



23 January 2022

COVID-19 Update

What you need to know:

- All early childhood education and outside school hour care services will receive additional supplies of RAT kits to allow staff to test twice a week, for a period of four weeks.
- Staff are not required to confirm or report on the use of their tests but all positive results must be reported to [Service NSW](#) and to the service.

Dear services and providers

This morning the Premier and Minister for Education and Early Learning announced that all services will receive additional supplies of rapid antigen tests to support staff to confidently remain at work.

The supplies will allow staff to undertake rapid antigen surveillance testing twice a week in the morning before attending the service, for a period of four weeks.

Distribution of the RAT kits has commenced and services will:

- All receive kits, including those who have already received a supply from the department.
 - Where services are not yet operational for 2022, including preschools, mobile services and OSHC services who do not operate Vacation Care, will receive kits in the first week of operation.
- Initially receive enough tests for 2 weeks of surveillance testing (two tests per week) for staff. Staff estimates have been adjusted based on service size, however, the department does not hold information on actual staff numbers in individual ECE services.
 - Additional supplies of RAT kits will be sent to services to allow for staff to test twice weekly, for a total period of four weeks.
- Be sent kits directly to the service where they will be available for staff to access.

Staff are not required to confirm or report on the use of their tests but all positive results must be reported to [Service NSW](#) and to the service.

Rapid Antigen Testing FAQs

When will my service receive their RAT kits?

Distribution of RAT kits has commenced, services can expect to receive a supply of kits before the start of the school term, in addition to any kits already received.

Services that are not yet operational for 2022, including preschools, mobile services and OSHC services who do not operate Vacation Care, they will receive kits in the first week of operation.

How many RAT kits will my services receive?

The number of RAT kits received will be based on the size of your service. The department will continue to send supplies of RAT kits throughout the four-week

period to ensure services have enough RATs to allow staff to test twice a week.

What if a staff member returns a positive RAT result?

If a staff member tests positive they must:

- Immediately self-isolate for 7 days from the day they tested positive using the rapid antigen test.
- Register their positive result via [Service NSW](#).
- Notify the early childhood education and care service so they can follow the steps outlined in [managing positive cases](#).

Will ECE services receive RAT kits for children to use?

The RAT kits supplied from the department are for staff use only, to allow staff to remain at work and to keep services operational. Parents of young children can choose to purchase and undertake RAT testing, it is important for parents to know that some test kits are not suitable for use in young children.

What is Rapid Antigen Testing?

Rapid antigen testing involves taking either a saliva sample or nasal swab that is placed into a chemical solution. The result displays within 10-15 minutes.

Our staff members are proactively using RAT kits each day, can we stop wearing masks?

Rapid Antigen testing is another tool to support the pandemic response however, it does not replace the need for vaccination, mask-wearing in indoor environments, hand hygiene and distancing rules that need to remain in place.

A staff member/child is unwell, but has returned a negative RAT, can they return to the service?

If staff or children are unwell, they should not come to your service and will need to continue to isolate until they are no longer symptomatic.

For more information

Educators are encouraged to regularly check the [NSW Health website](#) and [NSW Government website](#) regarding up-to-date restrictions in NSW.

If you have any questions about your service operation you can contact the Information and Enquiries team on 1800 619 113 or by emailing ececd@det.nsw.edu.au.

If you have a positive COVID case or have specific questions about your service's response to COVID-19, you can also email ECEC.COVIDCASE@det.nsw.edu.au



Copyright © 2022 Early Childhood Education, All rights reserved.

Sent to all services and providers in NSW

Our mailing address is:

Early Childhood Education
L 8 10 Valentine Avenue
Parramatta, NSW 2150
Australia

[Add us to your address book](#)

Want to change how you receive these emails?

[unsubscribe from this list](#)