

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Testing

Information for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians

Version 2 – 2 July 2020

Coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to pose a risk to communities in Australia and other countries. To slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) and maintain community safety:

- practice physical distancing and stay home
- wash hands often with soap
- get tested if you have any symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), however mild, or have been around someone who does
- isolate if sick until fully well again.

Aboriginal people over the age of 50-years or those that have a pre-existing health condition, such as diabetes, asthma, heart and lung conditions, or immune problems are at higher risk of developing a severe illness associated with coronavirus (COVID-19).

Aboriginal people that are experiencing coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms should get tested early to ensure access to treatment as soon as possible if needed and protect your family and community from the virus.

If you are sick

People with mild to moderate illness should:

- get tested and then stay at home
- get plenty of rest and drink lots of fluids, just like they would if they have the flu
- stay away from other people until they get better, so not to spread it to others

People with coronavirus (COVID-19) usually have:

- fever
- chills or sweats
- cough
- sore throat
- shortness of breath
- runny nose
- loss of sense of smell.

If you have any symptoms, contact your local health or medical service by phone.

Your doctor, clinic or health service can tell you the best thing to do and where to go. Go to the hospital only if you are told that you should. This will help to slow the spread of the virus to others in the community. Calling ahead also stops overcrowding in clinics and hospitals and allows very sick people to access treatment they need.

Call the coronavirus (COVID-19) hotline on 1800 675 398 to see where you can get tested.

In an emergency, such as difficulty breathing, call triple zero (000) and ask for an ambulance.

Testing for coronavirus (COVID-19)

Getting tested means you keep yourself, your friends, family, workplace and the community safe.

Testing in Victoria is:

- available to any person with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, mild or strong
- free and widely available
- fast, taking around a minute and involves a swab from the back of your throat and nose.

Take at least one form of identification for example, Medicare card, driver's licence or student ID.

People who are tested should return home immediately after testing and stay in isolation until receiving the result within one to three days.

It is also important to provide Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status so the right support is made available and appropriate services can be accessed.

Coronavirus assessment centres

Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHO) are culturally safe places and might be preferred when accessing treatment and testing. Not all ACCHO's perform coronavirus COVID-19 testing.

Sites include:

- Ballarat & District Aboriginal Co-operative
- Bendigo & District Aboriginal Co-operative
- Budja Budja Aboriginal Co-operative – Dandenong
- Gunditjmara Aboriginal Co-operative
- Kirrae Health Services
- Lake Tyers Health & Children's Service
- Mallee District Aboriginal Services – Kerang, Mildura and Swan Hill
- Murray Valley Aboriginal Co-operative
- Ramahyuck District Aboriginal Corporation – Morwell and Sale
- Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd
- Victorian Aboriginal Health Service
- Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative
- First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing – Frankston and Thomastown

Call your local ACCHO or the coronavirus (COVID-19) hotline on 1800 675 398 to see where you can get tested.

For more information visit the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation's website at: <http://www.vaccho.org.au/about-us/coronavirus/>

Assessment centres have been established at many Melbourne metro and regional hospitals around the State. For up-to date information about where to go for testing you can visit:

<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/getting-tested-coronavirus-covid-19>

Some current drive-through testing sites

You do not need to make an appointment to attend a [drive-through testing site](#). You must be in a vehicle to be tested at one of these sites, you cannot walk in.

These locations are updated regularly, so make sure you check <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/getting-tested-coronavirus-covid-19> for the latest details.

Getting test results back

It may take between one and three days for results to come back. The facility will advise how long it could take to receive results. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and those in an essential service role can have testing results processed faster.

If positive, care is generally provided at home or in hospital depending on the severity of symptoms.

If negative, people should still self-isolate until they are completely better at the direction of your doctor or health professional.

Quarantine or self-isolation:

While you are in self-isolation or quarantine you:

- must not attend work, school, childcare or university
- must not go to other public places such as restaurants, cinemas or shopping centres
- must not use public transport or taxis
- must not allow visitors into your home - only those who usually live in the household should be in the home.
- must not attend social or community gatherings
- must stay in a different room to other people as much as possible.

Visit the coronavirus (COVID-19) Aboriginal community webpage for more information:

www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-information-aboriginal-communities

To receive this publication in an accessible format, email Aboriginal Strategy and Oversight <aboriginalstrategyandoversight@dhhs.vic.gov.au>.

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In this document, 'Aboriginal' refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

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Available at <<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-information-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-communities>>