Coronavirus (COVID-19) health alert

We are monitoring a respiratory illness outbreak caused by a novel (new) coronavirus (COVID-19). We update this alert every day with the latest medical advice and official reports.

Alert status
Active

Last updated
28 February 2020

On this page

Current status

In Australia

As at 06:30 hrs on 28 February 2020, we have 23 confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) in Australia:

- 8 in Queensland
- 4 in New South Wales
- 7 in Victoria
- 3 in South Australia
- 1 in Western Australia

15 of these cases are reported to have recovered. The remaining cases are in a stable condition.

8 cases are passengers who were on the Diamond Princess repatriation flight from Japan. They were in quarantine at the Manigurr-ma Village Howard Springs facility in Darwin when they tested positive to coronavirus (COVID-19).

All of these people have returned to their home states for medical treatment.

For questions about testing or the welfare of people with the virus, contact yourstate or territory health authority.

In the news

- the Prime Minister has announced the activation of the Australian Health Sector Emergency Response Plan for Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19).
- the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) has issued a statement on travel restrictions

For more information, read the latest transcripts and media releases about coronavirus (COVID-19) in our news section.

Across the world

> Across the world, there have been about 82,704 confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) and 2,814 reported deaths. Of confirmed cases reported globally, the case fatality rate is approximately 3.4%. The case fatality rate in countries and regions outside mainland China is 1.4%

The majority of cases of COVID-19 have been reported from mainland China. 4,207 cases have been reported from 49 countries and regions outside mainland China.

Since 27 February there have been 623 new cases and 14 deaths reported outside of mainland China.

Why is there an alert

On 30 January 2020, the World Health Organization declared the coronavirus outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern.

The Australian Government has issued this health alert as a precaution, based on the latest and best medical advice.

Learn more about coronavirus (COVID-19)

Find out more about coronavirus (COVID-19) and how to protect yourself

Separate fact from fiction by reading coronavirus myth busters on the World Health Organization website. This includes information about when and how to wear a surgical mask

We also have a series of information sheets to help you, your family, health professionals, aged care workers, educational facilities, and the travel industry.

> **Coronavirus (COVID-19) resources**
>
> A collection of resources for the general public, health professionals and industry about coronavirus (COVID-19).

Coronavirus (COVID-19) resources in Simplified or Traditional Chinese

A collection of resources about coronavirus (COVID-19) in Simplified or Traditional Chinese.

Information for the health sector

View our resources for health professionals, including pathology providers and healthcare managers.

> Also read the 2019-nCoV National Guidelines for Public Health Units that were updated by the Communicable Diseases Network Australia on 27 February 2020.

For information about the epidemiology of cases in Australia and overseas, read the weekly epidemiological reports.

Australian Health Sector Emergency Response Plan for Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

The Australian Health Sector Emergency Response Plan for Novel Coronavirus (the COVID-19 Plan) was endorsed by the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee on 17 February 2020.

The Australian Government will continue to monitor the emerging information and evidence closely. It will work with jurisdictions, through key committees and other relevant experts, to adapt the COVID-19 Plan as new information becomes available.

Australian Health Sector Emergency Response Plan For Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

The Australian Health Sector Emergency Response Plan for Novel Coronavirus (the COVID-19 Plan) guides the Australian health sector response.

Who is at risk

In Australia, the people most at risk of getting the virus are those who have:

- recently been in mainland China
- been in close contact with someone who is a confirmed case of coronavirus

If you are at risk

You need to isolate yourself if you are at risk of getting the virus:

- If you have left, or transited through mainland China in the last 14 days, you must isolate yourself for 14 days from the date of leaving mainland China.
- If you have been in close contact with a proven case of coronavirus, you must isolate yourself for 14 days from the date of last contact with the confirmed case.

You do not need to isolate yourself if you have only travelled in Hong Kong, Macau or Taiwan.

Travellers and visitors

On 27 February 2020, the Australian Government supported recommendations from the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) to maintain current travel restrictions. These will be reviewed again before 6 March 2020. Read the statement from the AHPPC.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) have raised the level of advice for:

- Northern Italy (several regions, including Lombardia and Veneto)
- Iran
- Japan
- South Korea (Daegu and Cheongdo)
- Mongolia

> Australians travelling overseas are encouraged to regularly review theSmartraveller website and subscribe for updates.

