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Coronavirus (COVID-19) daily update

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This Chief Health Officer update is intended to provide clinicians and the Victorian public with information about the number of confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) in Victoria as well as relevant public health response activities in Victoria. Chief Health Officer Alerts will continue to be issued when there are changes to the public health advice related to coronavirus (COVID-19).

19/2/2021

What's new?

- Victoria has recorded three new cases of coronavirus. All three cases are locally acquired and linked to the Holiday Inn.
- The total number of coronavirus (COVID-19) cases reported in Victoria is now 20,479.
- There were no new deaths and the state's death toll stands at 820.
- The number of active cases in Victoria is 27. This includes 20 locally acquired cases and 7 overseas acquired cases.
- A total of 4,834,041 test results have been received. This is an increase of 21,292 since yesterday.
- You can find further details in today's [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) media release](#).
- The DHHS website has full details in the [interactive daily report](#).

Update: circuit-breaker lifted

- From 11:59pm on Wednesday 17 February, Victoria went back to COVIDSafe Summer, with some additional rules.
- There are no restrictions on reasons to leave home, but stay COVIDSafe safe.

- Face masks are required everywhere indoors except in your own home. Face masks are also required outside if you cannot physically distance from others.
- Restaurants and retail can reopen – density limits are outlined in the [COVIDSafe Summer table of restrictions](#).
- Offices – both public and private sectors – can return to 50 per cent of workers on-site.
- Community facilities, entertainment venues and all other public places can reopen with some additional limits on crowd sizes:
 - seated indoor entertainment venues are capped at 50 per cent capacity, up to a maximum of 300 people
 - indoor non-seated venues, such as galleries, are capped at 50 per cent capacity up to a maximum of 300 people
 - cinemas are capped at 50 per cent of seated capacity up to a maximum of 300 people.
 - no more than five visitors are allowed to your home each day, and outdoor public gatherings with friends and family are limited to 20 people.
- Visits to hospitals and residential aged care facilities are limited to one household each day, with some exceptions.
- The four reasons to leave home and five-kilometre restriction will no longer apply.
- Weddings, funerals and religious gatherings can resume with density limits.
- Schools resume onsite learning.

Update: Holiday Inn cases

- There are three new cases of COVID-19 linked to the Holiday Inn.
- The cases include two parents and a child from the same family. All have been quarantining at home through their infectious period.

Update: Grand Hyatt cases

- The Department has also begun to clear significant numbers of primary close contacts linked to the Grand Hyatt.

COVID-19 vaccination program

- From Monday, Victorians who are most at risk of getting coronavirus (COVID-19) will start receiving vaccinations.
- This includes hotel quarantine workers, port of entry workers, and frontline health staff who are most likely to come into contact with suspected COVID-19 cases due to where they work – such as specialist COVID wards, or major ICUs where suspected cases are referred.
- We will also commence vaccinating public sector aged care staff and residents – while the Commonwealth are responsible for private aged care and the disability sector.
- That work will all commence from our hubs at Austin Health, Barwon Health, Western Health

and Monash Health. Monash Health will also work with the Alfred Health on the initial rollout to high-risk workers.

- All hospital vaccination hubs will come online in the coming weeks once the critical, high-risk workforce is vaccinated.
- As new supplies of vaccine are approved, manufactured and provided by the Commonwealth, we will be able to expand the rollout even further.
- For more information visit [COVID-19 vaccines](#).

Viral fragments detected in expanded wastewater monitoring program

- Victorians with even the mildest of COVID-19 symptoms are being urged to get tested following the detection of viral fragments in Victoria's expanded wastewater monitoring program.
- Weak detections of viral fragments have been found in a wastewater sample collected on 15 February from the Wantirna South and Boronia area, and in samples collected on 16 February in the Carrum Downs and Langwarrin area, and in the St Kilda, Caulfield and Caulfield North area.
- Anyone who has any symptoms of COVID-19 is urged to get tested, especially if you live in or have visited one of these areas during these periods:
 - Wantirna South or Boronia from 13 to 15 February (includes parts of Bayswater, Ferntree Gully, Knoxfield and Tremont)
 - Carrum Downs or Langwarrin from 13 to 16 February (includes parts of Skye)
 - St Kilda East or Caulfield North from 13 to 16 February (includes parts of Balaclava, Caulfield and Elsternwick)
- Wastewater monitoring is now undertaken at 71 wastewater treatment plants across the state and 61 sites within Melbourne metropolitan sewage networks.
- Fragments of the virus detected in wastewater may be due to a person with COVID-19 being in the early active infectious phase or it could be because someone is continuing to shed the virus after the early infectious period.
- Further information about the wastewater testing program can be found at [Wastewater monitoring](#).

Three-day Auckland lockdown

- On Sunday 14 February, the Australian Chief Medical Officer announced all flights originating in New Zealand will be classified as Red Zone flights for an initial period of 72 hours from 12.01 am Monday 15 February.
- As a result, all people arriving on flights from New Zealand within this three-day period will enter Hotel Quarantine for 14 days.
- On Monday 15 February, a flight arrived from New Zealand into Melbourne with 152 passengers. All passengers are being followed up to see if they are still in Victoria and, if so, they will be asked to isolate and get tested.

