



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

Your Ref:
Our Ref:
Contact:

The Honourable Roger Cook MLA
Acting Premier of Western Australia
13 Floor, Dumas House
2 Havelock Street
WEST PERTH WA 6005

Dear Acting Premier

UPDATED ADVICE: REDUCTION IN RESTRICTIONS IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19 RISK IN PERTH AND PEEL REGIONS

I am writing to provide updated advice on restrictions in place following the COVID-19 outbreak that occurred at Christmas in the Perth/Peel Region. On 03 January 2022, the Acting Chief Health Officer wrote to you to recommend ongoing restrictions in response to the outbreak, as there had been further cases. The advice at that time led to the implementation of the [COVID Restrictions \(Gatherings and Related Measures\) Directions \(No 4\)](#) and included face covering requirements, vaccination requirements, and extended application of Directions beyond the affected area.

As of 07 January 2022, a total of 21 cases of COVID-19 have been identified as being connected to the Community Christmas outbreak. The contact tracing of the 21 cases have resulted in identification of 856 close contacts, 802 of which have returned negative tests, and 2,334 casual contacts, who have been provided with information. Testing has been conducted widely across the backpacker community and offered to six backpacker hostels to enable testing of casual contacts and others in that cohort. There have also been two separate infections in hotel quarantine staff with limited community exposure. One case has led to no further spread and the second to a single household member infection, with other close contacts initially testing negative and now placed in self-quarantine.

The Outbreak Management Team reporting indicates that the situation is currently stable and well controlled. There is a small risk that cases may have been missed, as several cases travelled widely while infectious, and some cases were only peripherally linked to the outbreak. However, it is unlikely that there will be many cases associated with this outbreak that have not been found.

Given the very few new community cases in the current outbreak, I am confident that some of the restrictions in place in the Perth and Peel Regions can be eased. Specifically, the requirements to wear a mask in a public indoor space is no longer necessary, except on public transport, including in taxis and ride share, and in high

risk settings (hospitals, aged care, and disability services). The requirement for masks in nightclubs, at music events and at events with crowds of >500 people can also be removed.

Given there remains a small risk of missed cases and subsequent community spread, particularly in settings with large numbers of non-household members and mixing of patrons, the current requirements for licenced venues, with a capacity of over 500 patrons or which can operate after midnight, to show proof of vaccination and their identity as a condition of entry, should be maintained, as should proof of vaccination as a condition of entry to nightclubs, at music events and at events with crowds of >500 people.

The requirement for people, who have been in Perth or Peel area, to abide by restrictions in place in the Perth/Peel region when they return to regional areas, is no longer needed, as there has been no identified seeding of infection elsewhere in the State.

I will continue to monitor the outbreak and circumstances leading to transmission events and will re-consider the above advice should there be significant changes in the public health situation.

Yours sincerely



Dr Andy Robertson
CHIEF HEALTH OFFICER

7 January 2022