



COVID-19 Newsletter



Jervis Bay Territory Community | Issue no. 34 | 20 January 2022

COVID-19 in the JBT

There are high levels of local COVID transmission throughout the Jervis Bay region, as is happening across NSW and the rest of the country.

To protect the JBT community, the Australian Government is currently working to schedule a JBT testing and vaccination clinic in early February, which would include vaccinations for 5-11 year old children.

JBT residents who have been exposed or are experiencing symptoms, should isolate and attend a local testing clinic as required, including Nowra, St Georges Basin drive-through testing, or the Respiratory Clinic at Sanctuary Point. While testing clinics are working to increase capacity, people need to be prepared to wait several hours for testing if necessary.

It is very important that you get tested in line with guidelines, as while the vaccines reduce the risk of serious illness and hospitalisation from COVID-19, it can still make you, your families and the most vulnerable in our community sick.

Due to high demand as a result of this evolving COVID-19 situation, there is a shortage of Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs) throughout most of Australia, including the JBT. As an immediate support mechanism, the Department has provided a stock of RATs to the Wreck Bay community in JBT. WBACC has been provided with supplier details which it or community members can contact for personal supplies of RATs.

If you are due for your booster shot now, please contact local pharmacies and clinics as they should have good stocks available, and get it as soon as possible. In the meantime, please continue to follow NSW Health guidelines and your COVID-19 safe practices including good hand hygiene, physical distancing, avoiding crowds and wearing a mask as needed.

Changes to Public Health Directions for JBT

On 22 December 2021, significant changes were made to the Public Health Directions for the Jervis Bay Territory (JBT).

Under the new directions, there are no limits on how many people can visit premises in the JBT, including for camping. You still need to check in at some gatherings, such as funerals and wakes after funerals.

Face masks are now only required on public transport, aeroplanes, airports and by unvaccinated staff serving customers at hospitality venues. However, given the spread of COVID at the moment, people should continue to keep themselves safe, including wearing masks for additional protection as needed or where you can't physically distance from others, and having good hand hygiene.

People from overseas, affected areas, or those who are contacts of people with COVID-19 will need to self-isolate as directed.

All JBT residents are urged to self-isolate and get tested immediately if they display any symptoms of COVID-19, including cold or flu-like symptoms.

Remember to remain up-to-date with Australian Government and state and territory government advice, including on travel restrictions, health, hygiene, physical distancing and self-isolation, as the COVID-19 situation continues to change rapidly.

For further information, please see www.health.gov.au or phone the Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080.

There's good information on the rules and keeping safe at the NSW Health website:

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/covid-19/Pages/isolation-guidelines.aspx>

For the latest JBT public health directions and rules, scan our QR code.



Get ready to vaccinate young ones

After thorough testing, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) provisionally approved the Pfizer vaccine for children aged 5-11 years.

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) now recommends and approves the use of this vaccine for children.

Children aged 5-11 years will receive a smaller dose than people aged 12 years and over. Two doses of Pfizer vaccine will be needed for kids under 12, which will be given eight weeks apart.

Read more on the Department of Health website, www.health.gov.au





National Park Update

Summer is always a popular time for visitors to Booderee National Park, and with many Australians holidaying here this year, we're expecting visitor numbers to be even higher.

Parks Australia wants everyone to have a safe and enjoyable experience at Booderee this summer and asks that you review the safety messaging before visiting the park.

Due to the large number of visitors and holidaymakers expected in the Jervis Bay region these holidays, there may be delays travelling into Booderee National Park and everyone is asked to please be patient and allow travel extra time.

Visitors can keep up-to-date on park access on the Booderee National Park Facebook page, and on the Live Traffic NSW website and mobile app.

As part of the BNP COVID-Safe operating plan, the park may close at short notice due to COVID-19 restrictions at Booderee National Park, to deliver a safe experience for visitors, park staff and the local community.

Access to the park may also close to new visitors without pre-booked passes for periods when visitor capacity limits are reached.

For general enquiries during the holidays, please contact Visitor Centre staff via booderee.mail@awe.gov.au

You can also give a call on 02 4443 0977.



What is Omicron?

In late November 2021, a new variant of the COVID-19 virus was detected in South Africa. This variant is known as the Omicron variant.

So far, most people who have caught this variant of COVID are showing only mild symptoms, however it is proving to be much more transmissible than earlier variants. Experts around the world are looking at how this variant affects people.

It's more important than ever to receive your COVID-19 vaccine now to protect yourself, your family and your community from getting seriously ill or ending up in hospital.

If you haven't had your COVID-19 vaccine yet, and you're still not sure whether you will, speak to your family and friends and ask them why they had their vaccine. And have a yarn to your doctor about why arming yourself against COVID is the right move.



Have you got a fire plan?

We have seen the devastating impact that bush fires can have – on people, properties and communities. It's important that you take the time now to get ready for bush fires.

It can take as little as five minutes to make your bush fire plan. Talk about it with your family so that you all know what you will do, in the event of a fire.

Visit myfireplan.com.au to make your plan and ensure that you are ready this bush fire season. Don't get caught out!



JBT Office notice board

The JBT Office has reopened after the holiday period.

Opening hours are Tuesday and Thursday 9am – 12pm, or otherwise by appointment.

All residents are reminded that COVID-19 safe practices apply when visiting the office, including wearing a mask and staying home and getting tested if you are unwell.