



# Agency Advisory #9

## COVID-19 (Coronavirus disease)

Friday 13 March 2020 **14:00** Hours (latest updates in RED)

This advisory has been authorised by the PHEOC Coordinator, Dr Clare Huppatz

### New Information

- As of 13 March 2020, there are 14 confirmed cases in WA.
- To date, 3,788 Western Australians tested for COVID-19 in WA have returned a negative result.
- As at 11:00 AEDT 13 March 2020, there have been 161 laboratory confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Australia, and three deaths. Of the 161 confirmed cases, there have been 77 cases from NSW, 27 cases from QLD, 12 cases from SA, three cases from TAS, 27 cases from VIC and 14 cases from WA.
- [Western Australian Government Pandemic Plan March 2020](#)
- On 12 March 2020, the WHO made the assessment that COVID-19 can be characterised as a pandemic.
- **NEW & UPDATED DAILY - Snapshot Infographic** [Daily Snapshot COVID-19](#)
- According to the most recent [WHO Situation Report](#) dated 12 March 2020, in the past 24 hours:
  - Worldwide: 6,729 new confirmed cases were reported (125,048 total);
  - In China: 26 new confirmed cases were reported (80,981 total); 11 new deaths were reported (3,173 total). Note that from 13 to 20 February 2020 China included “clinically diagnosed” cases and some of these may have been revised later pending laboratory outcomes. This may affect case numbers reported during and following that period;
  - Outside of China: 6,703 new confirmed cases were reported (44,067 total). Four new countries/territories/area (French Polynesia, Turkey, Honduras and Côte d’Ivoire) reported cases (117 countries/territories/areas total). Two-hundred and ten new deaths outside of China were reported (1,440 total). The highest intensity of local transmission is occurring in Iran and certain regions of Italy (Lombardy and Veneto) and the Republic of Korea (Daegu and Chengdo).
- **Opening of Western Australian Metro COVID Clinics - Media Statement**  
[COVID-19 Clinics Media Statement 10 March](#)
- **Ban on Work-Related International Travel for WA Health Staff - Due to the international outbreak of COVID-19, the State Government has recently banned non-critical, work-related international travel for public sector employees, effective immediately. In order to protect our staff and patients, WA Health has decided to extend this ban to include all funded international work-related travel, including sponsored travel.**
- **INFORMATION FOR EMPLOYERS – It is not possible for employees to provide medical certificates if they have been declined a test for COVID-19. People who do not have symptoms SHOULD NOT be tested**

- Based on the expert medical advice of the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC), Commonwealth, State and Territory governments have agreed to provide public advice against holding non-essential, organised public gatherings of more than 500 people from Monday 16th March 2020. For more information visit the [Department of Health website](#)
- COVID-19 Media [Minister for Health The Hon Greg Hunt MP Interview Today Show](#)
- In WA, the Chief Health Officer has formally escalated the [Infectious Disease Emergency Management Plan](#) to INITIAL ACTION PHASE.
- The [State Hazard Plan Human Biosecurity](#) has been escalated to the response phase and a Level 2 Incident Level Declaration made by the Incident Controller, Dr Andrew Robertson. This declaration does not change the internal response activities for Health Service Providers. SHP – Human Biosecurity details the roles and responsibilities of emergency service agencies. An Operational Area Support Group will be formed with a meeting invite to the standard emergency response agencies to occur in the coming days
- TRAVEL ALERTS - All travel alerts regarding COVID-19 can be followed at [Smartraveller](#).
- DFAT travel advice levels related to COVID-19 current at 13 March 2020:
  - All Australians are advised to 'reconsider the need to travel' overseas at this time;
  - China: 'do not travel';
  - Iran: 'do not travel';
  - The Republic of Korea: 'reconsider the need to travel'. It is also advised that travellers 'do not travel' to Daegu in South Korea;
  - Italy: 'reconsider the need to travel'. It is also advised that travellers 'do not travel' to the region of Lombardia (Lombardy) and provinces of Modena, Parma, Piacenza, Reggio nell'Emilia, Rimini, Pesaro and Urbino, Alessandria, Asti, Novara, Verbania-Cusio-Ossola, Vercelli, Padova, Treviso, and Venezia;
  - Mongolia: 'reconsider the need to travel';
  - Japan: 'exercise a high degree of caution';
  - Lebanon: 'exercise a high degree of caution';
  - Spain: 'exercise a high degree of caution'. It is also advised that travellers 'reconsider the need to travel' to the cities of Igualada, Santa Margarida de Montbui, Òdena and Vilanova del Camí in the region of Catalonia;
  - DFAT has also advised Australians, particularly those with underlying health concerns, to reconsider taking an overseas cruise at this time due to COVID-19. Repatriation from cruise ships affected by COVID-19 should not be relied upon as an option.

