

Media Release

The Hon Jenny Mikakos MLC

Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Minister for the Coordination of Health and Human Services – COVID-19

Minister for Health

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STEPPING UP TARGETED TESTING TO TRACK CORONAVIRUS

Victoria will step-up its targeted coronavirus testing, zeroing in on communities where cases may be more likely or where testing numbers are relatively low – ensuring we have a full picture when it comes to tracking the virus.

Minister for Health Jenny Mikakos said targeted testing – in addition to ongoing testing – would help provide vital intelligence and inform the further easing of restrictions.

The targeted testing program will run until the end of August and focus on Local Government Areas (LGAs) with low testing rates, communities with high case numbers, high-risk workforces and vulnerable groups.

While more than 590,000 Victorians have already come forward for testing – giving Victoria one of the highest testing rates in the world – we cannot take any chances.

Targeting specific areas will help find and isolate cases quickly and make it easier for people to get tested – particularly culturally and linguistically diverse Victorians who may find it harder to access testing information.

It will be rolled out in four three-week waves across different locations and LGAs, with the first starting in Mildura, Kyabram, Dandenong and Brimbank.

Other LGAs and areas to be targeted include inner-city Melbourne, Moreland City Council, City of Melton, Colac Otway Shire, City of Whittlesea, Surf Coast Shire, Hume City and Wyndham City.

Victoria's public health team continues to work closely with health services, local government and community organisations to ensure people have information and support about coronavirus and where to get tested.

The program will boost testing by increasing awareness of testing sites, establishing new testing sites and increased promotion of testing – including in language for culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

There are currently more than 127 testing sites across Victoria – with a mixture of acute, GP, community and drive-through testing sites.

Anyone who has any symptoms, no matter how mild, should get a test. Common symptoms of coronavirus include fever, chills or sweats, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, runny nose or loss of sense of smell.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Jenny Mikakos

"If Victoria was a nation, our per capita testing rate would be one of the best in the world. But as we gradually ease restrictions, we won't take any chances."

"Our massive testing blitz saw Victorians come out in huge numbers to get tested. Now, we're strategically targeting specific communities to make sure we get the full picture."