**Changes to isolation requirements – Friday 11 March 11:59p.m.**

From **11:59pm tomorrow Friday 11 March** isolation requirements for positive cases of COVID-19 and their household contacts will be reduced from 10 to **seven days**.

This change has been made due to up-to-date public health advice: there is a decline in infectiousness of Omicron over time and in most cases, transmission occurs within seven days.

This reduction in the isolation period will ensure we maintain a balance between controlling the outbreak effectively and minimising the impacts of isolation requirements on people’s lives.

Evidence also shows that the risk of re-infection within the first three months after someone has had Omicron is very low. For this reason, recovered cases will **no longer** need to isolate again if they become a household contact within 90 days of having the virus. This has been **extended** from 28 days.

From **11.59pm Friday 11 March**, all cases and household contacts who are currently isolating can end their period of isolation after Day 7. Those currently in isolation will not have to complete their Days 8, 9 and 10 of isolation.

Please see the information below for changes that will be in effect from **Saturday 12 March**.

**Cases of COVID-19**

Anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 will be required to isolate for seven days.

Day 0 is the day symptoms began or the day the test was taken (whichever came first). Cases will isolate for a full seven days and are free to return to normal activities on Day 8, if they are not symptomatic.

**Household contacts**

Household contacts are required to isolate for the same seven days as the case.

They can return to their normal activities on the same day as the first case in their household, so long as all test results have been negative, and they are not symptomatic.

Household contacts should continue to self-monitor for symptoms up to Day 10.

Household contacts will be required to take a self-administered rapid antigen test (RAT) on Day 3 and Day 7 of the case’s isolation period.

If symptoms develop at any time during isolation:

* the usual advice remains in place to undertake an additional RAT
* if the test is negative and symptoms persist or worsen, test again 48 hours after that negative test
* if symptoms resolve there is no need for a further test until the required Day 7 test. If this is negative, they can return to daily life on Day 8.

If a household contact has new symptoms on the day of release:

* they should undertake an additional RAT and stay at home while unwell
* if that test is negative and symptoms persist or worsen, test again after 48 hours. If symptoms resolve, there is no need for a further test.

If a household contact has finished their period of isolation they do not need to return to isolation if a new case is identified in their household. However, **this only applies for a period of seven days** following their leaving isolation.

Should a new household member be confirmed as a case eight or more days after the household contact has left isolation, then they must start a new period of self-isolation for seven days.