



Environmental Health Bill, 2026

Frequently Asked Questions

1. When will the proposed Bill be made public?

- a. The proposed Bill will be published on 21 August. You will be able to view and download it from this site.

2. What happens after I submit my feedback?

- a. Your survey response or emailed feedback will be read by Ministry staff, and taken into consideration as we shape this legislation.

3. Does this proposed Bill mean Government will monitor air quality across all three islands?

- a. The Bill creates the legal basis for air-quality monitoring and standards. The intended direction is greater monitoring and transparency across the three islands, but implementation will depend on the regulations, equipment, technical capacity and an agreed monitoring programme.

4. Why are the powers proposed so broad?

- a. The proposed Bill provides DEH with authority to investigate risks and act before harm escalates. Powers of entry, inspection, seizure and closure should be used only where authorised, necessary and proportionate.

5. Is this Bill just a way for Government to impose more fines?

- a. The purpose of this Bill is to prevent harm and improve compliance, not simply to collect fines. DEH will have a range of responses, including advice, warnings and improvement notices. Stronger penalties will be available when someone ignores requirements or creates a serious risk to public health.

6. Why are you bringing this Bill now?

- a. The Bill is being brought now to modernise the current legal framework. We have identified that Cayman's environmental health legislation has not kept pace with the risks and needs of the Cayman Islands. Important areas such as air quality, noise and vibration, water management, food safety and potentially harmful trades are either not covered in sufficient detail in the current legislation or lack clear standards and effective enforcement tools.
- b. As a result, the Department of Environmental Health may have to respond after harm or disruption has occurred, rely on outdated provisions, or pursue matters through the courts when faster administrative action would be more effective.



- c. The Environmental Health Bill creates Cayman's first stand-alone environmental health framework. It gives the Department of Environmental Health clearer responsibilities, modern enforcement powers and the ability to apply internationally recognised standards, helping Government prevent risks earlier and better protect the places where people live, work and gather.

7. Could you give us a plain-language overview of the Environmental Health Bill and the changes it is intended to make?

- a. The Environmental Health Bill, 2026 will establish Cayman's first stand-alone legal framework for the powers and responsibilities of the Department of Environmental Health, covering food and water safety, laboratories, nuisances, harmful trades, air quality, noise and vibration, waste, sanitation, vector control and enforcement.
- b. There were no previous protocols that governed air quality or noise pollution.
- c. The Bill aims to make communities and businesses safer, empower the Department of Environmental Health to act quickly and proactively, and set clear standards and guidelines for residents.

8. This would be Cayman's first stand-alone environmental health bill. What everyday issues would it cover? The proposed legislation will cover a variety of issues, such as:

- a. Water management – Government can better protect drinking water quality through stronger monitoring, safety standards and management.
- b. Public health – potentially reducing the risk of waterborne illness by improving how water systems are managed and how food hygiene is overseen. Provision is made in the Bill on misleading descriptions or presentation of food. Regulations can provide for codes of practice on food handling, require records to be kept on food safety, and require qualifications or accreditation to be in place relating to food handling.
- c. Potentially harmful industries – regulating trades such as construction and pest control to better protect workers, communities and the environment.
- d. Noise and vibration – setting clear standards for noise and vibration levels to help tackle the impact of excessive noise in residential areas and workplaces.
- e. Air quality – improving air quality monitoring across all three islands and supporting cleaner, healthier communities.
- f. Nuisances – giving Environmental Health Officers stronger powers to quickly deal with public health nuisances.
- g. Enforcement – improving enforcement with modern powers to investigate, issue notices and seize unsafe items. This gives Environmental Health Officers the power to issue administrative fines, so the Department does not have to go to court.

9. How could proposed provisions on air quality, noise and vibration affect communities?



- a. The Bill sets out a new section on noise and vibration to empower the Department of Environmental Health to monitor, regulate and enforce noise and vibration concerns, including powers of entry. The regulations can provide for setting acceptable noise and vibration levels. Currently, if neighbours are in a dispute about noise, there is no way to objectively assess what would be considered “too loud”, as there are no regulations.
- b. The section on air quality is designed to ensure that the Department is monitoring, regulating and enforcing air quality standards, based on standards set by Cabinet in line with internationally recognised standards. It will give the Department the ability to set up air quality monitoring around the three islands and share data with relevant agencies.

10. Is this Bill a response to the April landfill fire?

- a. Those events demonstrate why reliable monitoring, clear standards and public information matter.
- b. However, the Bill provides a wider, long-term framework covering multiple environmental health risks.

11. The Environmental Health Bill increases some fines and introduces stronger deterrents. Why have fines increased?

- a. The higher penalties reflect the seriousness of conduct that may put public health at risk.
- b. Cabinet may make regulations establishing fees for specified environmental health services and applications, potentially including commercial applications to undertake waste management activities.

12. The Bill gives the Department of Environmental Health more power to act. Can you explain how that will look and what changes you anticipate will come with that?

- a. The Bill establishes new powers enabling Environmental Health Officers to enforce the Act, including powers of entry, inspection and examination; advice and warnings; notices to improve or desist; action where there is a failure to comply with a notice to improve or desist; seizure and condemnation of food; seizure and forfeiture of other items or substances; and closure orders.
- b. This means the Department will have the power to enforce fines or compliance orders, and to proactively take action and have impact in the community.

13. Will businesses face new costs?

- a. Some businesses may need to meet updated standards, maintain records, obtain relevant qualifications or pay prescribed fees.

14. The Ministry is asking the public to help shape the environmental health proposal. Why is this consultation important?

- a. We have heard the public say previously that at times government consultation is not robust enough.



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- b.** This Bill is far-reaching, with impacts that will affect our water management, food safety, business practices and how we live together.
- c.** We intend to ensure that everyone who wants to give their feedback can do so, in an accessible and easy way.

15. Some residents may wonder whether public feedback can genuinely change a proposal. What happens to the comments received?

- a.** The Ministry's policy team will review every feedback form or email that comes through.
- b.** This will be considered as we develop the policy, and if changes are to be made they will be made at the Committee Stage.