# Reporting COVID-19 cases in residential aged care

Older people are at an increased risk of serious illness, hospitalisation and death from COVID-19. In particular, COVID-19 disproportionately impacts people in residential aged care, where there is an increased risk of infection due to a range of factors including close living conditions.

Reporting COVID-19 cases among residents and staff helps the Department of Health and Aged Care (the department) monitor the impact of COVID-19 in aged care and provide support and information to the sector.

## Reporting a COVID-19 outbreak or exposure

Residential aged care services, including residential aged care homes (RACHs), Multi-Purpose Services (MPS) and National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program (NATSIFACP) should notify the department of all COVID-19 cases among residents, staff.

This includes reporting the initial outbreak, each individual COVID-19 positive case in a resident or staff member, COVID-19 positive resident deaths and the closure of outbreaks.

You should notify positive COVID-19 cases to:

* the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care via the [My Aged Care Service and Support portal](https://www.health.gov.au/resources/apps-and-tools/my-aged-care-service-and-support-portal)
* your local PHU, where applicable and in line with state and territory reporting requirements.
  + to find out about reporting requirements in your jurisdiction, please refer to your [state or territory health department](https://www.health.gov.au/about-us/contact-us/local-state-and-territory-health-departments).
* your state or territory Work Safe organisation, where applicable and in accordance with any state or territory requirements that may apply.

## Information on how to manage a COVID-19 outbreak

Older age continues to be the biggest risk factor for severe COVID-19 and aged care providers have a number of responsibilities in [preparing, responding to and managing COVID-19 outbreaks](https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/national-guidelines-for-the-prevention-control-and-public-health-management-of-outbreaks-of-acute-respiratory-infection-in-residential-care-facilities).

All approved providers are required to have in place:

* a process to vaccinate eligible residents against COVID-19 in line with current [recommendations](https://www.health.gov.au/our-work/covid-19-vaccines/information-for-aged-care-providers-workers-and-residents-about-covid-19-vaccines/residential-aged-care-service-providers#vaccination)
* an outbreak management plan that can be quickly activated
* the ability to enact enhanced infection prevention and control measures
* sufficient stock of personal protective equipment and rapid antigen test kits.

## Resources available

Further resources available to residential aged care homes to report a COVID-19 exposure or outbreak are here:

* [FAQs - How to access and use the COVID-19 Support Portal](https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/frequently-asked-questions-how-to-access-and-use-the-covid-19-support-portal)
* [My Aged Care - Quick reference guide](https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/my-aged-care-quick-reference-guide-how-to-report-covid-19-outbreaks-in-residential-aged-care-and-request-ppe-through-the-covid-19-support-portal?language=en)
* If you need assistance to access the portal, please call 1800 836 799.

## Stay up to date

* [Aged care newsletters and alerts](https://www.health.gov.au/topics/aged-care/providing-aged-care-services/newsletters-and-alerts-for-the-aged-care-sector?language=und)
* visit your [local State or Territory health department](https://www.health.gov.au/about-us/contact-us/local-state-and-territory-health-departments).