



SHICC PUBLIC HEALTH BULLETIN #12

Tuesday, 15 February 2022 16:00 Hours

This bulletin has been authorised by the A/Deputy Incident Controller – Public Health,
Dr Tania Wallace

COVID-19 case and vaccination numbers

- **Summary:** as of **Tuesday, 15 February**, in Western Australia (WA), there have been:
 - **2,383** confirmed cases of COVID-19 notified
 - **1,902** people recovered from COVID-19
 - **2,393,641** COVID-19 tests conducted
- **WA:** [Daily snapshot & Vaccination dashboard](#)
- **National:** [Current National Status & Australia's vaccine roll-out](#)
- **Worldwide:** [WHO Situation Reports & WHO Dashboard](#)

Living with COVID

Chief Health Officer advice

The latest advice from the Chief Health Officer is available [here](#).

WA COVID Care at Home program

The WA COVID Care at Home [program](#) has been launched to provide home monitoring care for COVID-19 positive people who have risk factors which put them at greater risk of requiring hospitalisation. It is a free service, however [registration](#) is required to determine whether the program would be of benefit to the case.

High caseload setting

Western Australia (WA) transitioned to high caseload setting arrangements from Tuesday, 8 February 2022, to appropriately manage COVID-19 in the community. The high caseload setting arrangements include:

- new close contact definition
- new testing and isolation guidelines
- schools and childcare centre close contact [protocols](#)
- mandatory positive rapid antigen test [registration](#)
- removal of casual contacts.

Refer to the [announcement](#) and the [media release](#) for further information.

Travel

From Wednesday, 9 February 2022, the following travel-related high caseload setting changes will be implemented:

- quarantine for approved international and interstate travellers reduced to seven days
- travellers must then wear a mask in indoor and outdoor settings for the seven days after they end their self-quarantine

- vaccinated direct international travellers permitted to self-quarantine at a suitable premise, if eligible, with the arrivals cap doubled to 530 travellers per week
- mandatory use of G2G NOW will still be required by all arrivals in self-quarantine
- unvaccinated international arrivals required to complete 14 days in hotel quarantine.

Refer to the [media release](#) and [announcement](#) for new hard border arrangement information.

RATs for travellers

All interstate and international travellers will be given two RATs on arrival at Perth Airport to accommodate their testing requirements.

Refer to the [announcement](#) for information.

New hard border

Western Australia's new hard border is now in place to enable safe, compassionate travel into WA and the return of Western Australians. This includes new requirements for approved travellers to enter WA from interstate or international locations.

Refer to the [announcement](#) and the WA.gov.au [website](#) for information.

Elective surgery

WA will reduce the number of elective surgery bookings made in anticipation of expected system pressures as COVID-19 case numbers increase.

All public hospitals, including public-private partnership hospitals, will temporarily pause further bookings for multi-day non-urgent Category 2 and Category 3 elective surgeries for two-months. **This will start on 14 March 2022 at all WA public hospitals and on 21 March 2022 at some larger private hospitals.** Bookings made before this time are expected to be performed. A weekly cap will be introduced for Category 2 procedures. All Category 1 bookings will continue.

Refer to the [media statement](#) for information.

Transition resources for HCW

The Department of Health has developed a [webpage](#) for transition policies and resources for healthcare workers.

The policies and resources will assist the WA health system in responding to the anticipated surge in COVID-19 community transmission and continue to provide excellent care to our community. The information applies to WA public sector clinicians, private health providers, general practices and pharmacies.

RAT use

Rapid antigen tests (RATs) can now be used as a diagnostic tool for COVID-19, as per high caseload setting health advice. Positive COVID-19 RAT results must be reported [online](#) within the Department of Health.

Information regarding RAT use is available at [HealthyWA](#) and [WA.gov.au](#). Information for [managing COVID-19](#) can be found at HealthyWA.

RAT for emergency department screening

WA public hospital emergency departments (EDs) in Perth and the South West will bolster their COVID-safe measures by screening patients using RATs before they enter.

Refer to the [media release](#) for information.

Public health advice

In line with the national approach, reference to casual contacts has ceased in WA. High risk exposure locations related to close contacts – where we cannot identify all contacts at the location – will continue to be listed. Low risk exposure sites may be listed in circumstances determined by public health. Western Australians are asked to continue to visit this [HealthyWA](#) regularly for updated or new exposure sites.

Anyone experiencing any symptoms should get [tested](#) immediately and isolate until they receive a negative result. This applies to anyone symptomatic – even if you have not visited a listed exposure site.

