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# QUARANTINE FACILITY CHARGING POLICY

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St Helena Government

#### DOCUMENT CONTROL

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# 1. Background and Context

## 1.1 Background

This policy sets out the St Helena Government's intentions in relation to charging for use of the quarantine facilities during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

One of St Helena Government's responses to the threat of the new coronavirus pandemic, which has had a devastating affect across the world, has been to adopt regulations <sup>1</sup>that require any persons arriving to St Helena whether by air or sea to quarantine for 14 days on arrival. This policy taken by the Government has resulted in the establishment of a dedicated government run quarantine facility at Bradley's Complex in Bottom Woods with facilities to cater for up to 35 people in quarantine. The facility which has been redeveloped from the ex-Basil Read low cost accommodation has had significant investment in order to bring it up to an acceptable standard that would provide for safe, secure and comfortable living arrangements for those having to quarantine by law.

The facility is supplemented by other satellite facilities across the Island where the Bradley's Complex is deemed not suitable by a proper officer.

The Bradley's Quarantine Facility provides 24 hour care for those required to quarantine and this includes the provision and delivery of 3 main meals, cleaning, laundry services and 24 hour concierge. In order to effectively operate the quarantine facility other indirect costs and services are also required and these include 24 hour security for the site or sites where applicable, facility management and management and administration. The complex also provides for Hospital and medical facilities should medical treatment be required.

In order to provide a reasonable service the operations of the quarantine facility therefore comes at significant cost to public funds which are currently not recovered in any way. Concerns have been raised about the longer term affordability of this going forward and the financial risk that this poses to the public funds.

## 1.2 Considerations

In the development of the policy a number of issues were considered and the measures outlined in this policy sets out government's response to those issues. Where possible the risks identified have been mitigated through the measures put in place.

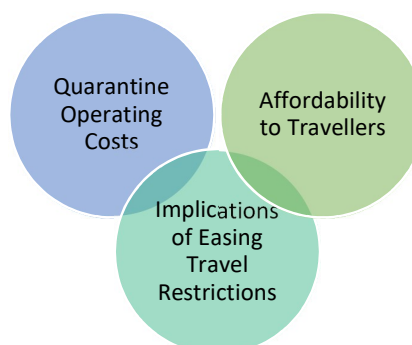


Figure 1 Key Considerations

<sup>1</sup> Public Health (Prevention of formidable diseases)(coronavirus) Regulations, 2020

- ***Operating Costs***

There are significant costs associated with operating the quarantine facility at Bradley's Complex. These costs are at present met in full from public funds but this is not sustainable or affordable for public finances over the longer time. This is further exacerbated by the fact that at this stage it is uncertain when the current government policy on quarantine will be eased which means that the uncertainty creates a financial risk for the government.

Currently it costs approximately £900 per person over the 14 day mandatory quarantine period to operate the quarantine facility at Bradley's Complex. This includes all hospitality services including catering and laundry and covers other operating costs like PPE, security, management and transport. This cost does not account for the any contribution toward the initial investment in the facility or minor purchases like furniture replacement.

- ***Implications of Easing Travel Restrictions***

Although at this present time regular commercial flights have been curtailed, it is recognised that in the future as travel restrictions begin to ease that the demand for travel to the Island will increase. It is likely that non-essential travel will increase as travel restrictions ease and this increases the financial risk to the government if SHG does not charge for quarantine facilities.

- ***Affordability to Travellers***

It is recognised that there are different categories of travellers. These include returning patients from overseas medical treatment and their carers, returning residents from overseas travel, SHG and private sector personnel arriving for employment, business visitors, those coming to visit family and friends and tourists. Some will be for essential travel but a good proportion will be for non-essential travel. Though for essential travel the cost of providing quarantine might be considered acceptable for the government to cover, for non-essential travel this position may be different.

It is deemed that not all travellers will be able to afford full cost recovery and it is also recognised that the cost associated with living at home will be lower than the cost of providing the hospitality service in the quarantine facility.

### 1.3 Rationale for intervention

It is the intention of the government to charge for the use of the quarantine facilities at Bradley's Complex or a satellite site, this is to ensure that at least some contribution can be made by travellers recover costs and to mitigate the impact on the public finances of St Helena.

## 2. Aims

The overall aims of this policy are as follows:

- i. To ensure that SHG is able to recover a proportion of the costs of operating the quarantine facility;
- ii. To ensure that there is a fair and consistent approach to charging for quarantine facilities;

### 3. Fees to be charged

#### 3.1 Quarantine Fees Chargeable

The following fees shall be charged under this policy for quarantine:

- a) Every person aged 17 or older required by the Public Health (Prevention of formidable diseases)(Coronavirus) Regulations 2020 to enter quarantine at SHG's Quarantine Facility at Bradley's Complex or a satellite site will be charged £30.00 per day (or in the case of persons under the age of 17, £15.00 per day) for every day they are required to quarantine, if they meet one of the following criteria:
  - I. Has St Helenian status and is ordinarily resident on St Helena; provided that when assessing the ordinary residence status under this policy, the relevant body will need to consider whether they are: living lawfully on the Island of St Helena voluntarily and for settled purposes as part of the regular order of their life for the time being. The concept of 'settled purpose' has been developed by the courts: There must be an identifiable purpose for their residence here, there can be one purpose or several, and it may be for a limited period. The purpose of living in St Helena must have a sufficient degree of continuity to be properly described as 'settled'. Ordinary residence can be of long or short duration. A person can be ordinarily resident in more than one country at once.
  - II. Has St Helenian status and can provide proof of contract of employment for at least one year on St Helena or is arriving with a bona fide intention to live on St Helena for at least one year from the date of arrival providing evidence of this intention;
  - III. Arrives in St Helena to fulfil a contract of employment of at least one year and can provide proof of contract of employment; or
  - IV. Has St Helenian status and is ordinarily resident on Ascension Island or the Falkland Islands and is coming to take leave on St Helena.
- b) All other persons not eligible under 3(a)(I) above, required by the Public Health (Prevention of formidable diseases)(Coronavirus) Regulations 2020 to enter quarantine at SHG's Quarantine Facility at Bradley's Complex or a satellite site will be charged £60.00 per day for every day they are required to quarantine.

The application of these fees are subject to the exemptions outlined in section 4 below.

The total fees payable shall be charged at the end of a person's period of quarantine and shall become immediately payable to the government.

The fees stipulated above does not represent full cost recovery but is a contribution to the overall cost of providing quarantine facilities.

A person who is required to pay the fee set out under clause 3(b) above may apply for 50% reduction in the fee on compassionate grounds whereby the person is returning to St Helena to visit a terminally ill relative or following the death of relative. Such person is required to provide evidence to support their request.

### 3.2 Medical Fees & Charges Chargeable While in Quarantine

If a person requires medical treatment while in quarantine the published Health Fees & Charges will apply.

## 4. Exemptions

The following persons are exempted from paying the fees chargeable under section 3 above:

- a) A patient returning from overseas medical treatment arranged by St Helena Health Directorate;
- b) A person returning with a patient under 4(a) above and who was approved by the St Helena Government Health Directorate to be the official carer of the person referred for overseas medical treatment; and
- c) A dependent who for family reasons was required to accompany a carer under 4(b) above. A dependent person in this case refers to a child under the age of 17 years.