



Rt Hon. Yvette Cooper MP
Chair, Home Affairs Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

8 June 2020

Dear Chair,

BORDER HEALTH REGULATIONS

I am writing as the Health Protection (Coronavirus, International Travel) (England) Regulations 2020 that will come into force on 8th June 2020 will be of particular interest to you.

In line with my announcement on 22nd May, these Regulations will enable measures to gather contact, travel, and address information from international travellers arriving in England, and require international travellers arriving in England to self-isolate for fourteen days in the interests of public health. These new measures apply to British and Irish citizens arriving into England where they have travelled outside the Common Travel Area (CTA) in the previous fourteen days, as well as citizens of countries outside the CTA. The measures will help guard against a second wave of COVID-19 infections.

From today (8th June 2020), travellers to England will be required to supply contact details, travel details and the address where they will self-isolate in the UK. This measure will support public health by allowing fast identification of those who have travelled near an infected individual and allow contact tracing to identify those who have come into contact with an infected individual in the UK. Contact tracing is a key part of our strategy to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 within the UK. Contacts will be rapidly identified and advised, where needed, to follow precautionary public health advice.

Further, the Government will require all arrivals from outside the CTA, or those who have travelled outside the CTA in the previous fourteen days, to self-isolate in their accommodation for fourteen days on arrival into England. Where international travellers are unable to safely self-isolate in their own accommodation the Government will support them finding appropriate accommodation at their own expense. This measure will contribute to reducing the transmission of COVID-19 by reducing levels of physical contact during the period of fourteen days when a traveller could have contracted the disease but

might not yet have shown symptoms. In introducing this measure, we join countries around the world that have introduced mandatory self-isolation.

Anyone failing to comply with the mandatory conditions may face enforcement action. The Regulations make it a criminal offence to contravene the requirements to provide contact information and self-isolate. Both offences are summary offences which carry an unlimited fine upon conviction.

Fixed penalty notices may be issued for breach of these regulations. Where there is reason to believe that a person over the age of 18 is not following the self-isolation requirement, there will be a fixed penalty notice of £1,000. Where passengers refuse to complete, or do not accurately complete a contact detail declaration form, the fixed penalty notice is £100 for the first offence, and this may be doubled for each subsequent offence up to a maximum of £3,200.

In April, you wrote to the Secretary of State for Health & Social Care, asking for self-isolation measures to be put in place. We have listened to these concerns and the scientific advice in coming to the decision to implement these measures. This policy is being introduced now because self-isolation and quarantine measures' relative effectiveness increases as domestic transmission of COVID-19 reduces. As the UK moves to a situation where domestic transmission is much lower, imported cases and onward transmission from these cases could become a higher proportion of the overall number of infections.

Alongside effective contact tracing and domestic social distancing measures, these measures, backed by the latest medical and scientific advice, will help to reduce the number of COVID-19 cases and ensure that our hard-earned progress in controlling COVID-19 is not lost.

The enforcement and penalty regime will be implemented by Border Force and the Police. Immigration Officers will be authorised to enforce the requirement to provide contact details. The Police will have the powers to enforce the requirement to self-isolate. Public Health England will set up an assurance service to contact a sample of UK arrivals by phone to ensure they understand the requirements and are self-isolating.

We have carefully considered limited exemptions to the measures in partnership with other departments, all of which have been considered in light of the need to protect public health. The exemptions will provide for continued security of supply into the UK, ensure we do not impede work supporting national security, necessary infrastructure or the COVID-19 response, and ensure we meet the UK's international obligations.

Exemptions relevant to the Home Affairs Committee include (but are not limited to): defence personnel and officials required to work on essential border security issues, who, given their need to travel frequently across the border are exempt both from providing contact information and from the requirement to self-isolate. Full details on exemptions to these measures can be found on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk).

Those exempt from self-isolation will still need to adhere to social distancing requirements and where possible departments will be issuing additional guidance to exempt groups to minimise the health risks.

We recognise that, despite the exemptions listed above, these measures will impact the work covered by the Committee. We would like to take this opportunity to reassure you that, in line with all Government Covid-19 measures, the measures will be kept under regular review to ensure they remain proportionate and necessary. The first review will take place by 29 June and they will be assessed on an ongoing basis thereafter, together with all our measures to fight this disease. The factors we will consider in these reviews include the rate of infection and transmission, the measures that international partners have put in place, levels of imported cases in other countries where there are more relaxed border measures and the degree to which antibody and other testing methodologies prove effective in minimising the health risk. We will also take into account the impact on our economy and industry.

We will continue to work closely with Parliament and industry partners, and to provide robust support to those companies affected by the COVID-19 pandemic through one of the most generous economic packages provided anywhere in the world. We have always recognised that the measures we've taken to limit the spread of COVID-19 will have an impact on our economy, including the business sector, but that measures like these are essential to protect our NHS and save lives.

Also announced in May, DfT will introduce new Regulations (the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Public Health Information for Passengers Travelling to England) Regulations 2020) under the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act. These Regulations will require transport operators to provide the latest public health information (as specified by the Secretary of State for Transport and set out on a gov.uk page) to passengers at three stages of their journey – at booking, at check-in, and on-board. This will apply to aviation, maritime and international rail services and will ensure that passengers are able to make informed choices about whether to travel based on the latest public health advice and know what is required of them upon arrival. These measures will apply to transport operators who are operating international commercial services to England. Travel within the CTA is exempt from the requirements.

The DfT Regulations make it a criminal offence to fail to provide the required information, punishable on conviction by an unlimited fine. Fixed penalty notices may be issued to transport operators who do not comply, requiring them to pay a fixed penalty of £4,000. The Civil Aviation Authority, Maritime and Coastguard Agency, and Office for Rail and Road will be responsible for enforcing the regulations.

The DfT regulations come into force today (8th June 2020). They will be reviewed regularly in line with the review process for the other border measures, with the first review taking place on 29 June.

DfT are also asking all aircraft flying into the UK to provide a General Aircraft Declaration (GAD) form, requiring crew to identify symptomatic passengers before arrival, with a similar process being implemented for maritime and international rail.

Public health is a devolved matter. The Government is therefore working closely with the Devolved Administrations, who are introducing similar provisions, to build a four nations approach. We will continue to collaborate closely to ensure these measures provide a coherent UK-wide regime, while acknowledging the Devolved Administrations' right to make their own detailed policy choices. As a result of our collaboration, these measures will apply regardless of whether an individual arrives directly into England, or via elsewhere in the UK.

We hope that this letter further explains the new border measures that these Regulations will enable. I am copying this to the chair of the Health and Social Care Committee.

Yours sincerely,

W. J. K. all your wishes


Rt Hon Priti Patel MP
Home Secretary