

Information Sheet

Testing for COVID-19

The only way to know if you have COVID-19 or not is to get tested. Anyone experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 should be tested. Anyone who is a known [close contact](#) of someone with COVID-19 should also be tested. There are two types of tests for COVID-19: Rapid Antigen Tests (RAT) and Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) tests. More information about RAT and PCR is available on the [Tasmanian Government website](#).

RAT: Rapid Antigen Test

You can do a RAT at home. They are available free for anyone who has COVID-19 symptoms, anyone who is a close contact of a confirmed case, or anyone who has been directed by Public Health to take one.

Eligible people who need a free RAT need to register their details using the [online request form](#).

If you are not eligible for a free RAT, you can buy one from a chemist or supermarket (they can be hard to find sometimes). Some schools will also be providing students with free RATs to use at home if they have COVID-19 symptoms.

[NDIS participants may also be able to use their plan](#) funds to claim for a RAT.

If your RAT is positive for COVID-19 you must record your test result on the [online declaration form](#). This will help make sure you can access medical and financial support if you are eligible.

Resources for RATs

- » There are two types of RAT – a nasal / throat swab or saliva sample. It is important to follow the instructions that come with the RAT you have.
- » Aspect have created tip sheets to help [children](#) and [adults/teenagers](#) doing a RAT.
- » Aspect have also created [visual schedules](#) for doing a RAT.

PCR: Polymerase Chain Reaction test

Covid testing clinics in Tasmania use PCR testing.

If you are told to get a PCR test, or you cannot use a RAT test, you can book a PCR test by using the [Public Health Tasmania Website](#) or by calling the Public Health Hotline on 1800 671 738.

PCR tests are done either in a clinic or from your car by a nurse.

The nurse will swab your throat and both nostrils and send the sample to a laboratory.

It can take some time (up to 72 hours) to get the results.

Resources for PCR tests

- » Berry St have put together a [social story](#) that explains COVID-19 testing including testing done in a car.
- » The Australian Government has a [Getting a test resource](#) in Easy Read format.
- » The Royal Children's Hospital has a [video for children on what it's like to receive a PCR](#).
- » Sue Larkey has a [tips sheet on COVID-19 testing](#).

The National Coronavirus Helpline can assist people with disability, their family, friends and carers with information about COVID-19 or COVID-19 vaccines. Call 1800 020 080 and select option 5. People with disability can also access support through the [Disability Gateway website](#) or by calling 1800 643 787.