



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Health**

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Contact:

The Honourable Mark McGowan MLA
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EASING OF RESTRICTIONS

Dear Premier

On 29 April 2021, I advised that eased restrictions could be implemented from 00:01 am on Saturday 1 May 2021 and remain in place until 00:01 am on Saturday 8 May 2021. This advice was based on having not identified any further community or local acquired cases since the 23 April 2021, despite extensive contact tracing and testing, related to the Victorian traveller who had undertaken 14 days hotel quarantine in Western Australia (Victorian case).

On 1 May 2021, a new case of COVID-19 was detected in a 22-year-old man who was working as a security guard at the Pan Pacific quarantine hotel (Case 1001). Case 1001 had worked shifts at the hotel on 24, 25 and 26 April 2021, had negative saliva tests for each of those days, and had developed symptoms on the evening of 29 April 2021. He had received the first dose of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine on 23 April 2021. He had a routine weekly PCR test on 30 April 2021, which was positive. He was placed into hotel quarantine and the Public Health Emergency Operations Centre (PHEOC) began identifying the close and casual contacts of Case 1001.

Case 1001 was sharing a house with seven other friends. All these close contacts were tested and two of the man's close contacts also tested positive (Cases 1003 and 1004). The five other close social contacts tested negative. All have been placed in hotel quarantine for 14 days. A further 11 close social contacts, who had attended various venues with the cases, were all confirmed as negative and placed in quarantine for 14 days. Extensive testing commenced, and, at that time, it was assessed that the previous restrictions on capacity numbers and the requirements for mask use were likely to have mitigated the spread of the virus.

On that basis, I recommended that the restrictions be modified as follows:

- All venues, except nightclubs, casinos and stadiums, could remain open subject to the usual 2 square metre and capacity arrangements under Phase 4C. Nightclubs and casinos were required to remain closed to restrict the size of

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gatherings to reduce the potential for the spread of COVID-19 from large numbers and mixing with non-household contacts, should other cases be subsequently identified in the community.

- Weddings and funerals were continued to be allowed up to 200 persons, with exemptions available for these events with more than 200 people. Gatherings at private premises were restricted to a maximum of 30 guests.
- The requirement for face masks returned to the previous lockdown requirements. They remained mandated for public indoor areas (e.g. shopping centres, hospitals, bars, restaurants, churches), on public transport, and when outside.
- Stadiums were required to close, with matches allowed without spectators.
- Music events were permitted to continue in accordance with the current events guidelines, but subject to a review of their COVID event plans if they involved over 500 people.

I recommended that these eased restrictions become effective immediately on Sunday 02 May 2021 and remain in place until 00:01 am on Saturday 08 May 2021.

I can now advise that we have not identified any further community or local acquired cases related to Case 1001. The PHEOC identified 115 close contacts of Cases 1001, 1003 and 1004, all of whom have tested negative for COVID-19 and were instructed to self-isolate for 14 days. The PHEOC also identified 508 casual contacts, all of whom have been contacted, with 364 (71.7%) contacts testing negative for COVID-19 and results for the remaining 144 (28.3%) contacts pending. All contacts have been directed to attend the COVID Clinic at Royal Perth Hospital from 6 May 2021 for follow up testing.

I can also advise that we have not identified any further community or local acquired cases related to the Victorian Case. 397 close contacts were identified related to this cluster, 396 (99.7%) of whom have been contacted and tested negative for COVID-19. One close contact cannot be located despite all attempts, including with assistance from the WA Police Force, and probably has left the State. 276 (69.5%) of the casual contacts have now been classified as 'cleared' as they have completed 14 days of quarantine, returned a negative test towards the end of their quarantine period and are asymptomatic. The PHEOC also identified 898 casual contacts related to this cluster and I can confirm that they have all been contacted, 882 (98.2%) of whom presented for testing and had a negative result.

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

- All venues, including nightclubs and casinos, can now open subject to the usual 2 square metre and capacity arrangements under Phase 4C.
- Weddings and funerals should continue to be allowed for up to 200 persons, with exemptions available for those events with more than 200 people. Music events may continue in accordance with the current events guidelines. Where a person wishes to have a gathering at their own premises, this should be restricted to a

maximum of 100 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. Face masks should remain mandated for public transport, stadiums and events with a crowd capacity of more than 1,000. The wearing of masks, particularly where there may still be community transmission and we have reopened major venues with large numbers and mixing, can provide extra protection. Masks should also continue to be mandated for visitors to aged care, disability and hospital settings. Easing requirements will allow people to remove masks in lower risk settings, such as where people gather in restricted numbers or outdoors. Masks should also continue to be mandated for the situations outlined above for those people travelling from the Perth and Peel regions to other regions of Western Australia.
- Visits to aged care facilities, disability care facilities and hospitals should remain restricted, but be eased to allow four personal visitors per day. COVID-19 presents greater risks for older people and those with certain medical conditions and disabilities, who may be particularly vulnerable to infectious diseases, and reducing exposure by limiting numbers and physical distancing is the most important action needed to protect vulnerable people from COVID-19.
- Arenas and stadiums 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 08 May 2021 and are in place until 00:01 am on Saturday 15 May 2021. If no further community cases outside home or hotel quarantine occur, I would anticipate we can return to Phase 4C from 15 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

6 May 2021