



# SHICC PUBLIC HEALTH BULLETIN #18

**Tuesday, 29 March 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:** as of Tuesday, **29 March**, in Western Australia (WA), there have been:
  - **154,901** confirmed cases of COVID-19 notified
  - **105,061** people recovered from COVID-19
  - **2,980,357** COVID-19 PCR tests conducted
- **WA:** [Daily snapshot](#), [Vaccination dashboard](#) and [WA COVID-19 data update](#)
- **National:** [Current National Status & 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](#).

- [Changes to Public Health and Social Measures](#) — 24 March 2022

### Public health and social measures

The current Level 2 public health and social measures (PHSMs) will be eased as of 12:01am Thursday, 31 March 2022. The revised PHSMs will affect gatherings, density and capacity limits, contact registration requirements, access to hospital, residential aged and disability care facilities, events, community sport and higher education requirements.

Masks will continue to be required for people aged 8 years and above (and Year 3 and higher in school), other than in the home. Mask [advice](#) can be found on HealthyWA.

Refer to the [announcement](#) and [WA.gov.au](#) for further information. Once published, the Directions will be available via the [WA.gov.au Publications](#) page.

### School-specific advice

Restrictions in Western Australian schools will be eased for the start of [Term 2](#). Parents and carers will be permitted to attend school sites in certain situations if requirements are followed.

School camps remain postponed due to the COVID-19 transmission and disruption to learning risks.

Schools' contact tracing and reporting requirements have now changed; schools are only required to identify close contacts of cases within their school. Parents/guardians are required to identify all other close contacts (e.g. community sport, social gatherings).

Information for COVID-19 positive cases, including how to identify close contacts, is available on the 'Looking after yourself' [page](#) of HealthyWA.

## Recently recovered ('recent') cases

People who have recovered from COVID-19 do not need to be tested for COVID-19 within the **12 weeks** following the completion of their required isolation, including if they have symptoms that are consistent with COVID-19, are told they are a close contact, or are tested for workplace screening.

A recent case who develops symptoms associated with COVID-19 within 12 weeks should remain at home until symptoms resolve and seek advice from their healthcare provider, if required.

A recent case is not considered a close contact and does not require testing or quarantine.

Further information is available in the [Directions](#) and on the HealthyWA [Close contact](#) and [Quarantine and isolation](#) pages.

## Waste management

Waste that is contaminated with blood or body fluids is classified as clinical waste. Most waste generated in healthcare facilities and other workplaces, including all personal protective equipment (such as gowns, gloves, face shields and masks), can be classified as general waste.

Used rapid antigen tests can also be disposed of into general waste.

Face masks should not be altered before they are disposed of into general waste, and ear loop should not be removed. Refer to HealthyWA for face mask [advice](#).

All waste should be bagged and securely sealed before transporting for disposal.

Adhere to the [Code of Practice for Clinical and Related Waste](#) management for classification and disposal of general, clinical and sharps waste. The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) have provided [information](#) on the management of waste during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Actual vs scenario modelled case data

Bi-weekly data updates are available at the Department of Health [website](#). The updates compare WA Health scenario data and actual data, including cumulative cases, COVID-19 ward and ICU admissions, and COVID-19 vaccination status of hospital admissions.

## Safe isolation and quarantine

Updated advice about how to isolate and quarantine effectively is available on the HealthyWA website, including how to protect others, care for others, and what to do when living with those at greater risk of serious illness. The advice is also available as a printable factsheet. Refer to the 'What is isolation and quarantine and how do I do so safely?' [accordion](#).

Refer to the 'Looking after yourself in quarantine and isolation' [accordion](#) for advice about food and medication access during isolation and quarantine, what to do in an emergency and how to access medical assistance.

Asymptomatic close contacts can now leave isolation to get a COVID-19 vaccination if they can produce evidence of receiving a negative COVID-19 rapid antigen test within four hours before entering the vaccination site. This does **not** apply to symptomatic close contacts and confirmed cases of COVID-19. Refer to the [Directions](#) for all the requirements.

## COVID-19 Care Plans

It's important that plans are in place in case you or someone in your household needs to isolate. Care Plans include information about you, your health and details of your plans for the care of adults, children and animals in your care, should you need to go to the hospital. Care Plans for all adults and children should be completed and placed somewhere easy to find (e.g. on the fridge or beside the bed). They can also be shared with your GP, hospital staff, and family or support person.

Refer to the 'COVID-19 Care Plans' accordion on the 'Staying Safe' page of [HealthyWA](#).

## Taxi and rideshare safety

Updated advice for rideshare and taxi drivers and passengers is [available](#) at the Department of Health website. Refer to the 'Travel, State quarantine facilities, accommodation and shared living' accordion.

## Elective surgery

Private hospitals **resumed** short-stay surgeries from Wednesday, 23 March 2022, after a [review](#) of the pause on performing certain surgeries. Day and single night stay Category 3 and non-urgent Category 2 surgeries **recommenced**. There is no change to booking at public hospitals.