Western Australians are encouraged to stay vigilant and use SafeWA/ServiceWA and mandatory contact registers to check into businesses and venues.

For information on public health measures including mask wearing and proof of vaccination, see the WA.gov.au [website](#). More information is also available in the [media statement](#).

Public hospital visitor guidelines and SAR

The *COVID-19 Public Hospital Visitor Guidelines* continues to be updated to provide clarification and incorporate feedback.

The WA Health COVID-19 Framework for System Alert and Response (SAR) will be updated in the coming weeks to align with revised policy and to provide clarification. Topics under review includes:

- visitor guidance
- testing guidelines
- publicly funded dental services
- mental health services provided by HSPs.

Outpatient guidelines are being revised and work is being progressed to develop web content.

The current risk rating is interim Amber for the following regions:

- Perth/Peel
- South West.

All other regions of the State remain at alert level Green.

Refer to the visitor guidelines [document](#) and [SAR](#) on the Department of Health website under 'clinical guidelines' accordion.

Community

Ventilation fact sheets

Three facts sheets have been developed to assist homeowners, building managers and public health personnel to assess and manage ventilation and indoor air quality to reduce the risk posed by COVID-19 in indoor environments. They can be found on the 'Information for business, industry and local government' page of the Department of Health [website](#).

Safe Transition Industry Support Package

The WA Government has announced the Safe Transition Industry Support Package to assist eligible businesses and individuals in sectors most affected by the decision to delay the full reopening of WA's borders. It includes nine support programs for the international education, tourism, aviation and events sectors. Information is available in the [announcement](#) and WA.gov.au [website](#).

Face masks

The use of [face masks](#) is an important tool to minimise COVID-19 transmission and the effect on the WA community, particularly when there is active community transmission.

The Directions that require mask use offer a list of [exceptions](#), including if the person has a physical or mental illness, condition or disability that makes wearing a face mask unsuitable.

If registered health practitioners believe their patient's medical condition is serious enough that they are unable to safely wear a mask, they can provide their patients with a letter of confirmation. The letter does not need to define the patient's condition.

Schools and gatherings

The WA Government released new guidance to schools to limit in-school gatherings of students to minimise the effect of a COVID-19 case attending the school before diagnosis. In-school gatherings of students and staff should be limited to class groups or small groups within a year level.

Refer to the [media release](#) for information.

Information for the fishing industry

The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) have developed [guidance](#) for the fishing industry, particularly relating to the impact of COVID-19 and mandatory vaccination.

Refer to the WA.gov.au [website](#) for further information.

Test and isolation payment

The WA Government announced a new COVID-19 Test Isolation Payment program to support Western Australian's who are required to isolate while waiting for a COVID-19 PCR test result and lose income as a result. More information is available in the [announcement](#) and [FAQs](#).

COVID-19 vaccination program

ATAGI announce new 'up-to-date' vaccination status

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) released a [statement](#) on 10 February 2022 defining 'up-to-date' status for COVID-19 vaccination. The advice states that all individuals aged 16 years and over are recommended to receive a COVID-19 vaccine booster dose to maintain an 'up-to-date' status. This booster dose is now recommended from 3 months after the last primary dose. This is called the 'due date'. Specific information for people who are severely immunocompromised or who have previously had COVID-19, is available in the [statement](#).

This 'up-to-date' guidance serves as the basis for policies for the public health management of the COVID-19 pandemic in a domestic context. It forms the basis of the due and overdue rules for the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR). Advice may change as the pandemic evolves.

New Commonwealth Vaccination Hubs open this week

The Australian Government has established a small number of pop-up vaccination hubs in the below locations for individuals working in disability, aged care, childcare, food, freight and pharmaceutical distribution industries. People with disability, their families and carers are also eligible to attend. Walk-in appointments are available. Hubs are open from 15 to 19 February 2022 between 10:30am and 6pm.

Locations

Osborne Community Hub	11 Royal St, Tuart Hill WA 6017
Scarborough Library	173 Gildercliffe St, Scarborough WA 6019
Belmont Sports and Recreation Centre	400 Abernethy Rd, Cloverdale WA 6105
Uniting Church Hall	133 Le Souef Dr, Kardinya WA 6163
St Augustine's Church	21 Cale St, Como WA 6152

ATAGI approves Pfizer boosters for 16 and 17-year-old children

On 3 February 2022, ATAGI [recommended](#) all 16 and 17 years old receive a booster vaccination with the Comirnaty (Pfizer) vaccine, 3 or more months after receiving their previous primary dose. This includes those who were aged under 16 years when they received their last primary dose and are now aged 16 years.

