

# COVID-19 testing criteria to be expanded in WA

Wednesday, 1 April 2020

Testing now available to anyone showing signs of a fever and acute respiratory infection

Expansion of criteria to assist in tracking individual cases and community transmission

Emphasis remains protecting vulnerable populations such as aged care and remote communities

As of Thursday 2nd April, the testing criteria for COVID-19 will be expanded significantly at all COVID-19 clinics.

## General Public Testing:

Any person presenting with **BOTH** a fever ( $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) **AND** an acute respiratory infection (e.g. shortness of breath, cough, sore throat) will be tested.

## High-Risk Settings:

Anyone working within a high-risk setting that presents with **EITHER** a fever ( $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) **OR** an acute respiratory infection will be tested. This includes healthcare workers (including aged care and disability workers) and Western Australian Police Officers.

Testing will also be arranged for anyone from the following high-risk settings where two or more people are experiencing **EITHER** a fever ( $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) **OR** an acute respiratory infection:

- aged and residential care;
- rural and remote Aboriginal communities;
- detention centres;
- correctional facilities;
- boarding schools;
- military barracks or equivalent;
- geographically localised areas with increased risk of community transmission; and
- cruise ship passengers or returned travellers (international and domestic).

These changes follow the advice given by the WA Chief Health Officer will help find new individual cases and if there is community transmission of COVID-19.

There are now seven COVID clinics open across the metropolitan area and one regional clinic operating at Bunbury Health Campus.

People seeking testing in regional areas should go to a public hospital, health service or remote health clinic.

Western Australia has now had 392 cases of COVID-19. In addition to these cases, 15,130 people have tested negative to the virus.

The community is reminded that the clinics are not intended to replace the medical care available through their GP or at hospital emergency departments.

Members of the public can telephone the COVID-19 Health Information Line on 1800 020 080 for advice and find more information by visiting <http://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au>

**Comments attributed to Health Minister Roger Cook:**

"The expanded testing regime in Western Australia will really help us to find new cases, protect our vulnerable populations and ensure we are tracking the movement of this virus as it develops."

"We are doing everything we can to ensure that testing is available to those who are symptomatic and preparing our health system to care for those who need it.

"We also want to ensure that our frontline healthcare staff are being looked after, which is why we have put processes in place across the laboratories to ensure that their tests are streamlined.

"It is critically important that Western Australians continue to adhere to the rules surrounding social distancing and the nation-wide shutdown of non-essential services."

Minister's office - 6552 6500