



SHICC PUBLIC HEALTH BULLETIN #32

Tuesday 9 August 2022 16:00 Hours

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

COVID-19 case and vaccination numbers

- **Summary:** for Western Australia (WA) to date:
 - **1,092,607** confirmed cases of COVID-19 notified
 - **1,074,767** people recovered from COVID-19
 - **4,404,788** COVID-19 PCR tests conducted
- **WA:** [Daily snapshot](#), [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](#).

When to use a RAT

Rapid antigen tests (RATs) remain a vital measure to protect the community from COVID-19 and are a convenient, safe and fast way to test for the disease.

People with [COVID-19 symptoms](#) should get tested using a RAT or visit a [COVID-19 testing clinic](#).

Instead of seeking a PCR test, people who are unsure about a negative RAT result should test again after 24 hours.

More free RATs for schools

An additional 11.87 million [free RATs](#) will be distributed via public, Catholic and independent schools over the coming weeks to assist families and staff easily access COVID-19 testing. Each student will be provided an additional 20 free RATs, and an allocation is available for staff.

All RATs available for sale in Australia, and those being distributed via the WA Government's free RATs program, are safe, effective and approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). The TGA [website](#) has a list of all RATs approved for use in Australia.

SAR update scheduled

The [new](#) System Alert and Response ([SAR](#)) Framework Blue alert level will be implemented from Monday 15 August 2022. Until then, the State remains at Red alert level.

The statewide step down of current measures to a Blue alert level will apply to all public hospitals and health services covered under the SAR, providing consistent, systemwide guidance designed to support effective processing of patients through hospitals and emergency departments, while

maintaining sensible measures to protect healthcare workers and those who are most at risk of developing serious illness from COVID-19.

Key changes include:

- reduced screening requirements
- targeted testing
- changes to staff mask requirements
- visitor hours reverting to normal, 7 days per week
- staff conducting proof of vaccination (or valid exemption) spot checks, rather than mass on-entry inspections.

Amended Proof of Vaccination Directions and Visitors to Hospitals and Disability Support Accommodation Facilities Directions will come into effect at 12:01am Monday 15 August 2022 to support the SAR alert level change. The updated COVID-19 Visitor Guideline for WA Public Hospital and Health Services will become available on the Department of Health [website](#).

Monitor the resources on the Department of Health [website](#) for the most up-to-date information.

COVID-19 antiviral access

The eligibility criteria to access COVID-19 antiviral treatment have expanded. Eligibility depends on age, existing medical conditions, and other risk factors such as living in residential aged care.

People at greater risk of illness are encouraged to see their GP in advance of getting sick so treatments can be identified should they contract COVID-19. If antiviral treatment is appropriate, clinics are encouraged to accommodate urgent telehealth appointments for these patients upon testing positive.

Information and resources are available on the [COVID-19 treatments](#) page of the HealthyWA website.

Updated isolation and travel advice

The COVID-19 case and contact isolation advice has been updated. COVID-19 cases and contacts may travel home (or to alternative isolation premises), with overnight stays, by private vehicle, taxi or rideshare service, provided certain requirements are met.

Refer to the [COVID-safe travel in WA](#) page of the HealthyWA website and the [Directions](#) on the WA Government website for information.

Release from isolation

People diagnosed with COVID-19 are not required to return a negative COVID-19 test before leaving isolation or returning to work. After isolating for 7 complete days, people can leave isolation provided respiratory symptoms have substantially cleared and they have not had a fever for the previous 24 hours.

There is a small risk of reinfection during the first 4 weeks of recovery. People who have recovered from COVID-19 and develop new symptoms within this period should **stay home while sick**. **People at higher risk of severe disease should** seek advice from their healthcare provider.

Advice for [COVID-19 cases](#) and [recently recovered](#) cases is available on the HealthyWA website.

New COVID-19 video series

Watch 'The Brief' – a new educational video series available on WA Health's [YouTube channel](#). This video playlist features medical professionals speaking about current COVID-19 advice and general health information in a short, concise and easy-to-translate format, categorised by topic.

The videos cover topics such as COVID-19 testing, variants and how to stay safe, antiviral medications, test and isolation rules, and reinfection, with more to follow. Keep an eye on HealthyWA [Facebook](#) for updates.

Please share this resource link with any relevant contacts.

COVID-19 vaccination program

COVID-19 vaccinations now recommended for some young children aged 6 months to 5 years

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) recommends the Moderna COVID-19 vaccination for some young children aged 6 months to 5 years.

This includes children:

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

A list of relevant medical conditions is available on the Federal Government's [website](#).

Eligible children in this age group will receive 2 primary doses. Children who are severely immunocompromised will need 3 primary doses. The recommended interval between doses is 8 weeks.

More information about making an appointment will be available in early September.

Children who are not in the above risk categories are not currently recommended for COVID-19 vaccination.

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](#)
- Australian Government – Updated [fact sheet](#) on booster doses and winter doses (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people)
- HealthyWA – [COVID-19 vaccine](#) (for WA community), including [FAQs](#)
- HealthyWA – [Influenza and COVID-19](#) vaccines information
- 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. Further information can be found on the WA Government [website](#). New COVID-19 Directions are published at the WA Government [website](#).

New Directions

- [Proof of Vaccination Directions \(No 7\)](#)
- [Visitors to Hospitals and Disability Support Accommodation Facilities Directions \(No 2\)](#)

Updated factsheets

- [WA Health COVID-19 Framework for System Alert and Response \(SAR\) Version 9](#)
- [COVID-19: Information for Tour Operators Version 5](#)
- [COVID-19 Guidelines for Public Hospital Discharge and Inter-hospital Transfer Version 5](#)
- [Management of COVID-19 Outbreaks on International Commercial Vessels in Western Australia \(Industry Factsheet\)](#)

Testing

General population [testing criteria](#)

Testing locations

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

Series of National Guidelines (SoNG)

The [latest](#) iteration was released on 22 July 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
- [SafeWA user guide](#)
- [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: **25 August 2022**.

Last updated **10 August 2022**

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

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