

COVID-19

COVID-19 Public Health Response Amendment Act (No 2) 2021

November 2021

Fact Sheet 9: Managed Isolation and Quarantine – managing demand for MIQ places

Previously if you plan to come to New Zealand and enter managed isolation, you must have a confirmed place in managed isolation before you board your flight. Most places are released and confirmed online through the managed isolation allocation system. Some places are also held offline to deal with exceptional circumstances where getting a voucher online is not practicable or would result in adverse impacts for the individual or the New Zealand community. There must be justification for prioritising that person's entry to managed isolation, such as large group allocations or people that meet the [emergency allocation criteria](#).

The offline and online systems are governed by the [Isolation and Quarantine Order](#) made under the Act. The Minister for COVID-19 Response has the power to determine the basis for issuing managed isolation places, and the Chief Executive of MBIE has the power to manage the allocations in accordance with Ministerial decisions. For example, the Minister can decide to ring-fence a certain number of online places for New Zealanders, so that they are not crowded out by non-New Zealanders. The Chief Executive then issues vouchers in accordance with this decision.

For the offline system, the Minister establishes the criteria for issuing a voucher, and then the Chief Executive is responsible for making a decision on each application against those criteria.

What has changed?

The Amendment Act shifts these provisions and powers from the Isolation and Quarantine Order into the Act. It is preferable that these powers sit in the Act where they are transparent and subject to Parliamentary scrutiny. The Amendment Act also makes the Minister, rather than the Chief Executive of MBIE, responsible for deciding offline allocations that relate to large groups. This better reflects current practice for group allocations. The eligibility for group allocations will have to be published online, as will approved group allocations.

The Amendment Act also makes it clear that when the Minister sets the eligibility criteria for offline allocations, they must take into account the right of New Zealanders to enter New Zealand under section 18(2) of the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990, and the need to mitigate, so far as possible, the social, economic and other impacts of COVID-19.

How will this impact you?

Shifting these provisions into the Act does not generally change the way people apply for places in managed isolation, the basis for issuing allocations or how they are issued in practice. The changes for deciding offline group allocations and setting the eligibility criteria for offline allocations provide better transparency for people using that process, rather than changing what happens in practice. The changes ensure that the provisions sit at the right level and decisions are made by the right people.

Want to know more?

For further information about the COVID-19 Public Health Response Amendment Act visit the Ministry of Health [website](#).