China

Do not travel to mainland China. This is the latestChina travel advice from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

Foreign nationals (excluding permanent residents) who are in mainland China, will not be allowed to enter Australia until 14 days after they have left or transited through mainland China.

Australian citizens, permanent residents, and their immediate family will still be able to enter Australia, as well as airline crews who have been using appropriate personal protective equipment.

If you:

- hold a visa for Australia or have applied for a visa, read thecoronavirus fact sheet for visa holders and applicants
- are planning to travel to or transit through Australia, read the currenttravel restrictions
- plan to travel overseas, check the latest travel advice
- are concerned about someone overseas, call the DFAT consular emergency line

If you are on board an international flight and show signs of an infectious disease:

- the airline must report you to biosecurity officers
- biosecurity officers will assess you before you get off the plane
- you may be isolated or referred to a hospital

Australians in mainland China

You should follow the latest China travel advice and leave by commercial flight as soon as you can.

Australians on cruise ships

DFAT is providing consular assistance to Australians hospitalised and quarantined overseas because of COVID-19.

The Diamond Princess cruise ship

The Australian Government has assisted 170 people to depart Japan. They arrived in Darwin on a Qantas flight on 20 February 2020 and are in quarantine at the Howard Springs Accommodation Village (Manigurr-ma Village Howard Springs).

Any passengers from the Diamond Princess who were not on the Qantas charter flight:

- will not be allowed on other flights to Australia before Wednesday 4 March 2020
- need to complete a 14 day quarantine period before travelling to Australia
- will be subject to health screening on entry if they have not completed the 14 day quarantine requirement
- may be subject to a Human Biosecurity Control Order under the*Biosecurity Act 2015*, that can include conditions restricting movement or requiring isolation.

Australians who are medically cleared from the Japanese health system will be provided a medical clearance form for presentation to officials upon arrival at the Australian border.

The Australian Embassy in Tokyo is providing consular assistance to a number of Australians hospitalised in Japan due to coronavirus.

Australians in quarantine

164 passengers from the Diamond Princess (Australian citizens, dual nationals and family members) began a 14 day quarantine period at the Howard Springs Accommodation Village (Manigurr-ma Village Howard Springs).

8 passengers have tested positive to COVID-19 since their arrival in Darwin. All have been transferred to their home state for medical treatment.

The facility has strong isolation procedures in place.

To support the quarantine process Howard Springs Accommodation Village (Darwin) (Manigurr-ma Village Howard Springs) will act as a human health response zone.

International students

Year 11 and 12 students

Year 11 and 12 students who remain in China (outside Hubei Province) due to Australian travel restrictions have been offered a strict pathway to resume their studies. This is in recognition of the importance of the final 2 years of school.

Students who are completing their senior secondary schooling can apply for an exemption to the 1 February 2020 COVID-19 travel restrictions applied to foreign nationals who have been in mainland China (except Hubei Province). The exemptions will be considered on a case by case basis.

Australian Border Force has information for student visa holders.

We are delivering more Australian education services online and offshore for international students. To find out more and for support, go to coronavirus updates for international students on the Study in Australia website.

What we are doing

Australia is well prepared. We have plans that we are adapting as we learn more about the virus and how it spreads.

Australian Government agencies and state and territory governments are working together to coordinate an evidence-based response. This includes:

- providing information in English and Chinese based on the latest medical advice, including through Facebook, Twitter, Weibo, WeChat and Chinese newspapers
- applying a 14-day isolation period to people at risk of getting coronavirus
- applying travel restrictions to reduce the number of travellers from mainland China
- organising assisted departure for Australian citizens in Wuhan
- tracing coronavirus cases
- continuing to screen travellers who arrive in Australia
- continuing with border surveillance

- applying enhanced border measures at international air and sea ports, including announcements and signs

State and territory health authorities are:

- testing anyone who shows symptoms of the virus
- monitoring close contacts of confirmed cases every day

Find out more

You can also visit our Facebook and Twitter pages or call us if you still have questions about coronavirus:

Coronavirus Health Information Line

Call this line if you are seeking information on novel coronavirus. The line operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

1800 020 080

View contact

Departmental media enquiries

Contact for members of the media

news [at]
health.gov.au

02 6289 7400

View contact

Tags:

Communicable diseases | Emergency health management | Travel health

Is there anything wrong with this page?

© Commonwealth of Australia | Department of Health