

Media Release

The Hon Martin Foley MP
Minister for Health
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MORE THAN TWO MILLION RAPID ANTIGEN TESTS ON THE WAY

The Victorian Government will purchase almost 2.2 million rapid antigen tests for Victoria's health system, as part of a broader range of testing measures and increased capacity as we progress on our roadmap to reopening.

With large rapid antigen testing trials already underway – including with 1200 employees at least three times a week on a level crossing removal project, and for emergency department triaging at the Royal Melbourne Hospital – the Government will also explore options for its broader use in the community.

Rapid antigen testing will be rolled out across the Victorian healthcare system first, before other high risk settings, such as schools, child care and corrections are added to the program.

Antigen tests will be used across our healthcare system in hospitals and community health services to support staff surveillance testing, management of close contacts and triaging of patients requiring urgent care, including patients who present to emergency and are awaiting the results of a PCR test.

Targeted surveillance using rapid antigen testing will be expanded, with the Government currently working with industry on potential applications in settings such as construction and food supply. Any positive result will require follow up with a PCR test.

As Victoria nears its 80 per cent double dose threshold, and in line with approval from the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) for the technology's use in the home, rapid antigen testing will be explored for people who are undertaking home quarantine or who are attending some workplaces, educational settings or major events.

There are currently 33 different rapid antigen tests authorised for use by the TGA in Australia. While rapid antigen testing is less accurate than standard PCR testing currently in use, it offers a 15-to-20-minute result turnaround at the point of testing.

In addition to innovative testing options, Victoria is also continuing to expand and uplift its PCR testing capacity through the establishment of mega testing sites.

Current mass testing centres are located in Coolaroo, and at the Melbourne Showgrounds, Monash and Deakin Universities, and Casey Fields.

Getting tested is still one of the most powerful ways you can protect yourself, your family, and your community. To see where to get tested, including current wait times, visit www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/where-get-tested-covid-19

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Martin Foley

“Three million tests have been processed during this outbreak. That’s an incredible number that shows Victorians are getting tested at the first sign of symptoms and protecting each other.”

“As we move towards a different way of managing this virus as a vaccinated population – and with TGA approval – we can now broaden our range of innovative testing measures and implement rapid testing technology to support standard PCR testing.”

For more information call the coronavirus hotline on 1800 675 398 or visit [coronavirus.vic.gov.au](https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au).