

Media Release

The Hon Martin Foley MP

Minister for Health

Minister for Ambulance Services

Minister for Equality

Acting Minister for Police and Emergency Services



Sunday, 14 February 2021

MASSIVE EXPANSION OF VICTORIA'S PUBLIC TESTING CAPACITY

Victoria has more than tripled its coronavirus (COVID-19) testing capacity at public laboratories and can now process about 30,000 tests a day with the vast majority turned around in less than 24 hours.

Minister for Health Martin Foley today announced more resources and new equipment to boost Victoria's public pathology services – including five new high-throughput testing machines, which are now in operation.

Pathology testing capacity in both public and private laboratories is essential to managing coronavirus outbreaks so Victoria's contact tracing teams can find cases quickly and slow the spread of this hyper-infectious virus.

4,694,136 (COVID-19) tests have been processed in Victoria since 1 January 2020, including 21,475 yesterday.

Yesterday, more than 90 per cent of coronavirus (COVID-19) test results across Victoria were received within 24 hours.

In October 2020, the state's eight public pathology labs had a testing capacity of approximately 4,000 per day with more than 80 per cent of tests turned around in less than 24 hours.

With the new high-throughput testing machines now in operation, other new equipment, additional staff and extended operating hours, the state's public testing capacity has now increased to around 14,000 tests per day.

With private pathology testing included, Victoria's capacity to turn around more than 80 per cent of results in under 24 hours has increased to about 30,000 tests.

Equipment purchased as part of Victoria's pathology investments can also be used across Victoria's eight public pathology laboratories in the future for testing of other diseases such as influenza.

The machines are located at the public pathology laboratories at Royal Melbourne Hospital and Monash Health.

To see a list of testing sites and real-time queue times, visit coronavirus.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Martin Foley

"We have put the equipment and workforce in place to be able to process around 30,000 coronavirus tests a day with the vast majority turned around in less than 24 hours."

"Our public testing capacity has significantly increased which is helping us find more cases quickly so we can activate the appropriate public health response and keep Victorians safe."

"Victorians have done an amazing job getting tested if they have any symptoms. The more people we test – the quicker we can find cases and slow the spread of this hyper-infectious virus."