Those aged 16 and 17 years who are immunocompromised and have received a third primary dose of COVID-19 vaccine should also receive a booster dose (fourth dose) of the Pfizer vaccine when they become eligible.

Those aged 16 and 17 years with risk factors for severe disease (including chronic disease) or pregnancy, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, or those who work in environmental settings that place them at higher risk should receive their booster as soon as they are eligible.

ATAGI advice on Novavax use in mixed primary schedule

ATAGI has [advised](#) that Novavax COVID-19 vaccine can be administered as part of a [heterologous \(mixed\) primary schedule](#) to people who have received one or more doses of another COVID-19 vaccine, including as a third dose for people with severe immunocompromise.

Novavax COVID-19 vaccine is not currently recommended for use as a booster vaccine.

Booster Blitz

A two-week vaccination blitz to increase booster vaccination rates was [announced](#) on 2 February 2022 to keep Western Australians safe. The blitz will see an extra 40,000 appointments available at the State-run vaccination clinics, increasing the weekly capacity at these clinics to around 100,000 doses. People are encouraged to book an appointment by visiting [VaccinateWA](#) or calling 13COVID if assistance is required.

Community vaccination clinics

Please check the community vaccination clinic list [online](#) for further information and opening times. To avoid extended queues, people are encouraged to make a booking at [VaccinateWA](#) or 13COVID, as people with bookings will be prioritised.

There will be numerous regional pop-up clinics available for walk-ins in the coming weeks. Visit the [COVID-19 vaccine](#) webpage for a list of these clinics and their opening times.

Existing [Community vaccination clinics](#) in WA include Armadale, Mirrabooka, Carramar, Mandurah, Canning Vale, Midland, Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre, Claremont Showgrounds, Joondalup, Kwinana, and Bunbury.

The Comirnaty (Pfizer), Spikevax (Moderna) and Vaxzevria (AstraZeneca) COVID-19 vaccines are being administered at participating GPs and pharmacies for eligible populations. Participating GPs and pharmacies can be found by using the COVID-19 [Vaccine Clinic Finder](#).

Vaccine information and resources

Please visit the sources below for more information and resources related to vaccines:

- HealthyWA – [COVID-19 Vaccine](#) (for WA community) including [FAQs](#)
- WA Health – [COVID-19 Vaccination Program](#) (for WA health providers)
- Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC) – workplace [information](#) about the COVID-19 vaccine FAQs (general information for businesses and employers)
- The Australian Government – [COVID-19 Vaccines hub](#)
- [Roll up for WA](#) and [Roll up for WA posters](#)
- KAMS – [Get vaccinated against COVID-19 TVC Campaign](#)

Directions updates

COVID-19 State of Emergency [Declarations](#) and community [advice](#) summarises the latest COVID-19 Directions that are in place in WA. Further information can be found on WA Government [website](#).

New Directions

- [COVID Transition Sports Directions Fremantle Dockers Football Club](#)
- [COVID Transition Sports Directions Perth Lynx](#)
- [COVID-19 Testing Directions \(No 4\) Revocation Directions](#)
- [Exposed On-Board Worker Directions \(No 5\)](#)
- [Maritime Crew Member Directions \(No 5\)](#)
- [Presentation for Testing \(Airport Workers – Direct International Arrivals\) Directions \(No 3\)](#)
- [Presentation for Testing \(Quarantine Centre Workers\) Directions \(No 10\)](#)
- [Rig or Platform Crew Member Directions \(No 5\)](#)
- [Transport and Accommodation Services \(Exposed Maritime Worker\) Directions \(No 4\)](#)
- [Presentation for Testing \(40\)](#)
- [COVID Transition Sports Directions Carlton Football Club](#)
- [COVID Transition Sports Directions Collingwood Football Club](#)
- [COVID Transition Sports Directions West Coast Eagles Football Club](#)
- [Air North \(Crew and Engineer\) Directions \(No 3\)](#)
- [Air Services and Border Worker \(Restrictions on Access\) Directions \(No 3\)](#)
- [Aircraft Travel \(Face Mask\) Directions \(No 2\)](#)
- [Airport and Transportation \(Face Mask\) Directions \(No 2\)](#)
- [COVID Transition \(Testing and Isolation\) Directions](#)
- [Close Contact Definition Amendment Directions](#)
- [Fire and Emergency Services Worker \(Restrictions on Access\) Directions \(No 3\)](#)
- [Quarantine Centre Workers \(Secondary Employment\) Directions \(No 2\)](#)
- [Rapid Antigen Test \(Restrictions on Sale and Supply\) Directions \(No 2\)](#)
- [Transiting Aircraft Passengers Directions \(No 4\)](#)
- [Access to Quarantine Centres Directions \(No 3\)](#)
- [Aircraft from Restricted Locations Arrival Directions \(No 2\)](#)
- [Beach Energy Ocean Onyx Workers Directions \(No 2\)](#)
- [COVID Transition \(Consequential Revocations\) Directions](#)
- [Critical Businesses Worker \(Restrictions on Access\) Directions \(No 2\)](#)

