

Protecting yourself and others from COVID-19

Managing COVID-19 cases and outbreaks – information for COVID-19 priority settings

This information is for organisations responsible for COVID-19 priority settings in Tasmania, not general settings. For information about general settings, visit the [Department of Health website](#).

For information about the importance of being ready for cases and outbreaks in COVID-19 priority settings, see:

- [Fact Sheet 1: Getting ready for COVID-19 cases and outbreaks – information for COVID-19 Priority Settings](#).

Managing COVID-19 in priority settings

When a case or outbreak of COVID-19 is linked to a COVID-19 priority setting in Tasmania, a vigorous and rapid, coordinated, multi-agency response will be activated to stop the virus spreading.

This information outlines that response and what first steps organisations responsible for COVID-19 priority settings will be expected to take.

Priority settings are places where COVID-19 may spread fast or outbreak management may be complex. If you're not sure if your setting is a COVID-19 priority setting, [click here](#).

How are cases and outbreaks of COVID-19 controlled?

COVID-19 outbreak control can be difficult and resource intensive. It can cause severe resource shortages in some settings because of the need to isolate confirmed cases and quarantine their close contacts for up to 14 days – longer if they become unwell.

The *COVID-19 Case and Outbreak Management Framework for Tasmanian Settings* describes the many components of outbreak management and how they fit together.

Those components include:

- isolation and appropriate care of the person/people who have the virus
- rapid identification and quarantining of people who have had close contact with cases while they were infectious (able to spread the virus)
- rapid risk assessment
- timely and effective communication with people associated with the setting
- widespread testing within the community to identify further cases
- enhanced physical distancing, hand and respiratory hygiene and cleaning and disinfection within the affected setting
- tracking and analysis of the spread of illness and effectiveness of public health interventions
- coordination through multi-agency outbreak management coordination teams.



For more information visit www.health.tas.gov.au

Multi-agency outbreak management coordination teams

A multi-agency outbreak management coordination team will be assigned to each outbreak (which may be a single case) in a COVID-19 priority setting and will be led by a public health doctor. This team will lead the organisation responsible for the setting through the outbreak response.

The make-up of each team will vary according to the setting and risk. Groups that may be represented on each outbreak management coordination team include:

- the Department of Health, including Public Health Services and the Tasmanian Health Service
- the organisation (employer or service provider) responsible for the setting
- Primary Health Tasmania and local health services
- WorkSafe Tasmania
- emergency services, including Tasmania Police and the State Emergency Service.

Your first steps (within the first 24 hours of being notified of a case)

Public Health Services will advise you what to do if you are notified of a case associated with your setting. The initial, quick steps Public Health Services may ask you to take are:

1. Isolate and support confirmed case/s (for residential settings).
2. Activate your outbreak management plan.
3. Activate your internal outbreak response team to coordinate the response within your setting and provide the name and contact details of your preferred contact person/s.
4. Support contact tracing by providing a list of people who may have had contact with the case/s within your setting (eg through visitor/customer logs, staff rosters) and their contact details.

5. Support risk assessment by providing information about your setting (eg site plan, outbreak management plan) and advising on risks specific to the setting.
6. Liaise with Public Health Services to coordinate appropriate communication about the case/outbreak to other people associated with the setting.
7. Restrict access to areas that may have been contaminated by the confirmed case/s, including spaces where the person spent time within the previous 48 hours.
8. Restrict entry to the premises and movement within the premises.
9. Protect others by displaying outbreak signage and enhancing physical distancing in the setting.

Your next steps

After the rapid first steps, Public Health Services may ask you to:

- arrange cleaning and disinfection of areas that may have been contaminated by the confirmed case/s
- participate in a multi-agency outbreak management coordination team
- support quarantine of close contacts in your setting (for residential settings)
- support ongoing communication about the case/outbreak with people in/associated with your setting
- comply with additional outbreak control directives from the Director of Public Health or State Controller.

How can I stay updated?

Advice is updated frequently as the COVID-19 situation evolves in Tasmania. Please refer to the following for the latest information:

- Tasmanian Government Coronavirus website www.coronavirus.tas.gov.au
- Australian Government Department of Health www.health.gov.au
- Tasmanian Public Health Hotline **1800 671 738**



If the confirmed case is an employee, depending on the circumstances, the employer may also be required by law to notify [WorkSafe Tasmania](http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au) of the case as soon as possible.