

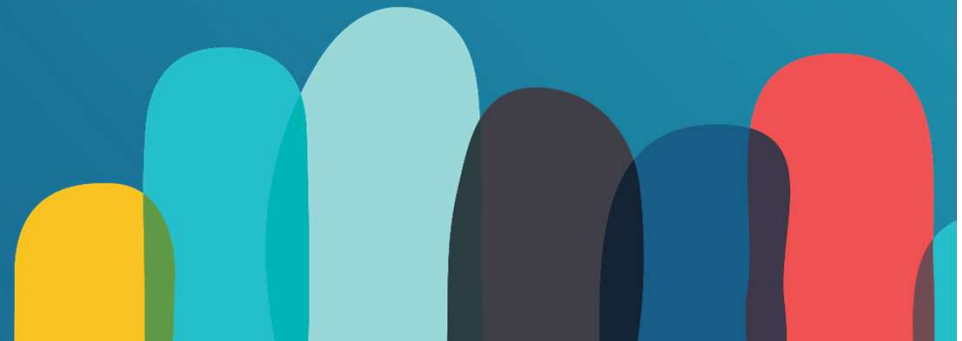


Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Communities**

COVID-19 Preparedness PPE, Cleaning, Surge workforce

Department of Communities

WACOSS



Welcome and speakers

- Mike Rowe, Director General, Department of Communities (MC)
- Louise Giolitto, CEO WACOSS
- Kylie Mayo, Executive Director, COMIT
- Scott McGill, Deputy Director COVID-19 Coordination, DPC





wa council of
social service

Covid-19 - Cleaning and Surge Workforce

**Presenter: Louise Giolitto, WACOSS
CEO**

3 March 2022

Cleaning

Department of Communities \$1million reimbursement scheme managed by WACOSS

Eligibility Criteria

- Not-for-profit community service that holds a WA Government contract providing services to vulnerable community members
- Cleaning is required in response to a positive COVID case
- Cleaning must have been done with approved TGA products
- Organisations to follow the CHO cleaning guidelines
- Funding will be available on a reimbursement basis on the provision of receipts and meeting the eligibility criteria
- There is no limit on number of times an organisation can claim as long as the claim meets the eligibility criteria

Restrictions

- Not to be used for reimbursement for regular cleaning
- Not for Aged care or NDIS federally funded programs or individual NDIS care packages
- Claims are valid from 14/01/2022 and are ongoing while funds are available

How to claim

- WACOSS is currently creating an online portal for organisations to submit a reimbursement claim

Covid-19 Preparedness



Surge Workforce

Department of Communities has resourced WACOSS to develop and implement a Surge Workforce Strategy

Background

- The social services sector in the Eastern states saw significant impact to their service delivery as a result of the Omicron spikes
- The development of a Community Services Secondment Pool has the potential to mitigate the impact to clients and social services

Community Services Secondment Pool (CSSP)

- This initiative arose from the shared insights and anticipated demand from and to the Community Services sector
- Organisations and their employees can volunteer to participate in the pool, and organisations that are affected by high levels of furloughing can seek to draw from it
- WACOSS is now resourced to develop and implement a surge workforce strategy, which will involve the provision and management of a Social Services Secondment Pool
- The Secondment Pool will allow the community services sector to have an agreed approach and central point of contact from where to request urgent workforce support

Benefits of the CSSP

- Clients are more likely to continue receiving support, irrespective of workforce disruptions
- Organisations are able to quickly draw on additional workforce for immediate deployment
- Contributing organisations can manage human resources more effectively

Time critical

- We are already in the Omicron wave. We are working as quickly as possible to establish this service. Bear with us!

