

# Minister for Health announces updates on Mandatory Hotel Quarantine - Thursday 15 April 2021

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The Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly TD is pleased to announce that following intensive work, the Department of Health and Tifco Hotel Group have achieved an increase in capacity on the system, which will come on line from this Saturday 17 April.

The online booking portal for reservations will reopen from late this evening, allowing people due to arrive from designated states from Saturday to pre-book to enter Mandatory Hotel Quarantine.

Minister Stephen Donnelly said:

"I welcome the intensive efforts made by both officials in my department and the Tifco Hotel Group to bring about this increased capacity. Mandatory Hotel Quarantine is a very important public health measure and ensures we continue to have the strongest border biosecurity measures in Europe.

"I would like to extend my particular thanks to the Tifco Hotel Group and their staff for stepping up capacity so quickly and for their commitment to ensuring the comfort and security of those required to enter Mandatory Hotel Quarantine. The management of this system is a complex undertaking, involving logistics across a range of operational areas and government sectors. I would like to thank all state actors involved in the operational delivery of this policy.

"Our system of Mandatory Hotel Quarantine is working as intended to protect the country from the importation of COVID-19, particularly variants of concern. To date, 18 people in Mandatory Hotel Quarantine have tested positive for COVID-19, of which four involve probable variants of concern. I am very grateful to those that have entered mandatory quarantine and for playing their part to stop the spread of this disease."

The following capacity increases have been announced:

- Tifco have confirmed the addition of 305 rooms, two days ahead of schedule, and will be ready to start taking bookings for those arriving Saturday 17 April onwards
- this will bring the capacity on Saturday 17 April to 959 rooms
- by Friday 23 April, capacity will increase to 1189 rooms
- by Monday 26 April, capacity will increase to 1607 rooms

In addition, the Minister for Health has announced that fully vaccinated persons arriving from designated states will shortly be exempted from Mandatory Hotel Quarantine.

Minister Donnelly said:

"The Government decision last week was for a rapid review to be conducted. I have now received advice from the Acting Chief Medical Officer, which I have accepted.

"Legal regulations will now be required to exempt fully vaccinated people from Mandatory Hotel Quarantine and allow them complete home quarantine. These regulations will be drafted and signed in the coming days."