



## Australian Army Relocates “Positive COVID Cases,” “Close Contacts” to COVID Camps

Authorities of two Northern Territory communities in Australia, Binjari and Rockhole, have imposed strict lockdowns in response to nine new COVID cases and called on the military to bring the infected and their close contacts to COVID quarantine facilities.

On November 20, Chief Minister of Northern Territory [Michael Gunner](#) said that since these communities “have very strong personal and family connections” and referred to them as “one big household rather than a lot of different households,” nine positive COVID cases — their vaccination status “undetermined” — would require imposing strict quarantine rules on them:



YouTube

That means residents in Binjari and Rockhole no longer have the five reasons to leave their home. They can only leave for medical treatment, in an emergency, or if required by law.

Here, Gunner referred to [five allowable reasons](#) for people to leave their homes, which includes buying essential food and supplies, exercising for up to an hour, providing care to a family member or person who cannot support themselves or in case of an emergency, going to “essential” work, and to getting medical treatment.

The minister added that quarantining those nine people is an “extreme” measure, but he views it as justifiable since “the threat to lives [from COVID] is extreme.” For reference, the official Northern Territory data [show](#) that 95 percent of residents age 16 and older have received their first dose of the shot, and 84 percent are fully vaccinated. As of today, there are 39 active COVID cases reported in the state with a population of [247,000](#).

Gunner also announced that an expanded Rapid Assessment Team of senior nursing and medical staff was deployed to the affected communities “to help with the hard lockdown” and “begin the contact tracing work.” According to the [Guardian](#), about 30 police officers have been deployed to assist medics in those efforts.

While those nine people who tested positive for COVID and 38 people who were “identified” as their close contacts have already been transferred to [Howard Springs](#) quarantine facility, more people may be joining them soon.

The minister said,

It’s highly likely that more residents will be transferred to Howard Springs today, either as



Written by [Veronika Kyrylenko](#) on November 23, 2021

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positive cases or as close contacts.

Notably, “close contacts” don’t even have to be infected with COVID to be taken to the COVID camp. Gunner further informed:

We identified five additional close contacts in Borroloola that had not previously been known to us. They have all tested negative, and they are being transferred to Howard Springs.

The official further expressed his gratitude to Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison for providing the military force used to take “positive cases” and “close contacts” to the camp:

I contacted the Prime Minister last night. We are grateful for the support of about 20 ADF personnel, as well as army trucks to assist with the transfer of positive cases and close contacts — and to support the communities.

ADF — Australian Defense Force — refers to Australia’s military. Taking people, or rather “cases,” as the officials refer to them now, forcefully to the “quarantine camps” now seems to be a part of Australian national interest.

Gunner also boasted that with medical/police teams going door to door, they could successfully pressure 27 people into taking their first shot in one of the communities.

Gunner said the lockdown would likely remain in place for at least a few weeks. He added that the vaccination rate in Binjari is low and called on people, particularly Aboriginal Territorians, to get vaccinated to “stay safe, stay healthy, and stay alive”:

Robinson River is a high-vax community and after more than a week of testing, we are at 7 cases, with a larger population. None of them are in hospital. Binjari is a low-vax community — and we discovered 9 positive cases in one day, and one is already in hospital.

As for the rest of the region where lockdown rules are a bit less draconian, such as Kathrine, the minister stressed, “If and when the lockdown ends, it won’t go straight back to normal.” In a “transitional” stage, only fully vaccinated Katherine residents “would be free to work and move about, but residents who are not fully vaccinated would have to stay in lockdown for a little longer.”

During the press conference dedicated to the issue, the minister harshly [blasted](#) people who oppose vaccine mandates as “anti-vaxxers” regardless of their vaccination status:

If you campaign against the mandate, if you campaign against people being vaccinated, if you campaign against people being vaccinated in vulnerable settings, [such as] teachers in classrooms you are absolutely anti-vax.... If you say you are “pro-persuasion,” I reject that utterly. Stuff it, shove it!

As stated on the Northern Territory government [website](#), there are two COVID camps, or “mandatory supervised quarantine facilities” in Northern Territory: the Centre for National Resilience in Howard Springs and the Alice Springs Quarantine Facility.



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Per [Chief Health Officer Direction 52 of 2021](#), people in quarantine must obey the following rules:

- stay in the person's allocated room, including on any veranda space allocated to the room, unless permitted by an authorized officer; and
- when not in their room, or on their veranda, residents must take all reasonable measures to stay at least 1.5 meters away from any other person in the quarantine facility, except for the person's spouse, de facto partner, child or parent; and
- wear a face mask when outside their room unless an authorized officer permits the person to remove the face mask; and
- comply with any directions given by an authorized officer to avoid people congregating in a quarantine zone; and
- must not leave the quarantine zone in which the person's allocated room is located unless the person is escorted by an authorized officer, except in an emergency.

There is also a list of the items that are not allowed:

- Cooking equipment including, microwaves, electric fryers, rice cookers, induction cookers, sandwich presses, toasters, etc.
- Alcohol.
- Toys or recreational items such as swimming pools (plastic or inflatable), scooters, skateboards, bikes, balls and roller blades.
- Care packages, personal goods or meal deliveries.

No visitors are allowed. All those in quarantine, including children, are tested for COVID three times during their stay, and if someone does not "undergo a test," he or she "will be required to remain in quarantine a further 10 days at your own expense."





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