and wearing of face masks remain firmly in place.

Despite the positive reports rendered by the Ministry of Health, the COVID-19 situation remains quite fluid. In the event of increased COVID-19 spread, current provisions may be rescinded. Accordingly, citizens are urged to be vigilant in the observance of recommended health protocols and to be socially responsible as the nation seeks to cautiously expand its economic activity without negatively impacting community spread of the virus. **ENDS**



Anthony Liverpool
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Foreign Affairs