

ADVICE TO EMPLOYEES – COVID-19

**Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara
(APY) Lands, Yalata Lands and Maralinga
Tjarutja Lands**

**End of Term 2 / Holidays / Beginning of
Term 3 2021 arrangements**

Advice as at 22 June 2021



Government of South Australia

Department for Education

What is the current situation for staff returning to the Lands at the end of the school holidays?

- The APY Executive Board of Management requires individuals returning to the APY Lands to submit a health status declaration form for assessment 72 hours before commencing return travel. This form can be found at <https://apy.snapforms.com.au/form/covid-19----health-status-individual>
- The Yalata council does not require staff to complete an entry permit.
- Oak Valley staff who are returning to community are currently required to apply for an entry permit and are required to phone the medical clinic the day before entering the community.

What is happening in regard to COVID-19 vaccinations?

- Aboriginal adults have been identified as a priority group for COVID-19 vaccination due to the risks of serious, life-threatening illness. The vaccine is voluntary, but strongly encouraged for everyone in the community, including all staff, to protect themselves and the most vulnerable in our community.
- Advice on the vaccine and FAQs are available here.
<https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/conditions/infectious+diseases/covid-19/vaccine/covid-19+vaccinations>
You can also call the National Vaccine Helpline with any questions on 1800 020 080.
- The department continues to seek advice from SA Health and if necessary, any advice will be communicated via email to Lands staff over the holiday period.

What is happening in regard to Influenza vaccinations?

- It is important to note that the Influenza vaccination (fluvax), which previously required a 14 day buffer, now requires a 7 day buffer before and after the COVID vaccination.
- If the timing of your COVID vaccination allows for you to have an influenza vaccination while you are on holidays please keep the receipt as the department will refund the cost of the influenza vaccination.

What are the arrangements for week 10, Term 2?

- Term 2 will conclude on Wednesday of week 10 Term 2 (30 June).
- Thursday and Friday of week 10 remain as travel days for staff, as is usually the case.

What preparations need to be in place prior to schools closing for the school holidays?

If we experience community transmission of COVID-19, staff who leave the Lands at the end of Term 2 will need to prepare for the possibility of quarantine in Term 3 2021:

- The Assistant Director has consulted with Principals regarding the preparation of ongoing learning for weeks 1 and 2 Term 3 2021, in case of quarantine restrictions being in place and staff requiring to self-isolate prior to returning to their community. Materials will be distributed to parents/carers and students as required should a COVID outbreak require a school closure.

- If quarantine is in place, prior to term 3 2021, schools will need to communicate beginning of term 3 arrangements, including the learning support available while students learn at home during weeks 1 and 2, with families.
- Principals are also asked to take note of their staff travel plans including dates, holiday address, mode of travel, and expected arrival time back into community.
- To ensure staff are contactable and information is centrally stored, Ellie will maintain a spreadsheet which will include each individual's travel plans. Principals are asked to forward this information to Ellie at Ellie.Allevi@sa.gov.au.

What are the arrangements for school holidays?

As normal, employees have a choice about their individual arrangements for the school holidays.

- Many employees will leave the Lands to travel home for the school holidays, while others will choose to remain on the Lands for other reasons (for example, partners who work in other services which do not cease over the period).
- Employees who travel for the school holiday period are advised to pack as they normally would during these breaks. At this stage there is no indication that employees will not be able to return after the Term 2 holidays.
- In the event entry requirements for the Lands change, the department will support employees including securing access to their personal belongings.

What are the quarantine requirements on returning to the Lands?

When returning to the Lands staff will need to follow any quarantine requirements that are in place at the time. These requirements may be issued by SA Health, APY Executive Board of Management, Yalata Anangu Aboriginal Corporation or Maralinga Tjarutja Aboriginal Council.

What are the arrangements for staff if self-quarantining is required due to a COVID outbreak?

The department will provide a daily allowance for food and essential supplies which is currently \$37.00 for staff self-quarantining at home.