- [DFES Interstate Firefighter Directions](#)
- [Entry by Approved Border Community Residents and Workers Directions \(No 2\)](#)
- [Entry to Kimberley Directions \(No 3\)](#)
- [Exposure Sites \(Outside of Western Australia\) Directions \(No 4\)](#)
- [Seasonal Workers Directions \(No 2\)](#)
- [Transitional Travellers \(Continuation of G2G Entry QR Codes\) Directions](#)
- [Yongah Hill Immigration Detainees Directions \(No 4\)](#)
- [Health Care Workers Directions \(No 3\)](#)
- [Proof of Vaccination Directions \(No 3\)](#)
- [COVID Transition \(Border Requirements\) Amendment Directions \(No 2\)](#)
- [Health Care Workers Directions \(No 2\)](#)
- [Meat Industry Worker \(Restrictions on Access\) Directions \(No 2\)](#)
- [Eastern Goldfields College: Identification of Class to Whom A Proof Exception Under Paragraph 8\(D\) Applies](#)

Updated fact sheets

- [Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines for Non-State Quarantine Facilities Providing Accommodation for Guests in Quarantine or Isolation Version 5.1](#)
- [Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines for Onsite Healthcare Teams in State quarantine Facilities Version 9](#)
- [COVID-19 Guidelines for Neonatal Services Version 5](#)
- [Information on COVID-19 and Building Ventilation](#)
- [Information on COVID-19 and Air Purifiers/Cleaners](#)
- [Information on COVID-19 and Ventilation at Home](#)

Testing

General population testing criteria

Any person may be tested if they have any one of the following clinical criteria: fever ($\geq 37.5^{\circ}\text{C}$) OR history of fever (e.g. night sweats, chills), without a known source **OR** acute respiratory symptoms (e.g. shortness of breath, cough, sore throat, runny nose) **OR** acute loss of smell or taste **OR** a positive or inconclusive rapid antigen test result.

Testing locations

Testing locations are listed on [HealthyWA](#).

Reporting

Notify suspected COVID-19 cases by completing the notification form either [online](#) or by printing out the notification form.

Positive rapid antigen test results must be registered on the Department of Health [website](#).

Series of National Guidelines (SoNG)

The [latest](#) iteration was released on 14 January 2022.

Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC)

The [Australian Health Protection Principal Committee \(AHPPC\)](#) is the key decision-making committee for health emergencies. It is comprised of all state and territory Chief Health Officers and is chaired by the Australian Chief Medical Officer. The AHPPC has an ongoing role to advise the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council (AHMAC) on health protection matters and national priorities. AHPPC is also tasked with the role of mitigating emerging health threats related to infectious diseases,

the environment as well as natural and human made disasters. **AHPPC recently released the following statement:**

- [15 February 2022](#) – **Mandating booster vaccinations in residential aged care workers**

Business and industry

Resources for more information

- [WA Department of Health](#) and [HealthyWA](#)
- [Department of Health Media Releases](#)
- [Australian Government Health Department](#)
- [Advice for the public \(WHO\)](#)
- [Advice in other languages](#) and [Translated Resources](#)
- [Advice for Aboriginal people](#)
- [Covid Clinic walkthrough](#) – in multiple languages
- [Contact register](#) information
- [SafeWA user guide](#)
- [Mandatory vaccination](#) Directions and supporting documents
- Mandatory vaccination general and industry-specific [FAQs](#)
- Proof of vaccination [Directions](#), [information](#) and [FAQs](#)

More information

- COVID-19 Clinic ONLY Test Results Enquiry Line: 1800 313 223 (Note: NOT for GP referred testing or private pathology clinic tests)
- COVID-19 WA Public Information Line: 132 6843 (13 COVID)
- COVID-19 Travel Restrictions Exemption Application: Visit the [G2G PASS](#) website
- COVID-19 WA Police Line: 131 444 To report breaches of: self-quarantine, business activities, border controls and other State of Emergency Directions

Next advice – The Bulletin is issued weekly. Next issue: **22 February 2022**.

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This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with disability.

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