Covid-19 Preparedness



Contacts

- TGA approved products

<https://www.tga.gov.au/disinfectants-use-against-covid-19-artg-legal-supply-australia>

- CHO cleaning guidelines <https://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/~media/Corp/Documents/Health-for/Infectious-disease/COVID19/COVID19-Cleaning-principles-for-staff-in-SQF.pdf>

- **WACOSS Surge Workforce Contact:** milan@wacoss.org.au

Covid-19 Preparedness

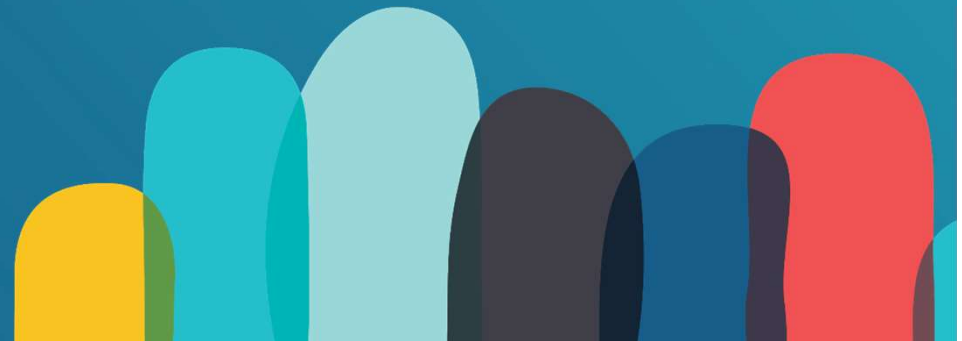




Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Communities**

COVID-19 Preparedness

RAT and PPE



Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs)

For furloughing critical workers

Department of Communities



Premier's announcement

“The State Government will provide RATs to the Community Service Sector, and schools and childcare providers, to ensure they have supplies when the critical worker furloughing policy is in action.”

[Media statement – 27 February 2022](#)



Purpose

- To support Critical Worker Furlough Policy
- Some allocation for high risk service users who may be symptomatic
- Examples
 - Rough sleepers who may not be able to access household allocation
 - Residential clients who may not be able or are unwilling to attend a testing centre



Distribution

- Communities will distribute RAT kits to CSOs on behalf of
 - Communities
 - Justice
 - Mental Health Commission



What you need to do

- register your critical workers with the [Critical Worker Furloughing Registration System](#) (you can only designate one agency, check which one has the highest allocation of RATs for your service)
- have received an email notification from Communities which will include:
 - your allocation (number of RATs)
 - the collection site address (may be metro and regional)
 - a designated time period for collection (to avoid congestion)
- bring a digital or printed copy of the notification to the collection site at the designated time.



Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

For accommodation or residential settings –
community service organisations

Department of Communities



PPE Kit: Eligibility

- Communities has developed a PPE Kit to be used if and when an outbreak occurs in a accommodation and/or residential setting.
- Communities is only providing PPE to Service Providers who hold an agreement with Communities and that service agreement provides services within an Accommodation and/or Residential setting at this time.



PPE Kit: Design

- The package was developed by our emergency welfare team.
- It contains items used by our emergency response teams during an outbreak or when operating an evacuation centre where there was COVID-19 in the community.



PPE Kit: Contents

Communities standard PPE Kit contains:

- 20 Disposable Gowns
- 100 Surgical Masks
- 400 Nitrile Powder Free Gloves
- 2 x 500ml Muru Gel Hand Sanitiser
- 21 x Pro Choice Cirrus Safety Glasses Clear

NB - supplementary supplies on order including face shields



What about N95s?