## Returning Travellers

- The following travel restrictions are in place for people entering Australia having left mainland China (excluding Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan) or Iran in the last 14 days; for people entering Australia having left the Republic of Korea on or after 5 March 2020; and, for people entering Australia having left Italy on or after 11 March 2020:
  - foreign nationals (excluding permanent residents of Australia) will not be allowed to enter Australia until 14 days after they have left or transited through mainland China (excluding Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan), Iran or the Republic of Korea;
  - Australian citizens, permanent residents and their immediate family will still be able to enter Australia, as well as airline crews who have been using appropriate personal protective equipment;
  - If you are returning from mainland China or Iran, you must isolate yourself for 14 days after leaving mainland China or Iran;
  - If you are travelling from the Republic of Korea, on or after 5 March 2020, you must isolate yourself for 14 days from the time you left the Republic of Korea;
  - If you are travelling from Italy, on or after 11 March 2020, you must isolate yourself for 14 days from the time you left Italy.
- Countries considered to pose a risk of transmission as at 13 March 2020: This list is based on the risk of the person having been exposed to COVID-19 due to travel to a country with sustained

community transmission and/or based on the patterns of travel between those countries and Australia, and/or the other epidemiological evidence.

- **Higher risk:** Mainland China, Iran, Italy, South Korea
- **Moderate risk:** All other countries

The most up to date list can be accessed at: [Risk Of Transmission Countries](#)

- **All returned travellers who have travelled overseas in the last 14 days should self-monitor for symptoms and immediately isolate themselves if they become unwell.**
- **HEALTHCARE WORKERS IN HOSPITALS OR RESIDENTIAL SETTINGS** - Healthcare workers who have returned from any *higher risk country* (Mainland China, Iran, South Korea, Italy) should be advised not to undertake work in a hospital or residential care setting, including aged care facility, for 14 days since leaving the higher risk country.
- Australian Health Protection Principal Committee [latest news](#)

## Summary of other key information

- On 30 January 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) International Health Regulations Emergency Committee declared the outbreak of COVID-19 a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC).
- In Western Australia the Communicable Disease Control Directorate within the WA Department of Health Public and Aboriginal Health Division is leading the response to COVID-19 with the instigation of the Public Health Emergency Operation Centre (PHEOC), in collaboration with the State Health Incident Coordination Centre (SHICC), and with support from the Population/Public Health Units and Health Service Providers.
- The best way to protect yourself and others against COVID-19 is to practise good hygiene. WA Health does not recommend the use of facemasks for the general community (who have no symptoms of respiratory illness), to prevent the risk of contracting COVID-19. See our [fact sheet](#) for further information.
- [WHO Rational use of personal protective equipment for coronavirus disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)

## More information

**National Coronavirus Health Information Line: 1800 020 080**

- International information and updates: [World Health Organization](#)
- [WHO COVID-19 Rolling Updates](#)
- Various resources for employers, schools and higher education, health, aged care, childcare, transport, travel and hotel sectors are available at the following websites:  
[WA Department of Health](#)  
[HealthyWA](#)  
[Commonwealth Government](#)  
[COVID-19 MythBusters](#) (World Health Organisation)

**Next advice** - The next agency advisory will be issued on **Tuesday 17 March 2020**.

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