

# Non-Government Organisations: COVID-19

## Frequently Asked Questions

*Note: recently added information is highlighted in yellow.*

### Lockdown in the ACT

- **What are the essential reasons you can leave home during lockdown?**

Further information on the essential reasons you can leave home during lockdown is available here:

[Lockdown in the ACT - COVID-19](#)

For the latest news and updates on COVID-19, visit the Media Updates page here:

[Media updates - COVID-19 \(act.gov.au\)](#)

- **For families who share care of their children across two households, does the other household constitute their 'bubble' or can these families establish a further 'bubble' with another household?**

For families who are looking to connect with another household beyond their shared custody 'bubble', there are new rules on meeting outdoors with up to 5 people from different households. Further information is available here:

<https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/act-status-and-response/lockdown/lockdown-faqs>

### Exposure locations

- **Where can I find more information on COVID-19 exposure locations in the ACT?**

Information on COVID-19 exposure locations in the ACT is updated regularly and available here:

[COVID-19 exposure locations in the ACT - COVID-19](#)

### Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- **Does the direction to wear face masks apply to my service and staff?**

Information about wearing face masks is available here:

<https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/act-status-and-response/face-masks>

- **How can people in the community access face masks if they don't have capacity to purchase them?**

Information about access to PPE for the community and allied health services is available here:

<https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/stay-safe-and-healthy/protect-yourself#Personal-protective-equipment-for-the-community-and-allied-health-services>

Requests for PPE can be submitted through the [PPE online request form](#).

- **Who is required to wear N95 masks?**

Information about appropriate use of PPE is available here:

<https://health.act.gov.au/businesses/non-government-community-disability-and-health-service-providers#personalprotectiveequipment>

## **Entering and Leaving the ACT**

- **What is the process for staff who live outside the ACT who need to enter the ACT for an essential work purpose?**

Information on travelling to the ACT, including for ACT/NSW border residents, is available here:

<https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/travel/entering-the-act/travel-directions-in-the-act/standing-exemptions-including-transiting#ACT-border-residents-living-in-NSW>

Online travel forms, including declaration and exemption forms, are available here:

[Online travel forms - COVID-19 \(act.gov.au\)](#)

- **What is the process for those people who live in NSW and need to enter the ACT for essential work purposes and then need to return home to NSW?**

Information on travelling from the ACT into NSW is available here:

[Interstate travellers | NSW Government](#)

The online declaration form, for entry into NSW from the ACT, is available here:

[Complete a travel declaration form](#)

## **COVID-19 Vaccination**

- **Who is eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine?**

Information on who is eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine is available here:

[Check if you're eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine - COVID-19 \(act.gov.au\)](#)

- **Are essential workers, including health, aged and disability care workers, being prioritised for COVID-19 vaccination?**

ACT Government COVID-19 vaccine clinics are prioritising health, aged and disability care workers. This includes but is not limited to clinical and non-clinical workers at hospitals, health, aged and disability facilities.

The COVID-19 vaccine is free for everyone, even those without Medicare cards and those who hold an immigration visa.

Workers can book their appointment by calling a dedicated vaccine booking line on **02 5124 3999** or the ACT COVID-19 vaccine booking line on **02 5124 7700**. Workers should identify themselves as an aged, disability or health care worker. They will need to answer a few questions to confirm their employment, before being prioritised for an appointment.

Further information on the COVID-19 vaccination program is available here:

[www.covid19.act.gov.au/vaccine](http://www.covid19.act.gov.au/vaccine)

- **Are aged care workers at residential facilities required to be vaccinated?**

From 17 September 2021, a [Public Health Emergency Direction](#) prohibits a worker from entering or remaining on the premises of a residential aged care facility, or undertaking a particular function, unless that person has received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine.

Further information on mandatory vaccination for aged care workers is available here:

[COVID-19 vaccine information for residential aged care providers, workers and residents - COVID-19 \(act.gov.au\)](#)

- **Are teachers and educators being prioritised for COVID-19 vaccination?**

The ACT Government has announced priority vaccination for ACT teachers, educators and staff who have direct contact with children in their daily work at schools and early education and care centres, as well as for all ACT Year 12 students.

Information on how to make a priority vaccination appointment is available here:

[Check if you're eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine - COVID-19 \(act.gov.au\)](#)

- **Are children eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine?**

From Monday 20 September all **children aged 12-15 years** are able to book a Pfizer vaccination appointment at an ACT Government clinic.

Further information is available here:

[COVID-19 vaccine - COVID-19 \(act.gov.au\)](#)

- **Can people with a disability, support staff, volunteers and carers access the COVID-19 vaccine?**

COVID-19 vaccination information for people with disability, support staff, volunteers and carers is available here:

[Information for people with disability - COVID-19 \(act.gov.au\)](#)

- **What arrangements are in place to help people with disability access COVID-19 vaccinations? Are there in-reach vaccination options for people who cannot travel to a vaccination clinic?**

Information on accessing COVID-19 vaccination for people with disability is available here:

[Advice for people with disability - COVID-19 \(act.gov.au\)](#)

Anyone who feels they may require **in-reach into their home** because they have significant barriers to accessing other vaccination options, is asked to contact the ACT vaccination booking line on **02 5124 7700** and **choose option 3 for the dedicated disability line**.

