



COVID-19 SITUATION UPDATE #14

18 July 2020

I. HIGHLIGHTS

Trinidad and Tobago

At the Ministry of Health Virtual Media Conference, held on Wednesday, 15 July 2020, the Minister of Health, Hon. Terrence Deyalsingh, announced that Trinidad & Tobago will be allowed equitable access to COVID-19 vaccinations when they become available.

On Saturday, 18 July 2020, at the Virtual Media Conference, the Minister of Health announced that the public health regulations are in the process of being amended and effective Monday 20 July 2020, bars will be allowed to open until 10:00pm. At the same time, he also addressed the breakdown of public gathering protocols that occurred on Nomination Day and asked Campaign Managers and Candidates of both Political Parties to ensure that it does not happen again. He went on to speak about the 3 nationals that tested positive for COVID-19 on the previous day and confirmed that they were imported cases from Grenada. The Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Roshan Parasram, in his clinical update indicated that there has been one additional positive case of COVID-19 from a recently repatriated group of nationals.

Dutch Territories

In **Aruba**, the number of cases increased to 113. The new cases are visitors who were tested upon arrival at the airport. These persons have been put in quarantine. Aruba requires persons traveling to complete an embarkation/disembarkation card, upload a PCR test result taken 72 hours before departure to Aruba and purchase visitor insurance. Residents of the United States and other countries with whom Aruba's borders are open will have the alternative option of taking a PCR test immediately upon arrival in Aruba, which is mandatory if a negative test was not uploaded within the required timeframe prior to arrival. The test is followed by a mandatory quarantine at the visitor's booked accommodation until test results are finalized. Mandatory quarantine means that the person must stay in their room until the test results are known and persons are to avoid contact with other guests and staff at the accommodation. The cost of this test is US\$75 per person and needs to be pre-paid as part of the online embarkation/disembarkation process. Those states that must upload prior to travel are *Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nevada, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Wisconsin, and Wyoming*.

SITUATION IN NUMBERS

(as of 18 July 2020)

Trinidad and Tobago

137 Confirmed Cases
8 Deaths
124 Discharges

Aruba

113 Confirmed Cases
3 Deaths
100 Discharges

Curaçao

28 Confirmed Cases
1 Death
24 Discharges

Sint Maarten

79 Confirmed Cases
15 Deaths
63 Discharges

Bonaire

5 Confirmed Cases
0 Death
2 Discharges

St. Eustatius

2 Confirmed Cases
0 Death
2 Discharges

Saba

3 Confirmed Cases
0 Death
3 Discharges

In **Curaçao** the COVID-19 cases have increased to 28 since the borders were opened. The first of the 3 cases was a US Soldier at the US Base in Curaçao. The are related to persons who entered Curaçao from the US via Aruba. Both are in quarantine. The borders continue to remain closed to the United States but open to the Netherlands.

In **Sint Maarten** of the 75 persons tested at the airport on their return to St. Maarten as part of the repatriation flight from Fort Lauderdale, Florida, one person tested positive for COVID-19 and one person tested inconclusive which is being repeated. This brings the total number of cases to 79. Sint Maarten's borders are still officially closed to US visitors.

In **Bonaire, Saba, Sint Eustatius** the number of cases in Bonaire has increased to 5. With Aruba opening their borders to the US, Bonaire issued a new emergency ordinance that decrees that anyone who was in a high risk country within the previous two weeks is barred from entering Bonaire.

Because of the new case of COVID-19 announced in St. Maarten on Wednesday, St. Eustatius has increased the level of COVID-19 risk in St. Maarten from low to medium. As a result, anyone arriving from St. Maarten will have to go into home-based quarantine for fourteen days. Business, tourist and family visits are only allowed from low-risk countries. Saba still has Sint Maarten listed as low risk.

3rd Tranche of COVID-19 support from Holland— Negotiations are ongoing.

