



Employee Fact Sheet Series

COVID-19 Guidance Summary – Last updated 16 February 2023

This factsheet provides an overview of current COVID-19 precautions at Monash Health.

Advice and information evolve quickly, so please ensure you are referring to the latest version of this document, available at coronavirus.monashhealth.org

COVID-19 testing: employees, patients and parents/guardians/carers

The table below outlines the most appropriate testing method and frequency for different groups.

Group	Test	When/Frequency
Patients		
Emergency Department	PCR	Symptomatic admissions
	No testing	Asymptomatic presentations
All Overnight Admissions	PCR	Symptomatic admissions
	No testing required	Asymptomatic admissions
Dialysis, day infusions and day cases	Rapid Antigen	Symptomatic presentations
Close contacts in hospital	PCR	D0 and D6
	PCR	If symptomatic
Symptomatic on ward	PCR	If symptomatic
Pre-operative admissions	Pre-operative screening	If symptomatic, Unit will consider continuing admission plan and treat as SCOVID, or defer surgery/procedure if not urgent
		No testing required for asymptomatic admissions
Pre-operative emergency admissions	PCR	Symptomatic presentations
	No testing required	Asymptomatic admissions
Parents/guardians/carers		
All parents/guardians/carers that will be present throughout an overnight or longer admission	RAT	If symptomatic
Employees		
Asymptomatic close contacts returning to work	Rapid Antigen	Before commencing shift for five days following notification as a close contact.
Returned from overseas	N/A	No testing required on return from overseas.

Post COVID-19 infection	N/A	No asymptomatic testing for 4 weeks after clearance, unless HCW has symptoms.
Symptomatic staff	See 'Updated advice for symptomatic staff' below	When symptomatic.

Please note: PCR tests may return positive results for weeks after the acute infection when the person is no longer infectious. Therefore, PCR tests should not be used on asymptomatic people for at least 4 weeks after they are cleared from COVID-19.

Where to get tested

Asymptomatic testing

As part of planned changes, our asymptomatic Employee Surveillance Testing has come to an end. Please visit www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au to find information on getting tested for COVID-19 in Victoria.

Symptomatic testing - Priority Employee COVID-19 PCR testing

Priority PCR test are available for **symptomatic** Monash Health employees.

Where: Dandenong Hospital Pathology Collection Centre (West Entrance) – drive up through the circular driveway off David Street. **When:** Monday – Friday, 8am – 6pm | Saturday and Sunday, 8am – 12pm

What to do:

- Bring your Employee ID, your Medicare card and wear an N95 mask.
- Drive up through the circular driveway off David Street.
- Enter Dandenong Hospital through the West entrance, into the air lock.
- Ring a doorbell alerting the Pathology collection team – you will be escorted into the pathology collection centre.
- Fill out a pre-populated request form.
- Self-swab and deposit the sample into the assigned collection box.

Where can I get a RAT or PCR test?

Rapid Antigen Tests can be purchased from your local pharmacy and can be available from your DCO or Manager. PCR tests are available via referral from a medical practitioner or from our Dandenong Hospital Pathology Collection Centre (see above).

What to do if you are a close contact

You are a close contact if you have spent more than four hours with someone who has COVID-19 inside a house, accommodation or care facility without appropriate PPE in place.

Healthcare workers who are close contacts and have no symptoms can attend work provided you:



- Notify your manager and complete the [Monash Health Close Contact Form](#)
- Undertake daily RAT testing for five days
- Wear an N95 while on-site and have breaks alone

Healthcare workers who are close contacts and have symptoms may return to work if you meet the following criteria:

- You have received a negative RAT
- Your symptoms are improving
- You have not experienced a fever in the past 24 hours

You must:

- Notify your manager and complete the [Monash Health Close Contact Form](#)
- Undertake daily RAT testing for five days
- Wear an N95 while on-site and have breaks alone.

If your RAT returns a negative result, but your symptoms are not improving or worsening, do not attend work. Please take another RAT.

After you complete the [Monash Health Close Contact Form](#), our hotline team will be in touch with further instructions.

What to do if you are symptomatic

If you have tested negative for COVID-19 and your symptoms are improving or completely recovered, you may be able to return to work.

You may return to work if you meet the following criteria:

- You have received a negative RAT
- Your symptoms are improving, or you are feeling better (no muscle aches and pains, no headache, improving cough, etc.)
- You have not experienced a fever in the past 24 hours

You must wear an N95 while on-site and have breaks alone until your symptoms are resolved.

If your RAT test returns a negative result, but your symptoms are not improving or worsening, do not attend work. Please take another RAT.

What to do if you test positive for COVID-19

Your first priority is your health and wellbeing. COVID-19 can be a serious illness. If your symptoms are severe or worsen, contact your GP or call the Department of Health hotline on 1800 675 398.



Reporting a positive test result

If you test positive for COVID-19 please let your manager know and complete our [online COVID-19 Positive Notification Form](#). If you received a positive result using a RAT, you should notify the [Department of Health using their COVID-19 Positive Rapid Antigen Test Self-Reporting Form](#).