## COVID-19 Testing

- **Where can I get tested for COVID-19 in the ACT?**

Information on where to get tested in the ACT is available here:

[Where to get tested in the ACT - COVID-19](#)

- **Can the wait time be reduced or in-home testing be made available for people with disability who require a COVID-19 test?**

Information on accessing COVID-19 testing for people with disability is available here:

[Advice for people with disability - COVID-19 \(act.gov.au\)](#)

## Emergency relief

- **How can people access emergency food relief during lockdown?**

Information on accessing emergency food relief is available here:

<https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/community/access-help#Emergency-food-relief>

- **Is any financial support available for those who are unwell, under lockdown, quarantine, isolation or stay-at-home orders and unable to work?**

Information on financial assistance and eligibility criteria is available here:

<https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/community/access-help#Financial-and-other-support>

- **Is any financial support available for those who are isolating and waiting on a COVID-19 test result?**

Information on the ACT Government COVID-19 test hardship isolation payment is available here:

[COVID-19 Hardship Isolation Payment - Guidelines \(act.gov.au\)](#)

To apply for the payment, access the application form here:

[COVID-19 Test Hardship Isolation Payment Application \(act.gov.au\)](#)

- **What accommodation supports are available for workers who are exposed to patients with COVID-19 and cannot safely self-isolate or quarantine in their homes?**

Guidance on Government Funded Accommodation arrangements for 'high risk' and 'essential workers' during the COVID-19 pandemic is available here:

[https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/1835218/Emergency-Response-Managing-accommodation-needs-during-the-COVID-19-pandemic.pdf](https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/1835218/Emergency-Response-Managing-accommodation-needs-during-the-COVID-19-pandemic.pdf)

These arrangements are aimed at minimising the risk of transmission of COVID-19 in the community and are available where **all other accommodation options have been exhausted.**

Non-government organisation chief executives who require accommodation support for workers who meet the eligibility criteria (outlined in the link above) are asked to contact their ACT Government contract managers for further information. For ACT Health-funded organisations,

requests can be sent to [PSRContracts@act.gov.au](mailto:PSRContracts@act.gov.au). For CSD-funded organisations, requests can be sent to [csdservicefundingsupport@act.gov.au](mailto:csdservicefundingsupport@act.gov.au).

- **What supports are available for homeless people/rough sleepers during the current lockdown?**

#### **Homelessness services**

Homelessness services will continue throughout the lockdown period.

Anyone who is homeless or at immediate risk of homelessness should call OneLink on **1800 176 468** or access further information here:

[www.onelink.org.au](http://www.onelink.org.au)

OneLink's normal hours of operation will continue throughout the lockdown period for contact by phone or email. These are **Monday to Friday 8.00am - 6.00pm**, and **Saturday and Sunday 12.30pm - 5.00pm**.

#### **Rough Sleepers**

Services in the Canberra community that provide support to rough sleepers and other vulnerable members of the community continue to operate safely during the lockdown and in accordance with health guidelines.

While services remain available, delivery will adapt to health advice and restrictions to ensure the safety of both clients and staff. For example, rather than sit down meal service, food may be provided as take away meal options. For some services, there has been a need to temporarily cancel non-essential face-to-face activities and switch to phone or online support.

OneLink is the ACT Government's central intake service for homelessness accommodation services and support in the ACT and continues to provide operations throughout the lockdown period. For those in our community who are experiencing homelessness and are in need of accommodation, OneLink will work to identify a suitable vacancy with a homelessness accommodation service.

Where needed, OneLink also has access to temporary hotel brokerage to support the most vulnerable members of the Canberra community, including rough sleepers and residents from homelessness and community housing shared accommodation settings who need to self-isolate or quarantine due to COVID-19. All requests for access to temporary accommodation, including hotel brokerage are assessed on a case by case basis.

For further information call OneLink on **1800 176 468** or visit the OneLink website here:

[www.onelink.org.au](http://www.onelink.org.au)

- **What support services are available for people on temporary visas?**

Information on support services for people on temporary visas is available here:

[https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/1830574/Fact-Sheet-Support-for-Temporary-Visa-holders.pdf](https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/1830574/Fact-Sheet-Support-for-Temporary-Visa-holders.pdf)

## **Essential Services**

- **What is classified as an essential service?**

Information on what qualifies as an essential service is available here:

<https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/act-status-and-response/lockdown#Business-and-community-restrictions>

- **Who is an essential worker?**

Information on who qualifies as an essential worker is available here.

<https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/act-status-and-response/lockdown#Business-and-community-restrictions>

- **Can people with disability continue to access support with medical care or disability support during lockdown?**

Information on receiving support with medical care or disability support during lockdown is available here:

<https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/stay-safe-and-healthy/disability/frequently-asked-questions>

- **How can disability providers continue to deliver services safely during lockdown?**

Information on how to continue to deliver services safely during lockdown is available here:

[Advice for disability providers - COVID-19 \(act.gov.au\)](#)

- **If people are not comfortable having support workers in their home during lockdown, can they suspend their support plans?**

There is no obligation for people to continue to receive services.

