



SHICC PUBLIC HEALTH BULLETIN #35

Tuesday 20 September 2022 16:00 Hours

This bulletin has been authorised by **Deputy Incident Controller – Public Health,**
Dr Revle Bangor-Jones

COVID-19 case and vaccination numbers

- **WA:** [Weekly statements](#), [Vaccination dashboard](#) and [WA COVID-19 data update](#)
- **National:** [Current National Status and Australia's vaccine roll-out](#)
- **Worldwide:** [WHO Situation Reports](#) and [WHO Dashboard](#)

Living with COVID

Chief Health Officer advice

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

Weekly reporting period

The Department of Health has transitioned to a weekly COVID-19 statement, in line with a national approach. Western Australia (WA) case data is now available every Friday via the [statement](#) on the Department of Health website.

Changes to case and close contact requirements

The requirements for COVID-19 cases and close contacts **have changed**. Refer to the [HealthyWA website](#) for all requirements.

COVID-19 [cases](#) and [close contacts](#) **must isolate for 5 complete days** (5 x 24 hours). People with COVID-19 symptoms at Day 5 should remain at home until their acute symptoms resolve. **Close contacts must test negative before finishing the 5-day isolation period** (Day 5 rapid antigen test (RAT) or Day 4 PCR).

Staff, elective patients and visitors **must not** enter high-risk facilities including hospitals, healthcare services, residential aged care and disability support accommodation facilities for **7 days** from testing positive. Elective patients and visitors **must not** enter high-risk facilities for **7 days** after becoming a close contact. Close contacts with no symptoms who work in high-risk settings can attend work if certain [requirements](#) are met.

[COVID-19 in the workplace](#) guidance is available on the Department of Health website. Clinicians should refer to [Clinician Alert #87](#).

The Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment [eligibility](#) **has changed** to reflect the new isolation period.

Public holiday COVID Clinic hours

Perth metropolitan public COVID Clinics will operate reduced hours on the upcoming public holidays:

- Thursday 22 September 2022: open 8am-12 noon
- Monday 26 September 2022: open 8am-12 noon

People attending a regional public COVID testing location should phone ahead, as they may have different operating hours. Refer to the HealthyWA [COVID-19 testing clinics](#) page for contact numbers and the most up-to-date information on PCR testing availability.

Private pathology providers determine their own operating hours and should be contacted directly for public holiday arrangements.

RATs remain a convenient, safe and fast way to detect COVID-19.

Private pathology testing pathway

From 1 October 2022, a referral from a GP or other medical practitioner will be required to access PCR testing from private pathology providers. This is in line with existing access pathways to testing for other respiratory illnesses, such as influenza.

Public COVID Clinics will continue to offer PCR testing without a referral for people who have COVID-like symptoms and asymptomatic close contacts.

Information for employers

The WA COVID-19 Test Trace Isolate Quarantine Plan (TTIQ Plan) and the Health Care Worker (HCW) Furloughing Guidelines have been removed from the WA Health website.

Relevant information previously available in these documents is now available at the [COVID-19 in the workplace](#) web page, which includes:

- information to prevent and manage COVID-19 in the workplace
- requirements for asymptomatic close contacts to attend work in non-high risk and in high-risk settings (including HCWs in health care settings)
- links to key resources including HealthyWA case and close contact isolation information, COVID-19 infection prevention and control advice on cleaning and disinfection and COVID-19 vaccination information.

Specific guidance for the management of acute respiratory infection in residential aged care facilities in WA is available at the [COVID-19 information for aged care and community care providers](#) page of the Department of Health [website](#).

Masks

The requirement to wear a [face mask](#) on all domestic aircraft and public transport, as well as rideshare services and taxis, **was removed** Friday 9 September 2022. Masks are strongly encouraged when physical distancing isn't possible, including on public transport and when indoors.

Masks continue to have an important role in high-risk settings, such as healthcare settings, hospitals, and correctional, residential aged care and disability services facilities, to protect those more vulnerable to severe illness.

The Directions are published on the WA Government [website](#).

Continue to be COVID-safe

Public health social measures (PHSMs), COVID-19 testing pathways and testing and isolation requirements are changing, but everyone is still encouraged to remain vigilant as WA continues the transition to 'Living with COVID'.

PHSMs that are recommended to protect from COVID-19 and other illnesses include:

- performing hand hygiene
- practising physical distancing
- wearing a mask in crowded indoor settings, and when visiting those most vulnerable to severe COVID-19 illness
- staying up-to-date with vaccination doses
- staying home when you're unwell
- taking a COVID-19 test if symptoms develop.

COVID-19 vaccination program

COVID-19 vaccinations now available for some children under 5 years

Vaccinations for eligible children began on Monday 5 September 2022 following the recent Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) recommendation for paediatric Moderna COVID-19 vaccination for children aged 6 months to under 5 years with the following conditions:

- the severely immunocompromised
- those with a disability
- those with complex and/or multiple health conditions that increase their risk of severe COVID-19.

A list of relevant medical conditions is available on the Australian Government's [website](#). Children aged 6 months to under 5 years who are not in the above risk categories are not currently recommended for COVID-19 vaccination.

