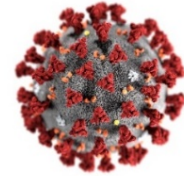


What will happen if COVID-19 comes to Elcho Island?

Summary of the Elcho Island local coronavirus outbreak plan



Currently there is no COVID-19 in East Arnhem Land. But someone might bring that coronavirus into the NT and into East Arnhem Land. We need to be ready to protect ourselves and control the virus if that happens.

The Northern Territory Government, the Land Councils and Aboriginal Medical Services Associated of the NT (AMSANT), working with many local organisations like Miwatj Health, Marthakal and East Arnhem Regional Council, have made two plans about what to do if coronavirus comes to the region. You might hear people talking about the 'Remote Communities Outbreak Management Plan' or 'Local Pandemic Plans'. These are the names of two plans which are connected – we will think of these combined plans as one 'local coronavirus outbreak plan'.

Each of the five communities and nearby homelands have their own local coronavirus outbreak plan, because local people will help run the plan. The people who worked on the Elcho Island plan are sharing this summary of the plan so that everyone is informed and prepared.

The plans might change if the people steering the plan make new decisions about the pathways to keep people safe. The last time new information was added to this summary was on 21 August 2020.

Goals of this plan

- Keep COVID-19 out of East Arnhem Land.
- Talking and listening to Balanda and Yolŋu about what is happening, so everyone knows what to do if someone brings coronavirus to East Arnhem.
- Plan for testing people who might have the virus, and looking after them until the test results are known.
- Plan for taking the people who have the virus to hospital in Nhulunbuy or Darwin
- Plan for quickly finding people who might have come into contact with the person who has the virus, looking after them and keeping them away from other people.
- Plan to keep the rest of the community safe and stop the spread of the virus.

Who is this plan for?

Everyone (Yolŋu and Balanda) living in Galiwin'ku, Buthan, Dhambala, Galawarra, Dhudupu, Ngayawilli, Dharyirri, Gitan, Gulmari, Banthula, Gawa, Ganpura, Langarra.

Who will steer the plan?

For Elcho Island, the Local Controller of the plan is the Officer-in-Charge at the Galiwin'ku Police Station. Police officers, NT Government Department of Health and the local Miwatj and Marthakal clinics will steer the plan. Together they will lead five groups with different jobs in the plan. Some people in these groups work for the Government, some of them work for other organisations. These workers will work together with local organisations. These are the five groups:

Medical Group	Public Information Group	Transport Group	Critical goods Group	Welfare Group
Top End Health Service (Department of Health) Miwatj Health, Marthakal, Careflight	Department of the Chief Minister Yalu, Miwatj Health, East Arnhem Regional Council, Marthakal	Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics East Arnhem Regional Council, ALPA, Marthakal	Department of Trade, Business and Innovation ALPA, East Arnhem Regional Council, other businesses	Territory Families Housing, East Arnhem Regional Council, Yalu, Centrelink, ALPA and others.
Test people for the virus. Lead contact tracing. Plan to have enough medical staff and resources. Get people to hospital and provide medical care.	Tell everyone what is happening. and what we need to do. Try to make sure the right information is heard, not rumours and misinformation which can create panic.	Help bring people who are sick, or who might be sick, to where they need to go.	Make sure we don't run out of things we need, like food, medicine, fuel and other supplies.	Support people who need to quarantine, including old and vulnerable people, and make sure they are safe and have everything they need.

What can we do to prepare now?

There are things everyone can do to prepare, now. If we do these things, and someone brings the virus here without knowing it, fewer people will get the virus.

