



Your Ref:  
Our Ref:  
Contact:

The Honourable Mark McGowan MLA  
Premier of Western Australia  
13 Floor, Dumas House  
2 Havelock Street  
WEST PERTH WA 6005

## **EASING OF RESTRICTIONS**

Dear Premier

On 26 April 2021, I advised that, as we had identified no further community or local acquired cases since the 23 April 2021, eased restrictions should be implemented from 00:01 am on Tuesday 27 April 2021 and remain in place until 00:01 am on Saturday 01 May 2021. Further contact tracing and testing would be undertaken, and, depending on the results of these measures, further easing of restrictions could be considered from 01 May 2021.

The Public Health Emergency Operations Centre (PHEOC) has identified the close and casual contacts of the Victorian case, Case 984 and Case 986 and required them to be immediately tested for COVID-19 and to quarantine for 14 days at home if a close contact. All 391 close contacts have been identified and tested, with 390 contacts negative on testing and 1 pending. 903 casual contacts have been identified and 802 contacts tested, with 727 negative and 75 pending results. Extensive testing has taken place, with 49,440 tests being completed between 23-28 April 2021. Whole Genome Sequencing of the Victorian Case and Case 984 has confirmed that the strain was the B.1.1.7 (United Kingdom) variant, and was linked to the Mercure cluster. There have been no further positive locally acquired COVID-19 test results received in respect to either the contacts or the public.

With these results in mind, I now recommend that the restrictions can be further eased as follows:

- All venues, except nightclubs and stadiums, can now open subject to the usual 2 square metre and capacity arrangements under Phase 4C. Nightclubs can open subject to complying with the 4m<sup>2</sup> rule. The intent of this is to allow people to socialise, but in restricted numbers to reduce the potential for the spread of COVID-19 from large numbers and mixing, should a case be subsequently identified in the community. Weddings and funerals should be allowed up to 200 persons, with exemptions available for these events with more than 200 people.

Music events may continue in accordance with current events guidelines. Where a person wishes to have a gathering at their own premises, this should be restricted to a maximum of 30 guests, given limited physical distancing, mask wearing and contact registers in such settings.

- The requirement for face masks should remain in place, but be further eased. They should remain mandated for public indoor areas (e.g. shopping centres, hospitals, bars, restaurants, churches), on public transport, and required outside where physical distancing is not possible, including stadiums and larger outdoor events. The wearing of masks, particularly where there may still be community transmission and we have reopened venues, can provide extra protection. As we remain within the first incubation period of the three cases, further cases may still be detected, and I therefore recommend that the requirement to wear face masks continues, except for primary school students, those with medical exemptions and those people undertaking exercise. Easing requirements will allow people to remove masks outside in low risk settings, such as when they are not in a mass gathering.
- Regarding healthcare facilities, I recommend that non-urgent category 2 or 3 elective surgery should resume. Visits to aged care facilities and hospitals should remain restricted, but be eased to allow one personal visitor per day. COVID-19 presents risks to older people, who are particularly vulnerable to respiratory diseases. As physical distancing is the most important action to protect vulnerable people from exposure to COVID-19, visitors to aged care facilities should still be restricted as above.
- Arenas can open to 75% capacity with a mandatory requirement for masks. Seated outdoor events are lower risk and any potential spread will be further mitigated by physical distancing from reduced capacity and masks.

Please see Attachment 1 for a table detailing my recommendations. I recommend that these eased restrictions become effective from 00:01 am on Saturday 01 May 2021 and are in place until 00:01 am on Saturday 08 May 2021. If no further community cases outside home or hotel quarantine occur, I would anticipate we can return to Phase 4C from 08 May 2021.

I am happy to re-consider the above advice should there be significant changes in the public health situation.

Yours sincerely



Dr Andy Robertson  
**CHIEF HEALTH OFFICER**

29 April 2021