



SHICC PUBLIC HEALTH BULLETIN #30

Tuesday 12 July 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:
 - 967,525 confirmed cases of COVID-19 notified
 - 933,060 people recovered from COVID-19
 - 4,184,589 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](#).

Reinfection update

WA is adopting new national health advice on COVID-19 reinfection – updating the State's guidelines to show reinfection can occur from 4 weeks after recovering from the virus. COVID-19 reinfection cases were previously defined as a case that occurs more than 12 weeks after an initial infection.

The updated [advice](#), from the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC), follows the detection of an increasing number of BA.4 and BA.5 COVID-19 Omicron variants in the WA community. These subvariants are now dominant in the WA community, representing over 50 per cent of new cases.

The new guidance means:

- People who have had COVID-19 should again get tested and isolate if they have symptoms more than 4 weeks after recovering from COVID-19.
- People who develop new acute respiratory symptoms within 4 weeks of recovery should stay at home and seek advice from their healthcare provider.
- People who meet the close contact definition within 4 weeks of release from isolation and who are asymptomatic do not need to follow close contact requirements.

This updated reinfection advice does **not** impact the recommended interval between COVID-19 infection and a COVID-19 vaccination. People who have recovered from COVID-19 must wait 3 months after having a COVID-19 infection before receiving a [COVID-19 vaccination](#).

Listen to the Chief Health Officer, Dr Andrew Robertson, speak to [6PR](#) about COVID-19 reinfection.

Additional information is available in the [announcement](#) and [media statement](#).

Free influenza vaccination program extended

The free influenza vaccination program has been extended until the end of July for everyone in WA.

Influenza (commonly called the 'flu') is a highly contagious virus that affects the respiratory system and is particularly dangerous for young children, older adults and those with underlying health conditions. Influenza vaccination is the best protection against serious illness and is recommended for everyone from 6 months of age.

People can receive their free influenza vaccination at participating pharmacies and GPs. Free influenza vaccinations are also available at State-run COVID-19 vaccination clinics for anyone aged 5 years and older.

The COVID-19 vaccine does not protect against influenza, so you should still have an influenza vaccine if you've had the COVID-19 vaccinations.

More information on influenza vaccination, including where to get one and the importance of receiving the COVID-19 and influenza vaccine, is available at [HealthyWA](#).

Preparing for COVID-safe travel

Before you travel, ensure you plan for what you'll do if you test positive to COVID-19 or become a close contact while you're away. For example:

- Consider what you'll do if you get COVID-19 and are unable to return home safely to isolate. You may need to stay where you are (in your holiday accommodation) or find alternative accommodation.
- Take medication and other essential supplies in case you're unable to access them while you're away. For example, take rapid antigen tests (RATs), face masks, hand sanitiser, tissues, and medication (pain relief, regular medications, and prescriptions). Consider how you'll get food delivered if you need to isolate.

More COVID-safe travel tips are available the HealthyWA [website](#).

Tour operators and COVID-19

Tour operators are reminded to ensure appropriate plans and protocols are in place if guests or staff develop COVID-19 symptoms, become a COVID-19 case or close contact.

Tour operators conducting overnight tours with accommodation shall assist to coordinate [appropriate isolation](#) for guests and staff who become COVID-19 cases. It's recommended operators identify appropriate accommodation ahead of tours, recognising there is limited accommodation available in many parts of regional WA and people who test positive for COVID-19 are not permitted to return home via commercial aircrafts while they are in isolation.

[COVID-safe](#) principles should be practised on tour to minimise the risk of COVID-19 transmission. These include:

- Using [face masks](#) as required and encouraging their use when physical distancing isn't possible
- Following [enhanced cleaning practices](#), where relevant
- Ensuring guests and staff have access to hand sanitiser, face masks and RATs
- Facilitating COVID-19 testing by RAT or PCR for people with symptoms consistent with COVID-19.

Further information for [tour operators](#) is available at the Department of Health [website](#) in the 'travel, accommodation and shared living' section.

COVID-19 testing clinic changes

Four metropolitan PCR testing clinics – those at Fiona Stanley Hospital, Armadale Health Service, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital and St John of God Midland Public Hospital – will close from 15 July 2022.

[Free PCR testing](#) will continue to be available at other sites across WA, including near the closed locations.

