

Media Release

The Hon Martin Foley MP
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services
Minister for Equality



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MASS COVID-19 VACCINATION, TESTING SITES TO SCALE BACK

With GPs and pharmacies now delivering more than 70 per cent of COVID-19 vaccinations and rapid antigen tests widely available, testing and vaccination will change to better match community need.

Victoria's mass PCR testing and COVID-19 vaccination programs will scale back by June 30, with the number of state vaccination centres decreasing from 39 to 12 and total state-run and private testing sites easing from 265 to approximately 180.

Most Victorians are choosing to get vaccinated closer to home, with the number of primary care providers administering vaccines increasing from fewer than 1,000 in the second half of 2021 to more than 2,100 today. Demand for PCR tests has also fallen sharply, with RATs now widely available.

Vaccination centres will continue in Hume, Wyndham, Melton, Whittlesea, Greater Dandenong, Frankston, Wodonga, Greater Geelong, Latrobe, Greater Shepparton, Ballarat and Greater Bendigo.

The updated vaccination and testing response will be targeted to ensure support remains available for Victorians and communities most at risk of serious illness from COVID-19. They include people aged 65 and over, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders 50 and over, people with compromised immunity and people with a disability.

State-run testing sites will be retained in selected Local Government Areas where fewer private testing providers and GP respiratory clinics are available to ensure easy access for residents.

More than 15.6 million COVID-19 vaccine doses have been administered in Victoria since 22 February 2021, with 6.26 million provided by state-commissioned services. COVID-19 vaccines will remain free for all Victorians.

Mobile vaccination teams will continue to provide in-reach services to people who are unable to travel for vaccination. They will also provide additional access in communities where third-dose vaccination rates are lower.

More than 21.2 million PCR tests have been performed in Victoria since the pandemic began. PCR testing will be primarily available to symptomatic individuals and vulnerable Victorians who need a definitive diagnosis to access anti-viral medications that will help reduce the severity of their infection.

Testing sites will also provide free RATs to symptomatic individuals and contacts who are required or have been advised to get tested.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Martin Foley

"Victorians are choosing to get vaccinated closer to home and in their community thanks to the growing number of GPs and pharmacies delivering vaccines."

"Rapid antigen tests have changed the way most Victorians test, but most importantly, PCR and in-reach testing will still be available for our most vulnerable communities."

"On behalf of the whole community, I want to recognise the extraordinary effort of every worker at our vaccination and testing sites for helping to keep us safe over the course of the pandemic."

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