

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
BY SENATOR S.W. PALLETT
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 1st FEBRUARY 2021
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 8th FEBRUARY 2021**

Question

Following recent news reports that a new Covid-19 variant has been discovered in Rennes, France, will the Minister –

- (a) advise Members whether he intends to suspend the exemption that currently permits ‘critical’ construction workers to undertake work immediately upon arrival in the Island without any period of self-isolation; and if not, why not;
- (b) set out why such construction workers are deemed as ‘critical’, particularly in current circumstances; and
- (c) provide the exact definition of the term ‘critical worker’ that is used in this context?

Answer

- (a) There is no exemption that permits critical construction workers to undertake work immediately upon arrival in the Island. From 11 February, critical workers will be required to provide evidence of a negative pre-arrival PCR test as a condition of their permission to leave isolation for the purposes of work. They will still be required to wait for a negative arrival (day 0) result before travelling to and attending the workplace. Only once this has provided a negative result are they permitted to leave self-isolation for that work. The only exemption is if the work is time critical – where, for example, a delay in undertaking the work before that initial negative result is a risk to life. Then the company must provide details of all measures to be implemented to minimise the risk associated with that time-critical work. There is no present intention to change the exemption process.
- (b) Construction workers are deemed ‘critical’ where the company has made the case that these workers cannot be recruited locally and where the time-critical nature of the work is such that those workers are needed now ie they are not available locally within the critical timescale of the project.
- (c) A critical worker is considered to meet this definition if:
 - the person’s physical presence is required to keep services or businesses running
 - and the person’s specific skill is not readily available in Jersey
 - the work is time-critical in terms of urgency and/or duration of work
 - it would be impossible, unreasonable or dangerous for the worker to complete the isolation period before beginning work.