Isolating at home

If you are diagnosed with COVID-19 you should isolate to prevent the spread of infection. The day you received a positive result is Day 0. You can return to work on Day 7 if you are free of symptoms.

Support and guidance

If you have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and have mild to moderate symptoms or you are a close contact, the Victorian Government's [Coronavirus portal](#) is a useful resource. If you have concerns or questions, you can call the [employee COVID-19 hotline](#) on (03) 8572 5610.

Masks/PPE

Monash Health's [PPE Compulsory Standards outline](#) the level of PPE required in different situations.

- **In non-clinical areas**, masks are optional.
- **In clinical areas**, caring for non-COVID/non-SCOVID and non-ED patients, surgical masks plus standard precautions are required.
- **In clinical areas**, Caring for COVID/SCOVID patients, N95 plus standard precautions are required.
- **Caring for Emergency Department patients**, N95 plus standard precautions are required.

Face-to-face meeting policy

Face-to-face meetings and training can resume if:

- No symptomatic attendees
- External (non-Monash) attendees require permission to attend clinical areas and must follow visitor guidelines including a wearing a surgical mask in clinical areas
- Hand hygiene should be available

Where these conditions cannot be met, please consider alternative meeting options such as MS Teams, Webex and phone.

Sharing food

Sharing food remains a transmission risk for COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. We ask that hand hygiene methods are followed, always opt for individually wrapped food and avoid communal bowls or plates.

Kitchen and mealtime reminders

- Wash hands before and after preparing food



- BYO crockery and cutlery
- Clean surfaces and appliances after use
- Wash hands before and after eating food
- Don't share food that is in communal bowls or plates (for example, chips, platters, lolly jar etc.)

Getting a COVID-19 vaccination

Booster eligibility

A booster is now available for adults aged 18 years and above. For Monash Health employees, consider receiving your COVID-19 booster every six months.

Visit the [Employee Vaccination Hub page](#) on the Monash Health COVID-19 Website for information about Booster recommendations and considerations.

Where to get your vaccination

Monash Immunisation

COVID-19 vaccinations continue to be available at Monash Immunisation at Monash Medical Centre.

- When: Monday – Friday 8.30am – 3.45pm
- Location: Suite i, Level 2, Main Building (inside Jessie McPherson Private Hospital)

This is a drop-in service, and no bookings are required. If you have any questions, email immunisation@monashhealth.org or call 9594 6320.

Visit the [Employee Vaccination Hub page](#) on the Monash Health COVID-19 Website for details of the pop-up clinics.

GP and local pharmacy

You can also get a vaccine through your GP, local pharmacy, or use the [COVID-19 Near Me to find a vaccination clinic near you](#). Bookings are recommended as these services are not operated by Monash Health. Call the Victorian Government Coronavirus Hotline on 1800 675 398 or [book online](#).

Visitor restrictions

- [For more detail about visitation and conditions of entry, please visit monashhealth.org.](#)
- [Resources for screening teams can be found on coronavirus.monashhealth.org](#)

Isolation requirements for patients, day admissions and community infections

COVID positive people are no longer required to isolate for a period of time. Importantly, this does not cover hospitals and other sensitive settings. We will maintain symptomatic screening at front doors.

We advise **community members** to get tested if unwell, and to isolate at home for 5 days if COVID positive and rest. If COVID negative, symptoms have improved and they do not have a fever, community members can visit our sites.



Inpatients are assessed based on symptoms at presentation, reason for admission, disease severity and presence of immunosuppression – all of which may prolong shedding.

Group	Isolation period	Clearance method/comments
Patients		
Asymptomatic positive PCR*	7 days	Email covidclearance@monashhealth.org
Symptomatic positive PCR but asymptomatic for ≥72 hours	10 days	Email covidclearance@monashhealth.org
Positive PCR but ongoing symptoms in mild-moderate disease	14 days	Email covidclearance@monashhealth.org
Currently in ICU	20 days from PCR or symptom onset, whichever is longer	Email covidclearance@monashhealth.org
Immunosuppressed inpatients	At least 7 days, then 2 negative PCRs	Email covidclearance@monashhealth.org
Day admissions		
Immunosuppressed outpatients	May require 2 negative PCR after D7) to clear for hospital inpatient setting	
Community		
Positive PCR	7 days	Automatic
Positive RAT	7 days	Automatic

*All positive Rapid antigen tests as inpatients must be confirmed with a PCR

These settings will be reviewed regularly

We will review these settings regularly to ensure they remain appropriate to the level of infection risk in the community, making adjustments as required. If you have questions or concerns please escalate them through your line manager.

Support

Our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) with Converge International is free and confidential. The EAP offers short term counselling and coaching support for all employees, immediate family members, and volunteers. The service is available 8am – 8pm, Monday to Friday, with limited availability on the weekends. You can make an appointment on 1300 687 327.



We also have a wide range of wellbeing resources available to help you. These can be found on the [Health and Wellbeing page of coronavirus.monashhealth.org](https://coronavirus.monashhealth.org/Health-and-Wellbeing).

