**Covid-19 and Islands**

***Islands of The Bahamas, The Bahamas***

1. What actions are being taken to protect the island community from Covid 19? In particular, how are travel restrictions being put in place and enforced?

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| Respondent | Date | Response |
| Kelli ArmstrongBRON Ltd.karmstrong@bebron.com  | 25 March 2020 | * Emergency Orders have been enacted by Prime Minister implementing a now 24 hour curfew and restricting all business operations to essential services only (mostly medical, pharmacy, gas stations, bank and hotel personnel) during the hours of 9am to 5pm (some earlier hours reserved for senior citizens only).
* If persons are not employed in an essential service, they are only allowed to be outside the confines of the yard space for runs to the grocery store, pharmacy, hospital, gas stations, banks, take-out restaurants and 90 minutes of exercise with one partner from the same household; all the while maintaining social distancing at a minimum of 6ft from another person. All public transportation is closed. All public and private ports have been closed except for cargo and emergency flights.
* Ministry of Health’s [Facebook page](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5CAndy%5CDropbox%5CIslands%20and%20Climate%20Change%5CCovid%5CSurvey%5CProfile%20countries%5C%20https%5Cwww.facebook.com%5CMOHBahamas%5C) provides regular updates.
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| See [Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency Situation Report](https://www.cdema.org/FINAL_CDEMA_Situation_Report_3_-_COVID_19_Outbreak_26_March_2020.pdf)  | 26 March 2020 | * A curfew is imposed every day for twenty-four hours except for those with approval from the Commissioner of Police
* All businesses and offices may only continue their business operations by allowing their employees to work remotely from home unless those workers are designated as essential workers. If a business is unable to have employees work remotely from home, that business is required to cease its operations
* All persons employed within the public service, unless specifically designated as essential workers, shall work remotely from home
* Every non-essential establishment, or business shall remain closed except for those specified within The Order
* Physical distancing protocols for all business establishments were enforced to ensure that social distancing is observed at all times by giving business owners twenty-four (24) hours to place markers six feet (6 ft.) apart to indicate where each customer should stand in line both on the inside and outside of an establishment
* All religious and educational places of instruction or worship shall remain closed
* Restrictions are now in place for social activities including funerals and weddings
* Restrictions have been placed on international and domestic travel with exceptions in place for extenuating circumstances
* Restrictions have been placed on road traffic, Public transportation and visitation of quarantine and isolation stations, hospitals and residential care facilities and correctional facilities.
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| Vikneswaran NairUniversity of The Bahamasvik.nair@ub.edu.bs  | 6 May 2020 | * Lockdown of the whole archipelago from outbound and inbound tourist and also total lockdown of the movement of the residents.
* The Emergency Order, “Emergency Powers (COVID 19) (NO. 2) Order, 2020,” announced by Prime Minister, remains in effect until the end of May, unless otherwise stated. Preventative restrictions are being enforced to prevent further spread of COVID-19, including: No visitor shall be permitted to enter and disembark for any reason including transiting through The Bahamas. All airports throughout the entire Bahamas, including private airports and fixed-base operations (FBOs), shall be closed to all flights. All sea ports shall be closed to regional and international seafaring and private boating. Air and sea restrictions do not apply to: cargo flights or cargo ships, commercial courier flights, emergency medical flights or emergency flights approved by the Civil Aviation Authority.
* All international visitors currently in The Bahamas should be prepared to stay for an indefinite period of time. No person shall offer for hire or seek to travel on any mail boat, sailing inter island, except for transport of freight; or inter island private commercial sea transport.
* Residents can leave their homes for essential travel to the doctor, grocery store, bank, pharmacy or to refuel; as well as for outside exercise, not exceeding an hour and a half per day between the hours of 5 a.m. to 9 p.m., provided that the exercise is conducted in one’s yard or one’s immediate neighborhood and no person shall drive to any place to exercise.
* Proper social distancing guidelines of at least six feet (6ft.) must be followed at all times while outside the home.
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| Latonya WilliamsForestry UnitLatonyawilliams242@gmail.com | 13 May 2020 | Stay at home orders, travel Restrictions, face masks mandatory |

1. What actions will be taken should people on the island have Covid 19?

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| Respondent | Date | Response |
| Kelli ArmstrongBRON Ltd.karmstrong@bebron.com  | 25 March 2020 | * If they believe they have symptoms they are to call the COVID-19 hotlines for medical direction on whether they should come to the hospital or stay home in isolation.
* If persons are suspected by medical personnel they will be quarantined and tested for COVID-19.
* If tested positive for COVID-19, some persons will remain in quarantine or be ordered to stay at home in isolation, guarded by an officer from the Royal Bahamas Defense Force, on case-by-case basis.
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| Vikneswaran NairUniversity of The Bahamasvik.nair@ub.edu.bs  | 6 May 2020 | * They are quarantined in dedicated facilities to handle them.
* The Bahamas Ministry of Tourism & Aviation is following guidance from the Bahamas Ministry of Health and other government agencies pertaining to the country’s Preparedness and Response Plan for COVID-19. Current and future patients are isolated in quarantine following the guidelines outlined by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
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1. What actions are being taken to ensure that essential goods and services are provided to the island community?

