



# COVID-19 SUPPORT PORTAL FOR PROVIDERS' REPORTING OF A COVID-19 OUTBREAK OR EXPOSURE IN RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE

23 February 2022

From 28 February 2022, providers will be required to report de-identified data on cases of COVID-19 outbreaks or exposures at a residential aged care facility via the new, online COVID-19 Support Portal.

This new portal will be accessible only via the [My Aged Care](#) provider portal.

The COVID-19 Support Portal offers residential aged care providers a more streamlined and efficient reporting mechanism, and it will further expedite the provision of Commonwealth supports to providers when an outbreak occurs.

It is already mandatory for providers to report COVID-19 outbreaks and exposures. The COVID-19 Support Portal collects the same information required to be reported by providers but in a more effective process.

The new portal enables providers to progressively update COVID-19 outbreak information in the one place as the situation evolves, including further test results, vaccination status of positive residents, and details of the facility's layout.

The COVID-19 Support Portal also allows immediate notification to the Department of outbreaks and exposures (COVID-19 in staff, resident or a visitor) to expedite the provision of support by the Commonwealth to ensure optimum protection for residents and workers.

## REPORTING AN OUTBREAK OR EXPOSURE

Up until Sunday 27 February 2022, providers will be required to continue to report COVID-19 cases to the Commonwealth by emailing [agedcareCOVIDcases@health.gov.au](mailto:agedcareCOVIDcases@health.gov.au).

The Department will continue to monitor this mailbox for a transition period, noting that providers will be redirected to provide their information through the COVID-19 Support Portal.

From the 28 February 2022, if a staff member or resident becomes positive with COVID-19, or an exposure occurs at a facility, the provider must immediately:

- notify the Commonwealth through either the COVID-19 Outbreak or Exposure Notification Form located on the COVID-19 Support Portal, accessed through the My Aged Care portal, and.
- notify their [state or territory health department](#).

### ***Residential aged care facility COVID-19 exposure:***

The [Communicable Disease Network Australia's National Guidelines for the Prevention, Control and Public Health Management of COVID-19 Outbreaks in Residential Aged](#)

[Care Facilities](#), defines a COVID-19 exposure in a residential aged care facility COVID-19 as:

- Any case of COVID-19 in staff, resident or a visitor at the facility during their infectious period that does not meet the definition of an outbreak.

**A residential aged care facility COVID-19 outbreak is defined as either:**

- Two or more residents of a residential care facility who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 via RAT or PCR test within 5 days and has been onsite at the residential aged care facility at any time during their infectious period, or
- Five or more staff, visitors and/or resident of the residential aged care facility diagnosed with COVID-19 through RAT or PCR test within the past 7 days who worked/visited during their infectious period.

Under the *Privacy Act 1988*, de-identified information should be provided to the Commonwealth. It should not include personal or private information that can identify an individual, such as their name, address, date of birth or contact details. Information about a resident's movements or passing should also be de-identified.

Providers will be required to include data on vaccination status of positive residents as part of their COVID-19 Outbreak or Exposure Notification Form. Information on facility level vaccination status of residents and staff is sourced from My Aged Care, however, this data does not provide visibility of the vaccination status of positive residents.

The [national guidelines on COVID-19 outbreaks in residential care facilities](#) provide advice to residential aged care facilities on how to control and manage outbreaks.

All approved providers are required to have in place an [outbreak management plan; and activate when appropriate](#).

All states and territories have issued public health directions for aged care providers. Check with you [local state or territory health department](#).

The [state or territory public health unit](#) is responsible for deciding when an outbreak is over.

## **WHY PROVIDERS NEED TO REPORT COVID-19 OUTBREAKS AND EXPOSURES**

Information on COVID-19 outbreaks and exposures assists the department and jurisdictions to effectively support the affected facility to appropriately manage and respond, including provision of [departmental support for Australian Government-funded aged care service providers](#).

## **STAY UP TO DATE**

An online reporting guide, including screenshots, will shortly be available for the sector.

To stay up to date, visit [Managing a COVID-19 outbreak in residential aged care | Australian Government Department of Health](#)