



## ODG CIRCULAR NO. 1 OF 2021

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**To:** Attorney General  
Financial Secretary  
Permanent Secretaries  
Heads of Department  
All Public Officers

**Cc:** H.E. the Governor  
Hon. Premier

**From:** Deputy Governor

**Ref:** ODG 7/1

**Date:** 7 February 2021

**RE:** **CLOSURE OF NON-ESSENTIAL BUSINESSES, FEBRUARY 7<sup>TH</sup> 2021**

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Over the weekend, there has been a rapid increase in the number of active COVID-19 cases from two (2) to four (4). In light of this, Cabinet has taken a decision to close all non-essential businesses on island for a period of fourteen (14) days effective from 6:00pm today, Sunday, February 7<sup>th</sup> 2021.

As a result of this Cabinet decision, I wish to advise that all non-essential Government of Montserrat offices will be closed from tomorrow, Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021 and only essential Government of Montserrat staff should attend their workplace.

All staff would have been previously advised of the adoption of flexible working arrangements, and most Heads of Departments would have been developing business continuity plans aimed at reducing the number of staff in various offices at any one time.

I am asking every civil servant who is not one of our essential workers to finalize the necessary arrangements to allow them to work remotely as a matter of urgency. From tomorrow Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021 all non-essential civil servants are required to work from home and not return to the workplace until Monday 21st February 2021, unless otherwise directed.

There will be some civil servant who are not essential staff who will not be able to continue to deliver their work remotely due to the nature of their jobs. These individuals are reminded that they are subject to redeployment to assist with filling any capacity gaps arising from the Government of Montserrat's COVID-19 response. These employees are therefore asked to remain available and flexible should their services be required.

For the avoidance of doubt, the following have been identified as essential services at this time:

- Royal Montserrat Police Service (to include Marine and IBSU)
- Fire and Rescue Services
  
- Prison Services

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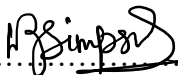
- Ministry of Health and Social Services (All Departments)
- Airport Management and Air Traffic staff
- Radio Montserrat
- Government Information Unit
- Cesspool Operators and Driver
- Security/Night Watchmen
- Customs
- Supreme Court Registry (Births and deaths)
- Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (at the direction of the DPP)
- Attorney General's Chambers (at the direction of the Attorney General)
- Department of Information and E-Government Services (DITES)
- Ministry of Finance (Budget and Economic Team, Treasury, General Post Office)
- DMCA
- Consular/Passport Services
- Montserrat Volcano Observatory

Being identified as essential does not mean that a Head of Department will no longer require staff to work remotely where possible or that other flexible arrangements cannot be used to reduce the number of staff physically in one space at any given time.

All Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Non-Ministerial Departments are considered essential personnel and will work either full-time or remotely or a combination of both. In the case of uniformed services, non-uniform support staff may be deemed essential at the discretion of the Head of Department.

As this situation continues to evolve, there may be some departments or personnel not listed above who may need their staff to be in office to deliver services. In such instances, Heads of Departments should liaise with their Permanent Secretaries who will then forward the request and their recommendation to me for consideration on a case by case basis.

As this situation continues to evolve, we must all remain flexible and continue to seek information from reliable sources. At this point in time, we are now required to set the standard in terms of complying with instructions from the Government especially as it relates to staying at home, practicing social distancing and taking all steps necessary to stop the spread of this deadly virus.



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Lyndell G M Simpson (Mrs.)

LGMS/oet