Guidelines for Notifying Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Containing legal requirements for laboratories

Effective 27 October 2021

Department of Health

Tasmanian Government
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PART A  Issuing statement and version notes

Issuing statement

I, Dr Mark Veitch, being and as the Director of Public Health, acting pursuant to section 184 of the Public Health Act 1997, hereby:

(1) revoke the Guidelines for Notifying Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) v2; and

(2) issue these Guidelines, being the Guidelines for Notifying Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) v3; and

(3) determine that these Guidelines come into effect on and from 27 October 2021.

Dated this 21 October 2021

Dr Mark Veitch
Director of Public Health

Version notes

27 October 2021  Start date for re-issued Guidelines. This version replaces the 5 March 2020 version. The changes reflect reporting requirements for negative results and method of reporting, and also remove reporting by medical practitioners.

5 March 2020  Start date for re-issued Guidelines. This version replaces the 6 February 2020 version. The changes reflect the official naming of the disease by the World Health Organization.

6 February 2020  First version of the Guidelines start operating.
PART B Introduction

Content of guidelines

These Guidelines set out when and how laboratories must notify the Director of Public Health of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

Legal framework

The Public Health Act 1997 contains the legal framework for declaring notifiable diseases and issuing notification guidelines.

Under section 40, the Director of Public Health has issued a public notice declaring COVID-19 a notifiable disease for the purposes of the Act.¹

Section 46 provides that guidelines may require a person to notify the Director of a notifiable disease. These guidelines serve that purpose for COVID-19.²


Guidelines are issued under section 184 and they contain legal requirements. Not complying with them is an offence under section 184(5) and penalties may apply.

¹ The public notice is available at www.gazette.tas.gov.au.
PART C  Definitions

A word or phrase appearing in *italics* in these Guidelines has the meaning given to it in the table below. If there is an asterisk (*) next to the word or phrase, its meaning is taken from the Public Health Act 1997 at the effective date of the Guidelines. If the definition in the Act later changes, that new definition replaces the one below.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Word or phrase</th>
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<tr>
<td>COVID-19</td>
<td>means the coronavirus disease formerly identified as “2019 novel coronavirus”, an acute respiratory illness in humans caused by the virus SARS-CoV-2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Director of Public Health*</td>
<td>means the Director of Public Health appointed under the Public Health Act 1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>established electronic reporting channel</td>
<td>means an electronic reporting channel that conforms to the international standard known as Health Level 7 or HL7, version 2.3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>laboratory*</td>
<td>means a laboratory whether associated with a hospital or not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Health Officer</td>
<td>means a person who holds a delegation from the Director of Public Health under the Public Health Act 1997 to investigate the presence or occurrence, or suspected presence or occurrence, of diseases declared under section 40 as notifiable diseases</td>
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<td>SARS-CoV-2</td>
<td>means severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2, the virus that causes COVID-19 and the presence of which can be detected by a laboratory test</td>
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<tr>
<td>superintendent</td>
<td>means the person in charge</td>
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</table>
PART D Laboratory notification – positive result

When and how to notify positive SARS-CoV-2

When to notify

(1) The superintendent of a laboratory who is aware (by reason of a test carried out in, or a test result received by, the laboratory) that a person has evidence of COVID-19, i.e. SARS-CoV-2, must notify the Director of Public Health or a Public Health Officer in accordance with the requirements of this Part D.

How to notify

(2) Upon being required to notify, the superintendent must do so by immediately:

(a) telephoning Covid Response on 0436 840 407; and
(b) sending a facsimile to 03 6173 0821 or
(c) sending a report via email to covid.response@health.tas.gov.au or
(d) sending a report via an established electronic reporting channel.

What to notify

(3) The superintendent must notify the following information:

(a) In relation to the person with evidence of the disease:
   (i) Full name
   (ii) Gender
   (iii) Date of birth
   (iv) Telephone number(s) (if known)
   (v) Usual residential address
       (street number and name, suburb, postcode)
   (vi) Postal address (if different to above)
   (vii) Email address (if known)
   (viii) Whether the person is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or both (if known)

(b) In relation to the disease:
(i) **Laboratory allocated number for the specimen**
(ii) Date the specimen tested was collected
(iii) Method of diagnosis
(iv) Result
(v) Date the test result was authorised by the laboratory

(c) In relation to the superintendent:
   (i) Name
   (ii) Telephone number(s)

(d) In relation to the laboratory:
   (i) Name
   (ii) If not previously notified:
       I. Street address
          (street number and name, suburb, postcode)
       II. Postal address (if different to above)
       III. Telephone number(s)
       IV. Facsimile number
       V. Email address

(e) In relation to the medical practitioner requesting the test:
   (i) Name
   (ii) Name of practice clinic / hospital
   (iii) Street address of practice clinic / hospital
         (street number and name, suburb, postcode)
   (iv) Postal address of practice clinic / hospital (if different to above)
   (v) Telephone number(s)
   (vi) Facsimile number
   (vii) Email address if known
   (viii) Provider number
PART E  Laboratory notification – negative result

When and how to notify negative SARS-CoV-2

When to notify

(1) The superintendent of a laboratory who is aware (by reason of a test carried out in, or a test result received by, the laboratory) that a person has been tested for COVID-19, i.e. SARS-CoV-2, must notify the Director of Public Health or a Public Health Officer within 7 days via an established electronic reporting channel.

What to notify

(2) The superintendent must notify the following information:

(a) In relation to the person who tested negative for SARS-CoV-2 infection:

(ix) Full name

(x) Gender

(xi) Date of birth

(xii) Usual residential address
     (street number and name, suburb, postcode)

(xiii) Whether the person is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or both (if known)

(b) In relation to the disease:

(i) Laboratory allocated number for the specimen

(ii) Date the specimen tested was collected

(iii) Method of diagnosis

(iv) Result

(v) Date the test result was authorised by the laboratory
(c) In relation to the superintendent:
   (i) Name
   (ii) Telephone number(s)

(d) In relation to the laboratory:
   (i) Name
   (ii) If not previously notified:
        VI. Street address
            (street number and name, suburb, postcode)
        VII. Postal address (if different to above)
        VIII. Telephone number(s)
        IX. Facsimile number
        X. Email address

(e) In relation to the medical practitioner requesting the test:
   (i) Name
   (ii) Name of practice clinic / hospital
   (iii) Street address of practice clinic / hospital
        (street number and name, suburb, postcode)
   (iv) Postal address of practice clinic / hospital (if different to above)
   (v) Telephone number(s)
   (vi) Facsimile number
       Email address (if known)
       Provider number.