People who feel unwell	Everyone
<p>If you feel unwell with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fever, chills or sweating• Sore throat• Dry cough• Runny nose• Shortness of breath <p><u>Don't go directly to the clinic</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Phone the clinic to arrange a test.• Some 'point of care tests' are available that take only a few hours.• Each clinic has set up a special process for COVID-19. If you are sick and need to go to the clinic, call them and they will tell you what to do. <p>Phone numbers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Galiwin'ku Clinic: 8970 5800 or 8970 5700. If the clinic is closed, call the on-call mobile 0459 168 227.• Marthakal Homelands: 1800 758 854 <p>If you cannot contact your clinic, call the NT COVID-19 hotline on 1800 008 002.</p>	<p>Physical distancing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stand 1.5m away from people, unless you live with them• Don't spend a long time with big groups of people• Don't share drinks or 'garnali' <p>Hygiene:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wash your hands with soap often• Clean surfaces that people touch often• Cough into your elbow. <p>Think about people who are old or unwell. Do they need a place to stay by themselves?</p> <p>Download the COVIDSAFE app Search for COVIDSAFE in the iPhone or Android store</p> <p>Listen to the loudspeaker for news about coronavirus.</p>

What happens when doctors think someone has COVID-19 in East Arnhem?

What will the sick person do?

- Galiwin'ku and Buthan residents will call the clinic to get tested. Homelands residents will call Marthakal Homelands or the clinic.
- If health staff are worried that person has COVID-19, they might take them to Gove District Hospital or Royal Darwin Hospital.
- If health staff are waiting for a test to know if that person has coronavirus, they will help that person stay in a room by themselves. This could be at the clinic or hospital, at their home, or somewhere else in community, like the old Nalkanbuy clinic or Marthakal Motel. The test results might be available within two hours but it could also take up to two days.

We will hear instructions and news through:

- Loudspeakers in each community
- Yolŋu Radio 88.9FM
- Police
- Yalu, Miwatj Health, Marthakal Rangers, Council
- Elcho Island Notice Board (Facebook)
- SecureNT Facebook

What will the sick person's family do?

- If doctors find out a person has the virus, health staff will start 'contact tracing'. This means they will try to find all the people the sick person usually stays with, and any other people they have been close to in the past few days.
- If any of those people look sick, Careflight will take them to Gove District Hospital or Royal Darwin Hospital.
- The other people who have been close to the sick person will be get tested for coronavirus. They will stay away from other people while they wait for the test result to come back from Darwin or Nhulunbuy. They might stay at the old Njalkanbuy clinic or Marthakal Motel while they wait.
- After staying at that place for a few hours, they will be taken to a place like a motel in Howard Springs near Darwin. They will then stay here for two weeks and maybe longer. Workers will bring food, drink, medicine and other things to their door. They can buy tobacco and other things online from shops like Coles and Big W, which will be delivered to their room. They will have TV and wifi, but will need to bring their own phones and chargers. No visitors are allowed. They will call to see a doctor or speak to one on the phone. They can ask for a Yolŋu interpreter to help over the phone or face-to-face, when they want to speak to a health worker or someone else. They are allowed to sit on the verandah for fresh air, and they are allowed to walk around a small area outside for 20 minutes two times a day.

What will everybody else do?

- If someone in a community or homeland has coronavirus, the police and Northern Territory Government might ask everyone to stay at home. This could be for a long time, maybe 14 days.
- This way of protecting everyone only works if everyone stays at home. If you leave your home or community, you might make your family in another place sick.
- The police, army and many health workers will come to the community and work with Yolŋu organisations to help everyone through this difficult time.
- Health staff will test everyone for coronavirus. Sick people will fly to Gove or Darwin Hospital. Well people will stay at home. If a house is overcrowded, some people might stay in tents.
- Food, drink, medicine and other things will be brought to houses in communities and homelands. Health staff with Yolŋu workers will visit sick people at home.
- In homelands, healthy residents might stay on country if it is safe.
- Old and sick people might be taken to Darwin or Nhulunbuy to keep safe.

For questions contact: Yalu - admin@yalu.org.au or 0477 668 554 or eastarnhem.covid19@nt.gov.au

NT COVID-19 Hotline: 1800 008 002

National Coronavirus Health Information Line: 1800 020 080

Secure NT Updates: <https://coronavirus.nt.gov.au/>

Australian Government Department of Health: www.health.gov.au

Information in Yolŋu Matha – www.ards.com.au, Yolŋu Radio [Facebook](#) and 88.9FM, www.amsant.org.au/covid-19/