## COVID-19 case resources

Resources are available for people who return a positive COVID-19 test result. HealthyWA contains information about [looking after yourself](#), a 'what to do' [checklist](#), [quarantine and isolation](#) information, COVID-19 positive [children](#) advice, and a [symptom diary](#). The testing and isolation [protocols](#), among other resources, are available on [WA.gov.au](#).

COVID-19 cases and their family / caregivers are encouraged to refer to the resources on [HealthyWA](#) and [WA.gov.au](#) regularly to access the most up to date information.

## Community

### Resources for industry and business

A 'COVID-19 in the workplace: Information for employers and employees' hub is now available on the Department of Health [website](#). Resources include tailored advice for certain sectors and a checklist to identify close contacts in the workplace. **Guidance for safe isolation in congregate living and large households has recently been published**. This advice accompanies existing guidance, including the [TTIQ](#) (Test, Trace, Isolate and Quarantine) Plan.

Businesses are encouraged to refer to the [Department of Health](#) and [HealthyWA](#) websites regularly for the most up to date advice.

## COVID-19 vaccination program

### ATAGI infographic on COVID-19 vaccines and doses

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) has created a table which outlines the COVID-19 vaccines and doses that are recommended for each age and population group.

This one page reference can be downloaded from the Australian Government [website](#).

### Winter booster dose recommendations

ATAGI recommends an additional winter booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccination for selected population groups who are at greatest risk of severe illness from COVID-19 and who have received their primary vaccination course and first booster dose. This is to increase protection for people in these groups before winter starts.

These groups are:

- Adults aged 65 years and older
- Residents of aged care or disability care facilities
- People aged 16 years and older with severe immunocompromise (as defined in the [ATAGI statement](#))
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 50 years and older.

ATAGI does not currently recommend an additional booster dose for healthy people who are not in one of the above groups.

The additional winter booster dose can be given:

- from 4 months or longer after the person has received their first booster dose, or
- from 4 months after a confirmed COVID-19 infection, if infection occurred since the person's first COVID-19 booster dose.

See the ATAGI [statement](#) about recommendations for a winter booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine.

## Summary – vaccines recommended for boosters

No booster vaccine is recommended for people aged 5–15 years.

Comirnaty (Pfizer) is the only recommended vaccine for use as a booster for people aged 16–17 years.

For individuals aged 18 years and older, Comirnaty (Pfizer) or Spikevax (Moderna) COVID-19 vaccine are preferred for use as booster doses, however, Nuvaxovid (Novavax) can be used if no other COVID-19 vaccine is considered suitable for that [individual](#).

The AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine is no longer recommended by [ATAGI](#) for use as the booster dose for people who received a primary vaccination course of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine, although it can still be used for this purpose if these individuals decline receiving an mRNA vaccine as a booster dose.

AstraZeneca is now only recommended when there are medical contraindications to the mRNA vaccines.

## 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)
- Australian Government – [COVID-19 vaccines hub](#)
- [Australian Government – COVID-19 vaccine fact sheets and guides](#)
- [Roll up for WA](#) and [Roll up for WA stakeholder toolkit](#)
- Keeping Culture Safe and Strong Aboriginal - COVID-19 [vaccination resources](#)
- Australian Government – COVID-19 vaccination [Easy Read](#) 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 WA Government [website](#).

## New Directions

- [COVID Transition \(Public Health and Social Measures\) Directions \(No 2\)](#)
- [COVID Transition \(Testing and Isolation\) Directions \(No 8\)](#)
- [Critical Infrastructure Worker \(Restrictions on Access\) Directions \(No 2\)](#)
- [WA Correctional Facility Entrant \(Restrictions on Access\) Directions \(No 2\)](#)

- [COVID Transition \(Face Covering\) Directions \(No 5\)](#)
- [Rapid Antigen Test \(Restrictions on Sale and Supply\) Directions \(No 3\)](#)
- [Visitors to Residential Aged Care Facilities Directions \(No 12\)](#)

## Updated factsheets

- [What to do when you test positive for COVID-19 Version 4](#)
- [What to do when your COVID-19 test is Confirmed as Positive Checklist Version 4](#)
- [Congregate Living and Large Households — Safe Isolation for Cases and Close Contacts](#)
- [COVID-19 TTIQ Workplace Checklist — Congregate Living Facilities Version 2](#)
- [Testing Criteria for SARS-CoV-2 in Western Australia #37](#)
- [Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines for Western Australian Residential Care Facilities Version 2.1](#)

## Testing

### General population testing criteria

The *Testing Criteria for SARS-CoV-2 in Western Australia #37* is available on the Department of Health [website](#) under the 'Testing' accordion.

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 [online](#) or by printing the notification form (standard notifiable infectious diseases process should be followed).

COVID-19 positive rapid antigen test (RAT) results must be registered on the HealthyWA [website](#) or by phoning 13 COVID (13 268 43).

## Series of National Guidelines (SoNG)

The [latest](#) iteration was released on 22 March 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
- [Contact registers](#) information
- [SafeWA user guide](#)
- [ServiceWA user guide](#)
- [Mandatory vaccination](#) Directions and supporting documents
- [Mandatory vaccination general and industry-specific](#) [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 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: **5 April 2022**.

**Last updated 29 March 2022**

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

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