The department will pay for accommodation (up to \$158.00 per night metro and \$134.00 per night for regional) for staff self-quarantining in a hotel and will provide a daily allowance for food and essential supplies (\$86.65 per night).

As per previous arrangements, schools will pay for these costs and will be reimbursed through the RES.

Staff whose primary place of residence is in Victoria or NSW.

At the current time active cases of Covid-19 are present in these states and border restrictions exist between South Australia, Victoria and NSW. Staff whose primary place of residence is in Victoria or NSW will be provided with an accommodation and travel allowance which will allow them to remain in South Australia for the holiday period if they choose to do so.

For staff requiring accommodation the department will pay for accommodation (up to \$158.00 per night metro and \$134.00 per night for regional) and will provide a daily allowance for food and essential supplies (\$86.65 per night)

As per previous arrangements, schools will pay for these costs and will be reimbursed through the RES.

What arrangements are in place to support employee wellbeing?

Your wellbeing is vital. We will be providing wellbeing checks and encourage you to proactively access the Employee Assistance Program.

What will be the arrangements in the event of an outbreak of COVID-19 on the Lands?

In the event of a positive test for COVID-19 on the Lands when staff are in community, the 'education response plan' to a positive COVID-19 test will be enacted.

In the event of a positive test for COVID-19 on the Lands when staff are holidaying and are not on the Lands, the department will work with the Education Director to ensure staff are supported and kept informed. Any staff remaining on the Lands will be supported as needed.

Will employees be able to access medical attention on the Lands for the purposes of COVID-19?

The Education Director, Anangu Lands Partnership and Medical Director, Nganampa Health Council have established a process to support employees who may have contracted COVID-19. Health clinics in Yalata and Oak Valley also have similar processes in place.

The process is:

1. An employee with symptoms is to stay at home and phone the clinic.
2. The medical staff will discuss the symptoms over the phone, and if required arrange to attend the house to administer a COVID-19 test.
3. Clinical staff will be in contact daily to monitor the symptoms of the unwell employee.
4. If the employee tests positive for COVID-19, or their health deteriorates, appropriate treatment and evacuation options will be considered.

Nganampa Health, SA Health and the Royal Flying Doctor Service will continue to work together to service the Lands, using usual evacuation procedures if necessary.

Is the risk of contracting COVID-19 increased for employees working on the Lands?

There are currently no known cases of COVID-19 on the APY, Yalata or Maralinga Tjarutja Lands.

Due to the current restrictions, the risk of contracting COVID-19 is less on the Lands than for other parts of South Australia.

Returning to the Lands.

Staff are required to follow SA Health advice and any Lands Council directives in place at the time.

If you become unwell during the journey **please do not proceed with travel** and seek medical advice.

What are the arrangements for Term 3, 2021?

Learning programs will be implemented in line with the state-wide approach in place at the start of Term 3 2021.

- If restrictions are not in place staff will have Monday 19 and Tuesday 20 July as travel days. Students will return to school, and teaching will commence on Wednesday 21 July.
- If staff need to self-quarantine during week 1 and 2 of Term 2 (commencing Monday 19 July) and including the required 2 days for travel, Lands schools will re-open and staff will commence face to face teaching on Wednesday 4 August.
- Staff will be on duty during their period of self-quarantine and will support students and families remotely during this time from Monday 19 July 2021. This includes staff remaining on the Lands during the holidays.

What arrangements are in place to support employees who are in a vulnerable category?

The department's approach to supporting vulnerable employees applies to all Department for Education staff, including those working on the Lands.

- Employees should talk with their site leader about their individual circumstances to either arrange to work from home or access leave entitlements.
- Where employees feel another outcome is required as staying on the Lands poses a risk to their health, this will be managed on a case-by-case basis within existing department guidelines.
- The Education Director, Anangu Lands Partnership and People and Culture division will provide advice as required.

Will department employees be needed to keep the community functioning?

Schools and staff are crucial to the continued functioning of communities. In the case of a positive test on the Lands, SA Health and SAPOL may ask staff to provide logistical support.