

## Public health advice for high-risk settings and health professionals regarding interstate COVID-19 outbreaks **(new information in red)**

### Key Points

- There is sustained community transmission of COVID-19 in Victoria. In addition, several public locations in New South Wales, predominantly in Sydney and Newcastle, have recently been linked to COVID-19 cases.
- Anyone (other than ACT residents) travelling into the ACT from Victoria will be denied entry unless they are granted an exemption. Anyone entering the ACT from Victoria must quarantine until 14 days after leaving Victoria.
- **Anyone who has been in Greater Sydney or Newcastle in the last 14 days should not visit or work in a high-risk setting for 14 days after leaving these areas.**

### What is the situation?

- There is sustained community transmission of COVID-19 in Victoria. ACT residents are strongly discouraged from travelling to Victoria.
- Several public locations in New South Wales, **predominantly in Greater Sydney and Newcastle**, have been linked to clusters of COVID-19 cases.
- Public Health Directions are in place in the ACT to protect the ACT community.
- **NSW Health are instructing individuals who attended [specific venues on specific dates](#) to get tested for COVID-19 and enter quarantine for 14 days after attending the venue, regardless of the test result. The list of venues is updated regularly. Any ACT resident who has recently been in NSW should keep up-to-date with the latest [NSW Health advice](#).**
- Wearing face masks is not routinely recommended in areas where there is no evidence of community transmission, such as the ACT. Appropriate PPE needs to be worn for contact with people who have potential or confirmed COVID-19.

### Public Health Directions

- Anyone (other than ACT residents) entering the ACT from Victoria will be denied entry unless they are granted an exemption. Under a Public Health Direction, anyone who has been in Victoria in the past 14 days, who has permission to enter the ACT, must quarantine until 14 days after leaving Victoria.

### What are high-risk settings?

- A **high-risk setting** is defined as a setting where there are a large number of people who are vulnerable to severe disease from COVID-19 (e.g. due to age or chronic medical conditions), and/or where there is a higher risk of COVID-19 transmission due to close proximity and difficulties maintaining physical distancing.



- These high-risk settings are:
  - Hospitals
  - Residential aged care facilities
  - Correctional facilities
  - Residential accommodation facilities that support people who require frequent, close personal care and who are vulnerable to severe disease

### Advice for high-risk settings

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- Anyone who is in quarantine under a Public Health Direction should not visit or work in a high-risk setting during their quarantine period, unless they are granted an exemption.
- **People who have been in [Greater Sydney or Newcastle](#) in the last 14 days should not visit or work in a high-risk setting for 14 days since leaving these areas.**
- If people are excluded from visiting or working in a high-risk setting, but are seeking to visit on compassionate grounds, or to work because they are deemed essential (e.g. someone with expertise that cannot be sourced elsewhere):
  - If they are not in quarantine under a Public Health Direction (see above), this should be considered following a risk assessment, in consultation with ACT Health if required.
  - If they are in quarantine under a Public Health Direction (see above), they will need to apply for an exemption by completing the online form at [covid19.act.gov.au](https://covid19.act.gov.au).

### Advice for staff providing home-based aged care, disability and other support services

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- Anyone who is in quarantine under a Public Health Direction should not provide home-based aged care, disability or other support services, unless they are granted an exemption.
- **People who have been in [Greater Sydney or Newcastle](#) in the last 14 days should not provide home-based aged care, disability or other support services for 14 days since leaving these areas.**
- If the service deems it is essential for the staff member to continue in their role:
  - If they are not in quarantine under a Public Health Direction (see above), the staff member's manager should undertake a risk assessment to determine whether it is appropriate for the staff member to return to work. Considerations include the staff member's risk of exposure to COVID-19, duration of close physical contact with clients and client vulnerability to COVID-19. ACT Health can assist with the risk assessment.
  - If they are in quarantine under a Public Health Direction (see above), they will need to apply for an exemption by completing the online form at [covid19.act.gov.au](https://covid19.act.gov.au).

### Advice for general practitioners and other community health practitioners

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- Anyone who is in quarantine under a Public Health Direction should not work in a community health setting, unless they are granted an exemption.
- GPs and other community health practitioners who have been in [Greater Sydney or Newcastle](#) should be particularly vigilant for symptoms of COVID-19. If symptoms develop, they should immediately self-isolate and arrange to get tested for COVID-19.



- Health practitioners should actively seek a patient's travel history and determine if they have been in Victoria, **Greater Sydney or Newcastle** in the past 14 days. If yes, the practitioner should be alert to even mild symptoms of COVID-19 and have a low threshold for testing, using appropriate PPE.

### For more information

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- Visit the Chief Health Officer alerts page: <https://www.health.act.gov.au/health-professionals/chief-health-officer-alerts>
- Visit the ACT COVID-19 webpage: <https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/>
- Contact ACT Health on (02) 5124 9213.

Dr Vanessa Johnston

For Dr Kerry Coleman  
ACT Chief Health Officer  
10 August 2020

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