

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.