Testing clinics at Royal Perth Hospital, Joondalup Health Campus, Rockingham Hospital and the PathWest public drive-through facility in Murdoch (alongside Fiona Stanley Hospital) will continue to operate between 8am and 8pm on weekdays and from 8am to 4pm on weekends.

Free RATs to be handed out at pop-up locations

Three million additional free rapid antigen tests (RATs) will be available for the Western Australian community at pop-up distribution sites in metropolitan and regional areas.

Free RATs can now be collected from Perth metropolitan shopping centres and train stations, **and regional pop-up locations**.

Additional RATs are also available for people with a [disability](#) and their support workers.

Visit the [WA free RAT program page](#) for more information. The page will be updated regularly over the coming weeks as more locations are added.

COVID-19 vaccination program

Winter COVID-19 booster eligibility expanded

ATAGI has updated its [recommendations](#) for a winter dose of COVID-19 vaccine to help reduce severe disease from the emerging surge of Omicron BA.4 and BA.5 subvariant infections, and to reduce the burden on Australian hospitals and the healthcare system in coming months.

From Monday 11 July 2022:

- Adults aged 50 to 64 years are recommended to receive a winter booster dose of a COVID-19 vaccine.
- Adults aged 30 to 49 years can receive a winter booster dose of a COVID-19 vaccine.
- The interval recommended between a recent COVID-19 infection, or last booster dose, and a winter booster dose is 3 months.

This advice is in addition to the previous recommendations for a winter booster, which remain in place for:

- All adults aged 65 years or older
- Residents of aged care or disability care facilities
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 50 years or older
- People who are [severely immunocompromised](#) (this will be their fifth dose)
- People aged 16 years or older with a [medical condition](#) that increases the risk of severe COVID-19 illness
- People aged 16 years or older with disability, significant or complex health needs, or multiple comorbidities which increase the risk of a poor outcome.

To reduce wait times, bookings are encouraged and can be made through [VaccinateWA](#). Winter boosters are available at any state-run COVID-19 vaccination clinic or an appointment can be booked through a participating GP or pharmacy using [Vaccine Clinic Finder](#).

Vaccination post COVID-19 infection

ATAGI updated their [advice](#) relating to individuals with a past COVID-19 infection. They recommend all people should wait **3 months** post confirmed infection with COVID-19 before they receive their next scheduled COVID-19 vaccination.

Following this 3-month period, the next scheduled COVID-19 dose should be given as soon as possible.

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 Directions

- [COVID Transition \(Testing and Isolation\) Directions \(No 16\)](#)
- [COVID Transition \(Face Covering\) Directions \(No 8\)](#)
- [COVID \(Redundant Instruments\) Revocation Directions \(No 2\)](#)
- [Revocation Instrument \(No. 2\) 2022 - Authorisation to Supply or Administer a Poison \[SARS-COV-2 \(COVID-19\)\]](#)
- [Prohibition on the Use of Nebuliser Machines Directions \(No 4\) Revocation Directions](#)

Updated factsheets

- [Clinician Alert #68](#)
- [Release of Cases from Isolation: Information for Clinicians](#) – Updated 12 July 2022
- [Testing Criteria for SARS-CoV-2 in Western Australia #40](#)
- [Infection Prevention and Control Advice on Cleaning and Disinfection Version 1.2](#)
- [COVID-19 Visitor Guideline for WA Public Hospital and Health Services Version 11.1](#)
- [Guidelines for Outpatient Services Version 3.6](#)
- [N95 and P2 Respirator Options for WA Health Care Facilities](#)
- [Guidelines on the use of the HALO CS3000 Powered Air-Purifying Power Unit Version 4](#)
- [Communication Pathway for Vessels with Concern of COVID-19](#) – Updated 6 July 2022
- [Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines for Western Australian Residential Care Facilities Version 2.1](#)
- [What to do when you Test Positive for COVID-19 Version 9](#)
- [What to do if you are a COVID-19 Close Contact Version 9](#)

Testing

General population [testing criteria](#)

The *Testing Criteria for SARS-CoV-2 in Western Australia #40* is now available.

Testing locations

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

Series of National Guidelines (SoNG)

The [latest](#) iteration was released on **8 June 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 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: **26 July 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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