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| Respondent | Date | Response |
| Kelli ArmstrongBRON Ltd.karmstrong@bebron.com  | 25 March 2020 | * The public has access to essential services aforementioned. The Prime Minister has assured us that the country has essential food and supply stocks for up to 2 months and they will continue to be replenished so there is no need for panic-buying (and consumption). Some essential business have limited the number of items persons can buy at a single time.
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| Vikneswaran NairUniversity of The Bahamasvik.nair@ub.edu.bs  | 6 May 2020 | * All mailboat services to all the islands and goods coming from US has continued to ensure there is no short of essential goods.
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1. What actions are being taken to ensure that people working on the islands, not only in the tourism sector, are sustained financially in the short term and in the long term?

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| Respondent | Date | Response |
| Kelli ArmstrongBRON Ltd.karmstrong@bebron.com  | 25 March 2020 | * Apart from the benefits available through the National Insurance Board programs, [the government has also offered additional financial assistance to self-employed tourism workers in the short term](https://www.nib-bahamas.com/NIB-News/NIB-Unemployment-Assistance).
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| Vikneswaran NairUniversity of The Bahamasvik.nair@ub.edu.bs  | 6 May 2020 | * The Government of The Bahamas, in collaboration with the National Insurance Board (NIB), is responding to bring financial support to self-employed Bahamians in the tourism sector whose income sources have been disrupted by COVID-19.
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1. What actions are being taken to ensure the mental well-being of people on the islands?

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| Respondent | Date | Response |
| Kelli ArmstrongBRON Ltd.karmstrong@bebron.com  | 25 March 2020 | * The COVID-19 hotline has been merged with the Hurricane Dorian hotline for psycho-social support to be offered to all those who need to access these services at this time.
* Citizens allowed 90 minutes of outdoor exercise daily with one other person from the same household, both maintaining physical distancing. This allowance has been restricted to immediate neighbourhoods only, so persons are not permitted to drive to another location for exercise.
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| Vikneswaran NairUniversity of The Bahamasvik.nair@ub.edu.bs  | 6 May 2020 | * Many professionals have offered free consultations to those in need.
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| Latonya WilliamsForestry UnitLatonyawilliams242@gmail.com | 13 May 2020 | Call centers, town hall meetings, radios talk shows |

1. If you consider it appropriate, feel free to share any data about people who have Covid 19 on your island and of people who, sadly, have passed away because of Covid 19.

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| Respondent | Date | Response |
| Kelli ArmstrongBRON Ltd.karmstrong@bebron.com  | 25 March 2020 | As of 26 March:* 9 confirmed cases
* 3 persons currently in quarantine; 39 persons were released from quarantine
* 600 contacts being tracked
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1. If applicable, how are lockdown measures being relaxed?

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| Respondent | Date | Response |
| Vikneswaran NairUniversity of The Bahamasvik.nair@ub.edu.bs  | 6 May 2020 | * It may be relaxed at the end of May, phase by phase - but still continue to administer social distance and mass screening when the kit is available.
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| Latonya WilliamsForestry UnitLatonyawilliams242@gmail.com | 13 May 2020 | Phase approaches, with essential businesses opening first |
| Kelli ArmstrongBRON Ltd.karmstrong@bebron.com  | 27 May 2020 | In the Bahamas, the government has transitioned from Phase 1 to Phase 2 of our plan to resume economic activity. All family islands (islands outside of New Providence and Grand Bahama) without COVID-19 cases have resumed regular commercial activities with the exception of Exuma and Eleuthera.Persons can now also apply to the Ministry of Health for inter-island travel after physical assessment, and testing if warranted, by an approved physician. |

1. Is there anything else you want to share?

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| Respondent | Date | Response |
| Kelli ArmstrongBRON Ltd.karmstrong@bebron.com  | 25 March 2020 | * The Ministry of Health and the Office of the Prime Minister have been doing an outstanding job with their communications. Every other day or so, we have been having press conferences with updates on the confirmed cases and Emergency Orders where the media are invited and usually encouraged to share questions from the public, Family Islands in particularly, via social media.
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| Vikneswaran NairUniversity of The Bahamasvik.nair@ub.edu.bs | 6 May 2020 | * The Bahamas is conducting COVID-19 testing and has been actively employing several measures used globally to screen visitors and residents and to manage the response to individuals of concern, in line with international health best practices. Traveller health questionnaires and a screening protocol have been used at ports, hotels and rental properties to identify guests who may require surveillance or treatment. In addition, all Bahamian nationals and residents returning to The Bahamas through any point of entry from any of the restricted countries or an area where community infection and spread is present, have been quarantined or placed under self-isolation upon arrival and are expected to follow the protocols of the Ministry of Health.
* My view in particular is for the Caribbean and The Bahamas, but it is relevant for all small island nations.
* The key word that all island tourism must deal with is “resilience”! We need to find ways to advance despite these adversities. The tourism dependent countries in The Caribbean including The Bahamas will always be confronting crisis and hence a holistic and long term plan is much needed for the region to remain resilient.
* Diversification of tourism dependent economies is key to reduce the impact during crisis. Agriculture is one of the sector that needs to be emphasised in small island nations including the Caribbean. Agriculture can ensure food security in the region by reducing import dependence. This sector can be transformed by being more innovative to attract youth. Bringing tourism into play with agriculture in the form of agritourism is certainly the way forward for the Caribbean.
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*This information has been collated by the Strathclyde Centre for Environmental Law and Governance in collaboration with Island Innovation and can be found at* [*https://www.strath.ac.uk/research/strathclydecentreenvironmentallawgovernance/ourwork/research/labsincubators/eilean/islandsandcovid-19/*](https://www.strath.ac.uk/research/strathclydecentreenvironmentallawgovernance/ourwork/research/labsincubators/eilean/islandsandcovid-19/)*.*