The paediatric Moderna COVID-19 vaccine is available at the Stan Perron Immunisation Centre at Perth Children's Hospital or through several GPs and Aboriginal Medical Services across WA. Details are available through the [COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic Finder](#).

Appointments at Perth Children's Hospital can be booked through [VaccinateWA](#), or by calling 13 COVID (13 268 43).

People who do not live near Perth Children's Hospital or a participating GP clinic can complete the Further Assistance Required [online form](#), email COVID.immunisation@health.wa.gov.au, or ring 13 COVID (13 268 43) and a clinic nurse will be in contact to make alternative arrangements.

Novavax vaccine for adolescents aged 12 to 17 years

The Australian Government has accepted [advice](#) from ATAGI that adolescents aged 12 to 17 years can receive the Novavax COVID-19 vaccine for their primary course of COVID-19 vaccination.

Pfizer, Moderna or Novavax can now be used for the primary course of COVID-19 vaccination in this age group.

From 5 September 2022, adolescents aged 12 to 17 years can book in to receive Novavax COVID-19 vaccination. The recommended primary course dosing schedule for Novavax COVID-19 vaccine is 2 doses, 8 weeks apart.

Novavax is not registered by the TGA for use as a booster dose in adolescents aged 12 to 17 years, however ATAGI have advised that Novavax can be used as a booster in this age group if no other COVID-19 vaccine brand is suitable for that person.

Vaccine information and resources

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

- Australian Government – [COVID-19 booster vaccine advice](#)
- Australian Government – [COVID-19 vaccination clinical considerations](#)
- Australian Government – [COVID-19 vaccine translated information](#)
- WA Department of Health – [COVID-19 information](#) for health professionals and GPs
- HealthyWA – [COVID-19 vaccine](#) (for WA community), including [FAQs](#)
- Keeping Culture Safe and Strong Aboriginal - COVID-19 [vaccination resources](#)

Directions updates

COVID-19 State of Emergency [Declarations](#) and community [advice](#) webpages summarise the latest COVID-19 Directions in place in WA. New [Directions](#) can be found on the WA Government [website](#).

- [Air Travel \(Face Covering\) Revocation Directions](#)
- [COVID Transition \(Face Covering\) Directions \(No 9\)](#)
- [COVID Transition \(Testing and Isolation\) Directions \(No 18\)](#)

Updated factsheets

- [Management of COVID-19 Outbreaks on International Commercial Vessels in Western Australia \(industry fact sheet\) Version 4](#)
- [Information for Tour Operators Version 6](#)
- [Response Checklist for Specific Settings](#) – Last updated 9 September 2022
- [Clinician Alert #87](#)
- [Release of Cases from Isolation: Information for Clinicians](#) – Last updated 14 September 2022
- [What to do if you are a COVID-19 Close Contact Version 10](#)
- [What to do when you Test Positive for COVID-19 Version 10](#)
- [Rapid Antigen Test FAQs Version 9](#)
- [COVID-19 Guidelines for Neonatal Services Version 5.4](#)
- [COVID-19 Guidelines for Hospital Discharge and Interhospital Transfer Version 6.1](#)
- [COVID-19 Visitor Guidelines for WA Public Hospitals and Health Services Version 12.1](#)
- [Supporting Information for the Management of Acute Respiratory Infection \(Including COVID-19 and Influenza\) in RACFs Version 3](#)
- Aboriginal sector material – [Stay strong and healthy](#)
- Aboriginal sector material – [Don't forget your mask](#)
- Aboriginal sector material – [Stop the spread](#)
- Aboriginal sector material – [Clean surfaces you share](#)
- Aboriginal sector material – [Cover coughs and sneezes](#)
- Aboriginal sector material – [Wash hands often](#)
- Aboriginal sector material – [Keep your distance](#)
- Aboriginal sector material – [Get vaccinated](#)
- Aboriginal sector material – [What is COVID - how does it spread](#)

Testing

General population [testing criteria](#)

Testing locations

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

Series of National Guidelines (SoNG)

The [latest](#) iteration was released on 9 September 2022.

Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC)

The AHPPC recently released the following statement:

- [Statement on reduced isolation period for COVID-19 cases](#) – 8 September 2022

Business and industry

Resources for more information

- [WA Department of Health](#) and [HealthyWA](#)
- [WA Department of Health Media releases](#)
- [Australian Department of Health](#)
- [Advice for the public \(WHO\)](#)
- [Advice in other languages](#) and [Translated Resources](#)
- [Advice and resources for Aboriginal people](#)
- [Covid Clinic walkthrough](#) – in multiple languages
- [ServiceWA user guide](#)
- [Mandatory vaccination](#) Directions and supporting documents
- [Mandatory vaccination Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Proof of vaccination Directions, information](#) and [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [COVID-19 in the workplace](#) – Information for employers and employees
- [Posters, signage and resources](#) for businesses

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: 13 268 43 (13 COVID)
- COVID-19 WA Police Line: 131 444 to report breaches of quarantine, business activities, border controls and other State of Emergency Directions

Next advice The Bulletin is issued fortnightly. Next issue: 5 October 2022.

Last updated 20 September 2022

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

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