

Right to Information Decision – Public Disclosure Log

Right to Information No.: RTI202122-95

Date of Decision: 08 June 2022

Information Requested

The information requested:

- a) All information, including correspondence, that relates to the decision by the Department of Health to cease the publication of COVID-19 exposure sites;
- b) The time and date on which 'low-risk' coronavirus exposure sites ceased to be published;
- c) The time and date on which 'casual contact' coronavirus exposure sites ceased to be published;
- d) The time and date on which 'close contact' coronavirus exposure sites ceased to be published;
- e) Information regarding the value and duration of any contracts the Department of Health currently has with external providers for contact tracing services and/or systems;
- f) Information regarding the value and duration of any contracts the Department of Health has previously had with external providers for contract tracing services and/or systems since July 1 2021 (excluding those covered in part e above); and
- g) Information regarding all contact tracing services undertaken by Healthdirect on behalf of the Department of Health including the dates on which these activities took place.

The applicant, pursuant to s13(7) of the Act, agreed to refine the application by requesting a global figure for any services or support provided by Healthdirect.

Decision

- a) All information, including correspondence, that relates to the decision by the Department of Health to cease the publication of COVID-19 exposure sites;

The decision was made by the Director of Public Health under the *Public Health Act 1997*. An update was published on 7 January 2022.

Update to close contact definition and listing of exposure sites 7 January

The Department of Health advised that due to the rapid spread of the Omicron variant, COVID-19 exposure sites will no longer be published.

Check in TAS will continue to be used as part of the contact tracing process and to identify individuals who have been at high-risk venues, workplaces or attended a large event.

The Department of Health will notify patrons via SMS if they have attended a high-risk venue where positive cases have been present and that they need to quarantine and take a COVID-19 rapid antigen test (RAT).

RATs that are required to be used under Department of Health requirements will be free to anyone in Tasmania in the same way that PCR testing is. If you are unable to obtain a RAT, book a PCR test. You can register online or call the Public Health Hotline on 1800 671 738.

Tasmania has also adopted the national definition of a close contact as a person who usually lives with or who has visited the same household for more than 4 hours as a COVID-19 case during their infectious period. In addition, where a significant transmission event has been documented Public Health may consider those who were at the site or venue to be close contacts.

All Tasmanians should assume that when they are at a gathering, visiting a business or meeting with friends, there is a high chance that they could be exposed to the COVID-19 virus. It is important everyone continues to follow COVID-safe behaviours to help reduce the chance of catching and spreading the disease.

- b) The time and date on which 'low-risk' coronavirus exposure sites ceased to be published;

Monday, 3 January 2022 at 09:00

- c) The time and date on which 'casual contact' coronavirus exposure sites ceased to be published;

Monday, 3 January 2022 at 09:00

- d) The time and date on which 'close contact' coronavirus exposure sites ceased to be published;

Wednesday, 5 January 2022

- e) Information regarding the value and duration of any contracts the Department of Health currently has with external providers for contact tracing services and/or systems;

The public authority entered into a service definition management order with Healthdirect Australia in accordance with clause 6 of the umbrella funding agreement that commenced 1 July 2013 for the provision of:

- Quarantine welfare checks;
- Contract tracing assessments; and
- COVID@Home monitoring.

The service was provided from 20 September 2021 until 3 June 2022.

The value of the pandemic activities provided by Healthdirect Australia under the contract paid to date is \$1 606 071. The costs are reconciled against usage and surge requirements.

- f) Information regarding the value and duration of any contracts the Department of Health has previously had with external providers for contact tracing services and/or systems since July 1 2021 (excluding those covered in part e above); and

The Healthdirect Australia agreement is the sole external provider.

- g) Information regarding all contact tracing services undertaken by Healthdirect on behalf of the Department of Health including the dates on which these activities took place.

Refer to the information under (e).