Testing sites and expanded testing

- Three rapid response teams are still operational in Sunbury, Point Cook and Coburg North – adding additional capacity through the system. And we also conducted 40 in home tests in special circumstances.
- Extended operations will continue through the day today at 11 testing sites.
- Yesterday, we set up a new drive-through testing site is operating at the Grand Prix circuit, 12 Aughtie Drive, Albert Park, which will open from 7-days from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.
- With high temperatures forecast over coming days, some testing sites may have to close or alter their hours of operation.
- We have also advised the public to make sure they have plenty of water, fuel and other necessary items in case they experience a lengthy wait.
- New testing sites, extended hours and expected wait times are regularly updated at [Where to get tested](#).
- Coronavirus (COVID-19) testing remains one of the best ways we can keep people safe and stay open, so we're asking anyone with symptoms – no matter how mild - to come and get tested.

Interstate border restrictions

- All travel into Victoria from other states and territories requires a travel permit. You can apply for a permit via the [ServiceVictoria](#) website.
- Travellers from the Greater Melbourne area are prohibited from entering South Australia on or after 12.01am 11 February 2021. Essential travellers or travellers with an exemption (such as returning SA residents, genuine relocations, and those fleeing family violence) will be required to self-quarantine at a suitable place for 14 days upon arrival and submit to COVID-19 testing on day 1, 5 and 12.
- Queensland closed its borders to Greater Melbourne for a two-week period from 11:59pm on 12 February 2021.
- Travellers from Victoria entering the Northern Territory from Greater Melbourne (including Melbourne Airport) are required to complete 14 days of mandatory supervised quarantine
- Travellers from Victoria entering Western Australia must apply for a G2G Pass and self-quarantine for 14 days on arrival and obtain a COVID-19 test with 48 hours of arrival

Western Australia zone change

- From 9:00 pm on 15 February, Perth, Peel and the south-west region of Western Australia became a green zone under Victoria's 'traffic light' travel permit system. This means that all of WA is currently a green zone.
- People in green zones can apply for a permit to enter Victoria if they have no COVID-19 symptoms and have had no close contact with a COVID-19 case.
- For more on travel permits visit [Victorian Travel Permit System](#).

Current advice to clinicians

- [Statement on Rapid Antigen Testing for SARS-CoV-2 \(COVID-19\) diagnosis in symptomatic persons](#) (Word).
- Notifications to the department of a confirmed diagnosis of coronavirus (COVID-19) can be done online. You can submit an [online form](#) to our public health team, rather than calling us, saving you time and resolving your case load more efficiently.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) testing criteria

- Practitioners should test any patients who meet the clinical criteria below:
 - Fever OR chills in the absence of an alternative diagnosis that explains the clinical presentation* OR
 - Acute respiratory infection (e.g. cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, runny nose, or loss or changes in sense of smell or taste)
 - Note: testing is also recommended for people with new onset of other clinical symptoms consistent with coronavirus (COVID-19)** AND who are from the following cohorts: close contacts of a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19); those who have returned from overseas in the past 14 days; or those who are healthcare or aged care workers. Testing is recommended for those cohorts with onset of other clinical symptoms**. Asymptomatic testing is not recommended at this stage except for targeted programs
 - *Clinical discretion applies including consideration of the potential for co-infection (e.g. concurrent infection with SARS-CoV-2 and influenza)
 - **headache, myalgia, stuffy nose, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea.
- If referring your patients for coronavirus (COVID-19) testing, a list of testing locations can be found on the [getting tested for coronavirus page](#).
- If a symptomatic patient that presents for testing, confirms exposure to a known coronavirus (COVID-19) case within the past 14 days, and the outbreak definition is met, the test sample is to be treated as an 'outbreak sample'.

Victoria's restriction levels

- The State of Emergency has been extended until Friday 26 February 2021 to allow the Chief Health Officer's directions to remain in force.

Clinical information

- [Latest coronavirus \(COVID-19\) information for Victorian health services and general practice](#)
- [Latest information about providing immunisation services during Coronavirus Pandemic](#) (Word)
- [Andrew Wilson, Chief Medical Officer Safer Care Victoria, speaks about the importance of staff completing declarations to consider their health before they start work](#)

Online resources

- Locations of respiratory assessment clinics and testing sites are available [online and through an interactive map](#).
- Find out the latest information about visiting [care facilities](#) and [hospitals](#) on our website.
- [Protecting our healthcare workers](#) (PDF) sets out the very latest in our understanding of coronavirus (COVID-19) and how it can spread within healthcare settings – both hospitals and aged-care facilities. More information can be [found online](#).
- A new [Infection Prevention and Control](#) resource hub is now online, and includes a new factsheet on protective eyewear and the [Guide to the conventional use of PPE](#) (Word). Updated information for health care workers is available online on the [PPE coronavirus page](#).

Mental health resources

- Many Victorians are feeling fatigued, isolated or lonely. If you are in need of support for your mental health there are [mental health resources](#) you can access on our website.
- If Victorians are not safe at home, they can seek help and support at an [Orange Door](#) or other family violence support service. If you or someone you know is at risk or experiencing family violence, call 000 in an emergency or safe steps 24/7 crisis service on 1800 015 188.
- The [Partners in Wellbeing](#) hotline (1300 375 330) is available for referrals from people who identify as LGBTIQ, multicultural, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people, veterans and people experiencing homelessness.

Consumer information

- [Financial and other support for coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Translated resources in over 50 languages](#)
- [Victoria's current restrictions](#)
- [Latest coronavirus information from the World Health Organization](#)
- [Latest travel advice from Smartraveller](#)

Contacts

Medical practitioners needing clinical information or to notify confirmed cases can contact the Department of Health and Human Services Communicable Diseases Section on 1300 651 160 (24 hours).

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The department acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Custodians of the land and acknowledges and pays respect to their Elders, past and present.

The department is committed to safe and inclusive work places, policies and services for people of LGBTIQ communities and their families.



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