



23 March 2022

## COVID-19 Update

### What you need to know:

- Due to increasing COVID-19 cases across NSW, another distribution of free Rapid Antigen Tests will be supplied to ECE services for staff use, as required.
- Services are encouraged to maintain COVID-smart measures including recommended use of masks indoors.
- All positive COVID test results must be reported to [Service NSW](#) and to the service.

Dear services and providers

The Department continues to work closely with NSW Health to determine considerations for ECE to support services to remain operational for children and families.

Please remain vigilant by continuing to follow the [COVID-safety guidelines](#) to help keep children, educators and the community safe.

Services are encouraged to maintain COVID-smart measures, which will

continue to be reviewed and updated as necessary, based on health advice.

All early childhood education and care educators and staff under the current [Public Health Order](#) must have received two doses of the COVID-19 vaccination, noting that the Public Health Order has been extended.

A booster vaccination can be given 3 or more months after your first 2 doses of a COVID-19 vaccine.

## **Information about RAT supplies**

Due to increasing COVID-19 cases across NSW, another distribution of free Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs) will be supplied by the Department of Education to ECE services for staff use, as required.

These may be used, for example, should a staff member be symptomatic or if there are cases arising at the service.

Outside of School Hours Care (OSHC) services on school sites will receive their own delivery of RAT kits for staff which may get delivered to the school office.

RAT kits for Department of Education preschool staff will be supplied by the school and these kits will be included in schools' distribution.

Find more information and frequently asked questions on RAT kits on the [Managing COVID cases webpage](#).

## **Additional COVID smart measures**

Services are encouraged to put in place additional COVID-smart practices if

they are experiencing a large increase in case numbers to minimise disruption.

NSW Health continues to recommend the wearing of masks indoors when you cannot physically distance, and this is a decision for services and educators to determine.

Staff and visitors in ECE services should continue to be supported to wear a mask should they choose to do so.

Individual services should continue to evaluate what is most appropriate for their service and their unique circumstances. For example, staggered drop-off or pick-up times, or collecting children from outside the service.

You can read more in our [COVID safety in ECE services: Guidance](#) document.

## **Reminder: returning to a service after COVID**

If a child or staff member is unwell, they should not attend the service.

If a child or staff member has tested positive, they must isolate and should not attend the service for 7 days. They can leave isolation after 7 days only if they are symptom-free, they do not need to test before returning to the service.

If a child is a household contact they must follow the [NSW Health Self Isolation Guidelines](#), isolate for 7 days and not attend the service.

Please review the latest isolation requirements from [NSW Health](#).

**For more information**

ECE staff 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](mailto:ececd@det.nsw.edu.au).

If you have specific questions about COVID-19, you can also email [ECEC.COVIDCASE@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:ECEC.COVIDCASE@det.nsw.edu.au)



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