- Currently almost no stock- prioritised for Health
- Further distribution centralised through DoF
- Options provided in recent Health Circular- agencies can use surgical masks, face shield and/or goggles



PPE Kit: Distribution

- An initial order has been placed with Communities supplier that allows for 1 package per accommodation/residential service.
- We are working through a process for other CSOs to register their requirements for further allocations





Department of
the Premier and Cabinet

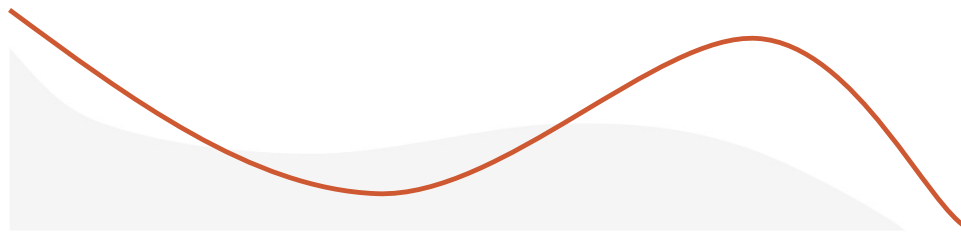
Critical Worker Furloughing and Rapid Antigen Testing





Current context

- **Critical worker furloughing policy – announced 28 January 2022**
- **Critical worker furloughing register – live 21 February 2022**
- **Critical worker furloughing policy NOT yet active– this will be based on advice from the Chief Health Officer**



