



Ticket issued to Hunter Reynolds for non-essential travel while getting a driving lesson from her mother.

COVID-19: Australian teen fined for 'nonessential travel'

By Caroline Hoy
Staff Writer

Many people are taking the quarantine seriously, but it's easy to see that the feeling is not mutual everywhere. People have been fined as a way to keep them in their houses. With this in place, people are not outside for no reason. From reports, the fines have been reasonable since the world has been in a state of emergency.

However, in Australia there is a different story. In Frankston, Victoria, a suburb in Melbourne, someone was fined \$1,652 for being out of her house with her mother.

Hunter Reynolds, 17, was out of the house with her mother to do a driving lesson. Although people were not supposed to leave their house at that time, the fine that was about \$1,700, which seems a bit over the top.

The main hole in the story is that hundreds were reported to be at Sydney's beaches that

day and none of those people had any fines. In fact many of those people failed at being six feet apart from one another.

On the other hand, Reynolds was staying in the car with her mother and not getting out at any stops. In fact, Reynolds's mother did not even know that what they were doing was considered illegal. The fine is currently up for debate on whether it was being too strict or not.

The police have given out other fines that are being contested. For example, one man in Newcastle, New South Wales was given a \$1,000 fine for eating on a park bench. The price of the fines are very high especially since the people who receive the fine may not realize that the act they are doing is against the rules. In one part of Australia, the fines have reached up to \$11,000.

Everyone is probably getting stir crazy at this point in time. The true question behind this is what are reasonable fines for leaving the confines of one's home?

Reimbursement

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the appeal process," Radford said in an email interview. "Our goal was to be fair and consider all circumstances. We also wanted to not prolong a decisive action by the college, so we had to initiate a policy for the entire residential population, knowing there would be exceptions that certainly warrant the full refund.

"All those students need to do is email me with details, as my email indicated. Brevard's stance was never to be unfair. We have a procedure and an appeal process in place to protect those that could not get back to campus," Radford said.

The 25 percent of room and board funds not reimbursed will be used to pay for expenses needed to run the college so they are ready to be fully operable in the fall, Radford said.

"The goal was to issue credits to students that were logical and fair, yet help sustain our financial viability to hit the ground running in August," Radford said. "We do plan to continue with updates to campus for you all, but that source of funding is separate from this refund process."

Many students at other schools have not been so fortunate about refunds. Two schools coming under fire for their questionable methods include Winthrop University in Rock Hill, South Carolina and the University of North Carolina-Charlotte. Students at these schools are facing a terrible dilemma: they are still required to pay rent for student housing, despite the fact that none of them are living in those spaces.

"A lot of them can't afford to stay there—they have a loss of income, their parents have a loss of income," said Rima Daya, a parent of a junior at Winthrop who lives at Walk2Campus.

"The financial burden for me is that I work a little bit but most of what I rely on to pay rent comes from my parents, and with both of them not really working right now, there's not any income coming in to pay rent in the foreseeable future," UNC-Charlotte senior Yovany Romero said.

During these trying times, it is important to help one another as much as possible. By refunding students' money, colleges are doing the right thing in the long run. The economy and all aspects of life have already been affected by COVID-19 and will continue to be affected for quite a while. BC students are lucky to go to a school that is willing to be fair and just to all students by implementing an appeal process.

"I am here to answer any questions that may help students and families understand this process, and to assure all that Brevard has implemented a procedure in the effort to be fair to you all," Radford said. "We hope all of our students are staying safe, and we look forward to the day where things are back to normal."

Chernobyl fire

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As the region of the exclusion zone has been taken over by nature, forest fires are not uncommon.

Firsov also acknowledged this, stating, "The problem of setting fires to grass by careless citizens in the spring and autumn has long been a very acute problem for us. Every year we see the same picture — fields, reeds, forests burn in all regions."

The main problem with this event is that the fires are releasing radiation previously trapped in the soil, leaves and wood of the forests around

and within the exclusion zone.

Police have arrested a suspect believed to have caused the fire. He is a 27-year-old man from the area who reportedly told police he had set grass and garbage on fire in three places "for fun." After he lit the fires, he said the wind picked up and he was unable to put them out.

Firsov even commented on how there needs to be harsher penalties for anyone caught starting fires in the area stating, "There are relevant draft bills. I hope they will be voted in. Otherwise, large-scale fires will continue to occur every autumn and spring."