II. SITUATION SUMMARY

Table 1. COVID-19 Status in Trinidad and Tobago, Aruba, Curaçao, Sint Marten, Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba, 18 July 2020

Country	# Confirmed Cases	# Deaths	# Tests Conducted	# Discharges	Transmission Type	Non-pharmacological Interventions			
						Travel Restrictions	Schools closed	Essential Services	Other
Trinidad and Tobago	137	8	6067	124	Sporadic Cases	Yes	Yes	No	Physical distance, the use of cloth masks in public spaces, hand hygiene, cough etiquette, no touching of face, restriction of gathering (25 persons) and restricted hours for bars.
Aruba	115	3	4977	100	Cluster of Cases	Yes	Yes	Lifted	Physical distance, the use of cloth masks in public spaces, hand hygiene, cough etiquette, no touching of face. Borders opened between Aruba, Bonaire Curaçao, Europe, the United States and Canada
Curaçao	25	1	Not available this week	23	Sporadic Cases	Yes	Yes	Lifted	Physical distance, the use of cloth masks in public spaces, hand hygiene, cough etiquette, no touching of face. Borders open to Holland, Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten
Sint Maarten	78	15	New total not available this week	63	Cluster of Cases	Yes	Yes	Lifted	Physical distance, the use of cloth masks in public spaces, hand hygiene, cough etiquette, no touching of face. Borders open to Aruba and Curaçao, Canada and Europe.
Bonaire	5	0	New total not available this week	2	Sporadic Cases				Social distancing and hygiene requirements have been maintained. Borders open to Aruba, Curaçao and some European countries.
St. Eustatius	2	0	Not available	2	Sporadic Cases	Yes	Yes	Lifted	Social distancing and hygiene requirements have been maintained. Borders open to BES islands.
Saba	3	0	New total not available this week	3	Sporadic Cases	Yes	Yes	Lifted	Borders open to BES islands, and Sint Maarten.

III. RESPONSE

A. Key Trinidad and Tobago/Repatriation Response to COVID-19, 18 July 2020

At the Media Conference held on Monday, 13 July 2020, the following were discussed:

- Prime Minister Dr. the Hon. Keith Rowley said that approximately 10,000 persons have requested exemptions to return to Trinidad and Tobago. He went on to state that as of 11 July 2020 the Ministry of National Security has granted approximately 4,515 exemptions since the borders were closed on 23 March 2020.
- Nationals have been repatriated from Guyana, Venezuela, Suriname, Barbados, Cruise ships, Cuba, St Maarten, UWI and other students from Jamaica and Barbados. There have also been smaller flights permitted with persons with medical issues.
- The Government has worked with the energy sector and oil and gas companies to permit entries of workers to keep the industry running uninterrupted. These workers have entered and left via private charter flights and the use of marine service vessels and rigs.
- Exemptions were granted to students in India, to persons in the UK, Europe and the Middle East. Plans are currently in place for repatriation of nationals from Grenada and Canada, using Caribbean Airlines.
- The border entries are being very carefully managed, and the numbers of exemptions being granted are based on the capacity of the public health care system to manage state quarantine and state supervised quarantine.
- The Government has a number of state quarantine facilities, including: UWI Debe Campus, Home of Football in Couva, Tacarigua Racquet Center, Balandra and NAPA. These are fully manned by the state using both Ministry of Health and Ministry of National Security.
- The Government also has state supervised quarantine facilities where returning nationals pay the costs for hotel accommodation under state supervised quarantine. This is being done at Chancellor Hotel and Cascadia Hotel, again, under the supervision of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of National Security. In an effort to expand the number of returning nationals, the State has added another hotel in Piarco as a state supervised quarantine facility.
- The Ministry of National Security in granting exemptions to the initial numbers of nationals in Canada, the UK, Europe and the Middle East has asked persons whether they would wish to pay for the cost of state supervised quarantine or whether they require state quarantine. Depending on the responses, the number of exemptions granted may marginally increase.
- Each application is being dealt with on a case by case basis.

B. Key PAHO/WHO Trinidad and Tobago, Aruba, Curaçao, Sint Maarten, Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba Response to COVID-19, 27 June 2020

- Handing over of PCR tubes and strips as well as a limited amount of pipette tips to the Ministry of Health, Trinidad & Tobago

IV. NEEDS

- COVID-19 Tests (Extraction and Amplification Kits as well as Enzymes)
- Nasopharyngeal swabs

V. GAPS/CHALLENGES

- Lack of continuous supply of RNA extraction kits which also remains a principal challenge at the regional level
- Nasopharyngeal swabs are difficult to obtain as there are overall production and shipping challenges
- Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten continue to negotiate with the Kingdom Council of Ministers

VI. REFERENCES

- Ministry of Health, Trinidad and Tobago: <http://www.health.gov.tt/>
- Aruba: <https://www.arubacovid19.org/>
- Sint Maarten: <https://vromi-sxm.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/285fa99a4fc442fcb4a71ea7297d1ec6>
- Saba: <http://www.sabagovernment.com/index.html>