If people are isolating or want to discuss changes to their plan as a result of lockdown, they can phone the NDIS Contact Centre on **1800 800 110 and select option 5** if their situation has changed due to COVID-19.

People with disability and their supporters may wish to consider if any supports are not critical right now, or consider and negotiate alternative ways to receive their support, such as through contactless or virtual means and/or implementing strategies such as staggered rosters if they have multiple support people coming into their home.

It is also okay to request support workers wear PPE and implement strict hygiene protocols. Support workers are required to comply with their employer's work health and safety obligations.

- **What mental health support is available in the ACT during this lockdown?**

Information on supporting mental health and wellbeing during COVID-19 is available here:

[Mental Health and Wellbeing during COVID-19 | Health \(act.gov.au\)](#)

## **Access to ACT Health Facilities**

- **Has access to health care facilities in the ACT changed during this lockdown?**

Information on accessing health care facilities in the ACT is available here:

[COVID-19 Update: Changes to your visit to ACT Health Facilities | Health](#)

- **Can people from other jurisdictions continue to access health care facilities in the ACT during lockdown?**

Information on accessing health care facilities for people who reside outside the ACT is available here:

[NSW Southern Region patient exemptions – what you need to know | Health \(act.gov.au\)](#)

The online health exemption form, for entry into the ACT, is available here:

[Australian Capital Territory \(ACT\) Health Exemption Application](#)

- **Can expectant mothers have a support person with them during labour and the postnatal period?**

Information on visitor arrangements for the Centenary Hospital for Women and Children is available here:

[Visitor arrangements for Centenary Hospital for Women and Children \(CHWC\) | Health \(act.gov.au\)](#)

Information on visitor arrangements at Calvary Public Hospital Bruce, Calvary Bruce Private Hospital and Calvary John James Hospital is available here:

[Information for patients, residents and clients - Calvary Health Care \(calvarycare.org.au\)](#)

Further information on visitor arrangements at Calvary Public Hospital Bruce is available here:

[Maternity Services - Calvary Public Hospital Bruce \(calvarycare.org.au\)](#)

## **Quarantine requirements**

- **Where can I find further information on quarantine requirements in the ACT?**

Information on quarantine, isolation and stay-at-home requirements is available here:

[Quarantine, isolation and stay at home - COVID-19 \(act.gov.au\)](#)

- **What is the difference between a close contact and a casual contact?**

- **Who is a secondary contact?**

Information on close, casual and secondary contacts is available here:

<https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/stay-safe-and-healthy/quarantine-and-isolation/types-of-contacts>

Note that the requirements for secondary contacts in NSW differ from the requirements in the ACT. Download the NSW Health fact sheet for secondary contacts for more information: [NSW Health fact sheet for secondary close contacts - Fact sheets](#).

- **I was present at a close contact exposure site. From what date does my 14 day quarantine period commence?**

**Day zero** is the last day of potential exposure to COVID-19. If you attended a venue that had more than one exposure time you should count the most recent date of when you attended as day zero (not the first day it was listed).

If you are in quarantine in a home where someone with COVID-19 is isolating, you will need to quarantine for another 14 days after they are released from isolation by ACT Health.

Further information on quarantine requirements for close contacts is available here:

[Quarantine for close contacts - COVID-19](#)

- **What is the advice for close contacts in quarantine who have received a negative day 12-13 test result, but have yet to hear from ACT Health regarding their completion of quarantine?**

Close contacts are required to quarantine for 14 days.

People who expect their quarantine to have finished and have received confirmation of a negative test result, but have yet to be contacted by ACT Health should call the COVID-19 Response Team on **02 5124 6500** and **select option 5** in the menu.

Further information on quarantine for close contacts is available here:

<https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/stay-safe-and-healthy/quarantine-and-isolation/quarantine/quarantine-for-close-contacts>

- **When can people who have tested positive for COVID-19 stop isolating?**

Isolation separates a person who has COVID-19 from other people to prevent the disease spreading.

In the ACT, isolation is mandatory for people with confirmed COVID-19.

People who have tested positive for COVID-19 **can only stop isolating when they are cleared for release by ACT Health**.

Further information on isolation is available here:

[Isolation information for people with confirmed COVID-19 - COVID-19 \(act.gov.au\)](#)

## **Translated resources**

- **For clients, workers and community members who do not speak English, where can I find translated COVID-19 information?**

COVID-19 information and resources have been translated into 20 languages. Access to the resources is available here:

[Languages - COVID-19 \(act.gov.au\)](#)



## **COVID-19 information for children**

- **Where can I find information on COVID-19 that is suitable for children?**

COVID-19 information for children, including newsletters, video messages and tips to beat lockdown boredom, is available here:

<https://hrc.act.gov.au/childrenyoungpeople/covid-info-for-kids/>