



SHICC PUBLIC HEALTH BULLETIN #37

Tuesday 18 October 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](#).

Mandatory isolation requirements removed

Following an agreement at [National Cabinet](#), the mandatory isolation requirements for COVID-19 positive cases and their close contacts were removed on 14 October 2022.

However, Western Australians are still encouraged to take steps to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and protect others.

Anyone who is [COVID-19 positive](#) or experiencing [symptoms](#) (runny nose, sore throat, cough, fever) is strongly encouraged to stay home until they have recovered.

It is recommended that those with COVID-19:

- stay at home for at least 5 days and until symptoms clear
- register their positive rapid antigen test (RAT) with [WA Health](#)
- don't visit people at high risk of severe illness, such as aged or disability care facilities or healthcare facilities, such as GPs, physio or dentists for 7 days after testing positive
- notify their employer and discuss when to return to work.

Guidance for COVID-19 [cases](#) and [close contacts](#) is available at the [HealthyWA](#) website. Information for employers and employees is available at the [Department of Health](#) website.

Exclusion period

While mandatory isolation requirements for COVID-19 cases and close contacts has been removed, some settings require ongoing risk management to protect those most vulnerable to severe illness.

People who work in a public hospital or public healthcare facility **cannot** attend work for 7 days after testing positive for COVID-19.

To protect those most at risk from COVID-19, for 7 days after testing positive to COVID-19, workers and visitors:

- **must not** enter public health service facilities including public hospitals, public mental health services and public community dental services
- **should not** enter high-risk settings including disability and mental health and aged care residential facilities and healthcare settings (e.g. private hospitals, ambulance services, GP clinics, physiotherapy).

Asymptomatic close contacts who work in high-risk settings can attend work with the agreement of their employer, provided they meet [certain conditions](#).

The [WA Health COVID-19 Framework for System Alert and Response \(SAR\)](#) was developed to provide proactive and coordinated guidance to the WA health system to respond to the changing risks of COVID-19. Private hospitals and healthcare settings are not required to follow this framework, however, may use it as a guide when creating their own policies.

Masks still required in high-risk settings

[Masks](#) are still required for people aged 12 years and over (year 7 and over for schools):

- at hospitals and healthcare settings
- at residential aged care facilities and other residential care facilities
- in ambulance and patient transport services
- at primary health clinics (including general practitioner clinics, Aboriginal health services, private nurse offices and maternal, child, and dental health clinics)
- at specialist outpatient services and day procedure centres
- at allied health services including radiology, physiotherapy and occupational therapy services.

Masks are not mandated for healthcare settings that do not have face-to-face interaction with patients (including telehealth services, pathology laboratories and corporate areas within health facilities).

If you believe you need wear a mask in certain circumstances, you are encouraged to do so.

Refer to the [HealthyWA](#) website for additional information.

Closure of Rockingham and RPH COVID clinics

In line with the wide accessibility of RATs, two state-run testing clinics will be closing.

- Rockingham COVID clinic will close on Friday 21 October 2022
- Royal Perth Hospital COVID clinic will close on Friday 28 October 2022.

The remaining [COVID clinics](#) at Murdoch, Joondalup, Broome and Bunbury will continue to provide PCR tests until further notice.

GP referral for private PCR testing

A reminder that patients need a referral from a GP or other medical practitioner to access [PCR testing](#) by private pathology providers.

People who are close contacts or with COVID-like symptoms can continue to receive PCR testing without a referral at Public COVID clinics. These clinics are at Joondalup Hospital, PathWest Murdoch

drive-through, Rockingham Hospital drive-through and Royal Perth Hospital in the metro area, and at regional testing locations as [listed](#).

In most circumstances, a rapid antigen test (RAT) is suitable to test for COVID-19 and is safe, convenient and fast.

New Bill introduced to WA Parliament

The WA Government has introduced a Bill into State Parliament to provide a new framework to manage COVID-19.

The new framework will allow for a 'Temporary COVID-19 Declaration' for the continuation of public health measures to manage COVID-19 in the community without a State of Emergency declaration. It will not allow the closure of State borders.

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

COVID-19 vaccination program

State-run vaccination clinics update

State-run vaccination clinics across Western Australia are [scaling down](#), with pop up clinics to continue for target priority groups.

Vaccines are still available from participating GPs and pharmacies for those requiring vaccinations. People should visit [Roll up for WA](#) or [VaccinateWA](#) for provider locations and booking details.

The State-run vaccination clinics at Claremont Showgrounds, Armadale, Maddington and Wanneroo were recently closed. The other clinics will close in a phased approach - Joondalup on 27 October, Midland on 29 October, Mirrabooka and Kwinana on (6 November).

Scaling back State-run vaccination clinics will free up resources and staff to devote time to pop-up clinics, with some staff returning to other roles within the health system.

Bivalent Original/Omicron (Moderna) vaccine included in COVID-19 vaccination program

As [advised](#) by the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI), the Bivalent Original/Omicron (Moderna) is now included in the COVID-19 vaccination program for boosters in people aged 18 years or older.

This Moderna bivalent vaccine can be used as an alternative vaccine for any booster dose in people aged 18 years or older according to the current ATAGI [recommendations](#) for booster doses. ATAGI does not currently recommend use of the Moderna bivalent vaccine as a booster in anyone under 18 years as it is not registered for this age group.

It is not recommended for the primary course of vaccination (first two doses in most people or first three doses in severely immunocompromised people).

The Moderna bivalent vaccine will be available from participating pharmacies and GPs, which can be found on the [Vaccine Clinic Finder](#).

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](#).

Updated factsheets

- [Testing criteria for SARS-CoV-2 in Western Australia #41 – 14 October 2022](#)
- [Molnupiravir \(Lagevrio®\) Patient Information](#)
- [Nirmatrelvir plus Ritonavir \(Paxlovid®\) Patient Information](#)
- [WA Department of Health Prioritisation of COVID-19 Medicines Version 6](#)
- [Guidelines for Renal Dialysis Version 2.6](#)
- [Dialysis and COVID-19: Risks and Information](#) – updated 12 October 2022
- [Where to get Tested in Regional and Remote WA](#) – updated October 2022
- [WA Health COVID-19 Framework for System Alert and Response \(SAR\) Version 9.2](#)
- [COVID-19 Clinician Alert #88.pdf](#)

Testing

General population [testing criteria](#)

The [Testing Criteria for SARS-CoV-2 in Western Australia #41](#) came into effect from 14 October 2022.

Testing locations

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

Series of National Guidelines (SoNG)

The [latest](#) iteration was released on 14 October 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: **2 November 2022**.

Last updated 18 October 2022

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

© Department of Health 2022