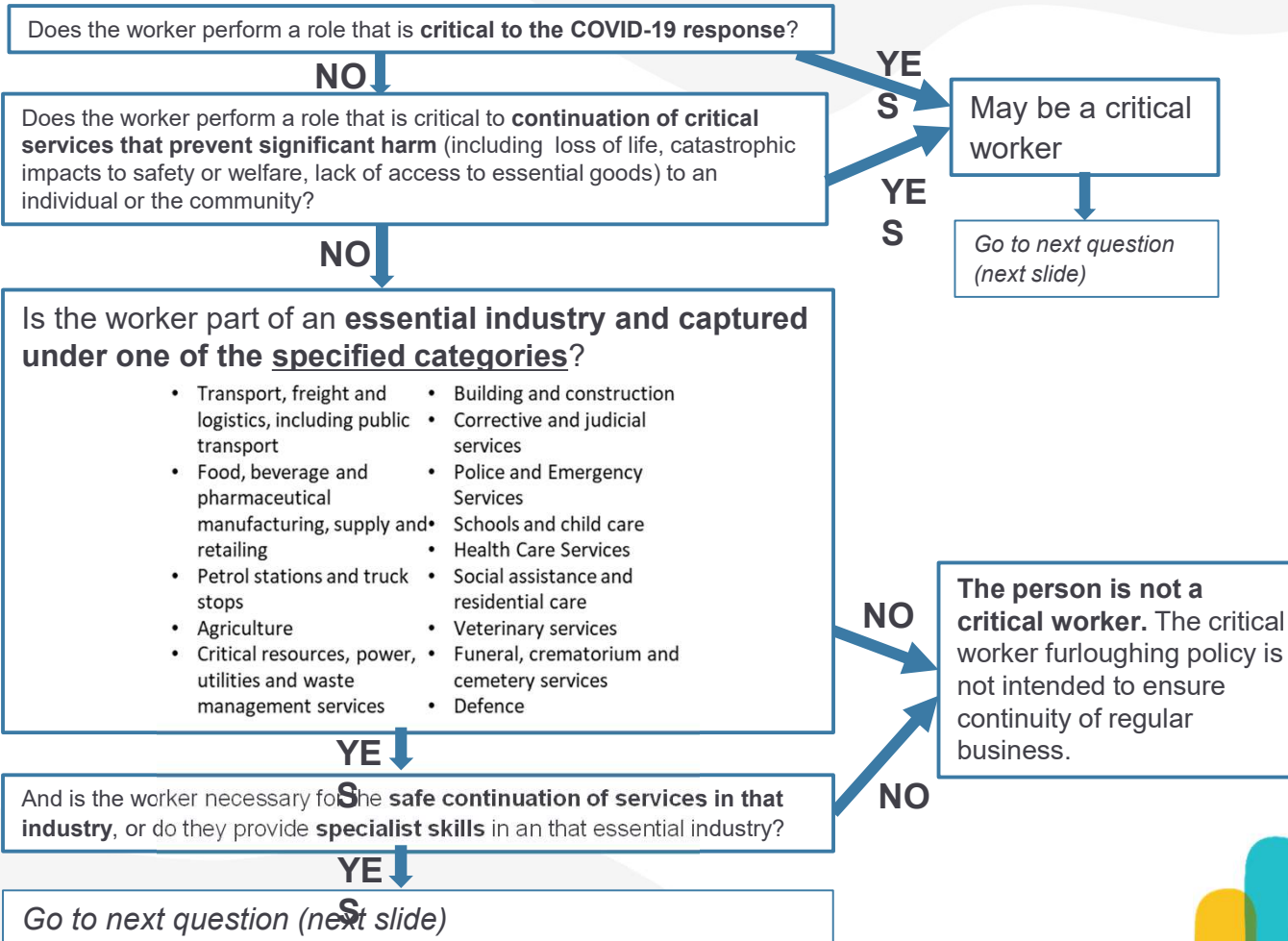
Critical Worker Furloughing Policy

Industry led approach - in-scope employers determine the roles that fall within the critical worker definition.

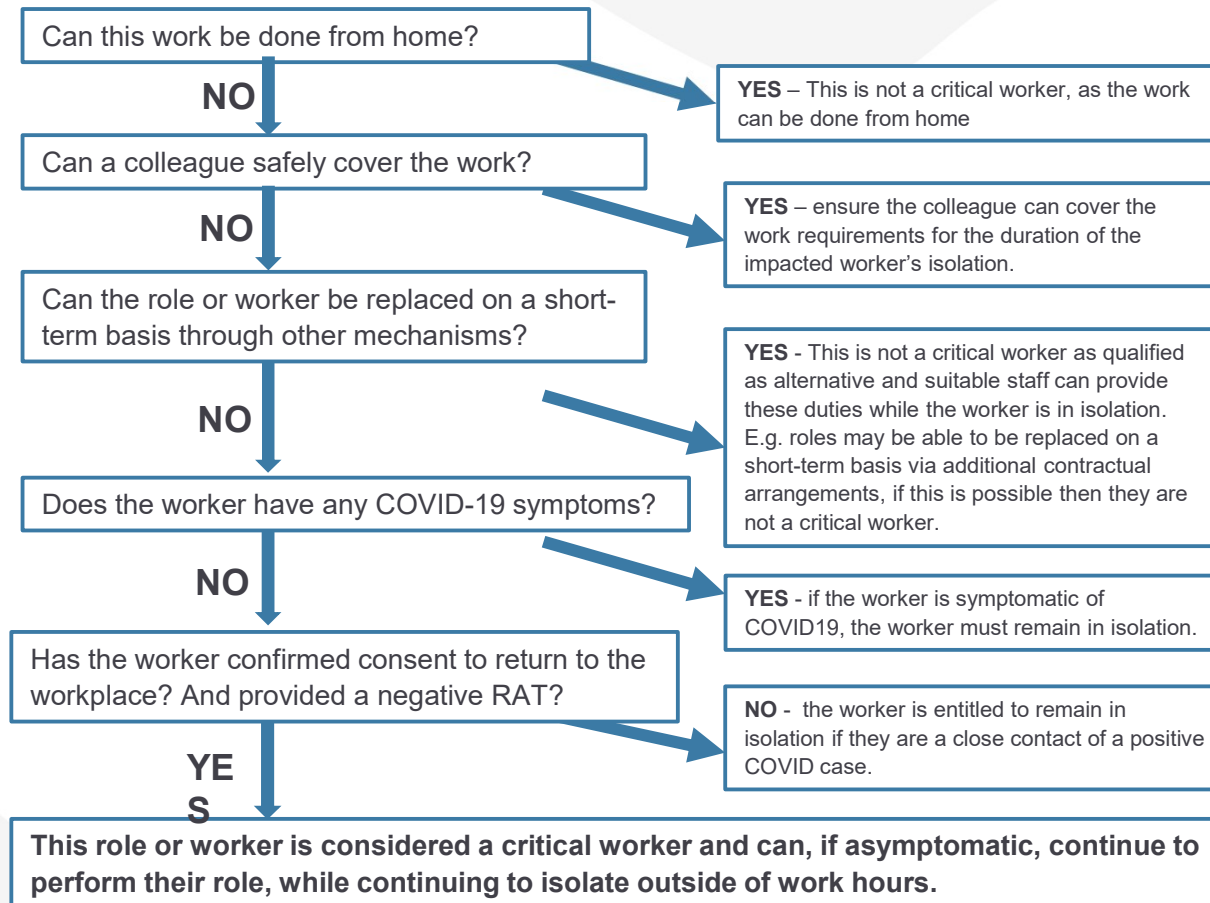
The critical worker furloughing policy:

- Provides an exemption for critical workers who are **close contacts** but who do **not have symptoms** to attend work during their isolation period:
 - in limited circumstances
 - If they meet strict criteria
- Targets critical workers delivering services and supports that are essential to the health and safety of the community.
- The Policy is for workers who are critical to the functions of society described in the directions – not to the operation of organisations generally.
- Is an option of last resort, to be applied by employers when all other options for filling critical roles are exhausted.
- Is time bound and triggered by circumstances of extreme risk.
- Requires employers to assess risk and ensure appropriate mitigations are in place.
- Is not intended to include 'business as usual' activities, or to maintain business continuity.
- Broadly reflects national arrangements and AHPPC advice.

Are you a Critical Worker who can leave isolation to attend work?



Are you a Critical Worker who can leave isolation to attend work? Pt. 2



Critical Worker Registration

- Utilising the Policy brings notable risks that remain with the employer. The policy does not remove any requirements or responsibilities from the employer.
- The register is easy to use and only requires a list of critical roles to be submitted.
- CEO or equivalent, or appropriate delegate can complete
- A notification to Government when roles are activated is not required.



The screenshot shows the WA.gov.au website interface. At the top, there is a dark navigation bar with the WA.gov.au logo, an accessibility link, a contact us link, and a search bar. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with links for 'Browse all Information and services', 'Find an agency', and 'WA Government'. The main content area features a breadcrumb trail: 'Home > WA Government > Coronavirus COVID-19 > COVID-19 coronavirus: Critical worker furloughing registration'. The main heading is 'COVID-19 coronavirus: Critical worker furloughing registration', followed by a sub-heading: 'Information and online form for employers to register their critical worker roles for the purpose of the exemption from isolation.' Below this, there is a 'Provided by' section listing the 'Department of the Premier and Cabinet > COVID 19 coronavirus'. A 'Contact' section is also visible, with a 'Telephone:' label and a partially obscured phone number.

<https://www.wa.gov.au/government/covid-19-coronavirus/covid-19-coronavirus-critical-worker-furloughing-registration>



Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs)

RAT testing in Western Australia

- The use of RATs without supervision by a medical practitioner was not permitted until January 2022
- Given the supply constraints in the market, it was necessary to procure RATs centrally to ensure they could be prioritised
- Ensuring the health system can function, and isolation and testing requirements for symptomatic people can be met, is the highest priority as daily case numbers have been rising

- The public health system will continue to be the first priority in the allocation and use of RAT supplies
- Any supplementary RATs will be distributed according to priority
- The RATs to be distributed to non-Health organisations will initially be those needed for agency staff (who meet the critical worker definition) to apply the critical worker protocol
- This protocol is not yet active



Questions?

Resources and links

- https://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/A_E/Coronavirus
- <https://www.wa.gov.au/government/covid-19-coronavirus>
- If you have any other questions please email:
 - sectorsupport@communities.wa.gov.au

