

COVID-19 TALKIT

A communique for all people living with HIV in NSW

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FEEDBACK & COMMENTS

contact@positivelife.org.au

Friday 8 October 2021

Now that NSW has passed the 70% double vaccination target, restrictions will ease on **Monday 11 October 2021**. Once the state has reached 80% double-dose vaccination, even more restrictions will ease for people fully vaccinated. It's anticipated these will be extended to people who are not fully vaccinated by **1 December 2021**. This can be both exciting for some people and cause anxiety for others. You'll still be able to set your own pace that you're comfortable with as things start to open back up. Over the next few weeks, Positive Life will be sharing our reopening process in line with NSW Health guidelines. If you want to discuss what any of these changes might mean for you, you can always email us on contact@positivelife.org.au or call on (02) 9206 2177 or 1800 245 677.

While Service NSW and the Australian Government are yet to finalise expectations around full vaccination, getting proof of your vaccinations will become easier especially if we need to provide evidence when checking into venues.

If you need any support in working out how to get your COVID-19 Digital Certificate onto your mobile devices (smart phone, ipad, tablet etc), you can contact a Positive Life peer support officer to guide you through this process of navigating the process to make this easier.

Positive Life peer support officers (Peer Navigators) continue to check in with community members currently enrolled in our Housing Support, WorkReady or Ageing Support programs. If you'd like to hear from us at any time, or would like a call, please drop us an email on contact@positivelife.org.au or leave a message on (02) 9206 2177 or 1800 245 677.

– Positive Life NSW



REOPENING MILESTONES

➔ 5pm Weds 6 Oct – [70% double vaccinated](#).

Easing of restrictions apply only to fully vaccinated (double-dose) NSW residents and those with medical exemptions.

Monday 11 October 2021

- Limited reopening for hospitality venues, retail stores, sporting facilities, gyms and indoor recreation venues, major recreation outdoor facilities, indoor entertainment and information facilities, and personal services (hairdressers, nail salons) with specific square metre rules in place.
- Guests limited to 50 people for weddings and funerals with specific square metre rules in place.
- Churches and places of worship open subject to specific square metre rules in place and no singing.
- Up to 10 people permitted to visit at home and up to 20 people at an outdoor setting
- People not fully vaccinated may only gather outdoors in groups of two people.
- Employers must require employees who are not fully vaccinated to work from home, if reasonably practicable.
- Carpooling is permitted while people not fully vaccinated can only carpool within their household.
- Masks and QR code check ins will still be required indoors, but not in outdoor hospitality settings.
- People in Sydney will no longer have to follow the 5km radius rule, and can travel within greater Sydney (including Central Coast, Wollongong, Shellharbour and the Blue Mountains).

Monday 25 October – [80% double vaccinated](#).

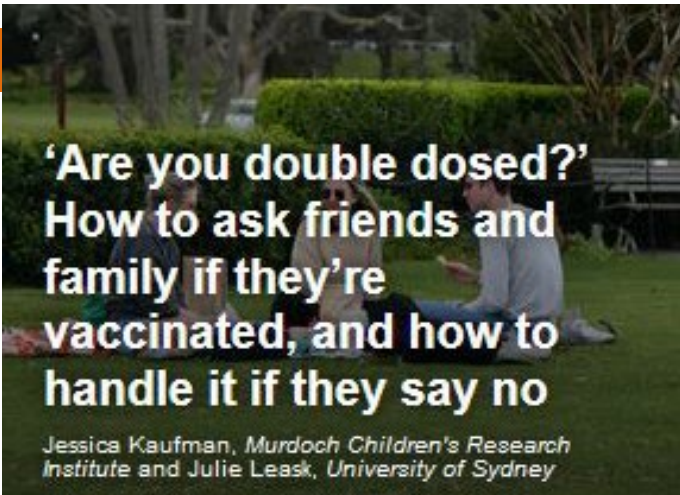
- Cap of 3000 people for controlled and ticketed outdoor events for fully vaccinated.
- Reopening of nightclubs for fully vaccinated.
- Standing up and drinking inside the pub permitted.
- Fully vaccinated people will be able to travel regionally.

Wednesday 1 December 2021 – [for all NSW residents regardless of vaccination](#).

- No limits on attendees to home or informal outdoor settings subject to specific square metre rule.
- All educational groups return to face-to-face learning.
- Community sport permitted for everyone.
- Churches and places of worship open subject to specific square metre rules in place and singing permitted.
- Domestic travel, including trips between Greater Sydney and Regional NSW
- Mask wearing will only be mandatory while travelling on public transport, on planes and at airports, and for front-of-house hospitality workers.
- Sex on premises venues and sex services premises reopen subject to 1pp/4sqm rule.

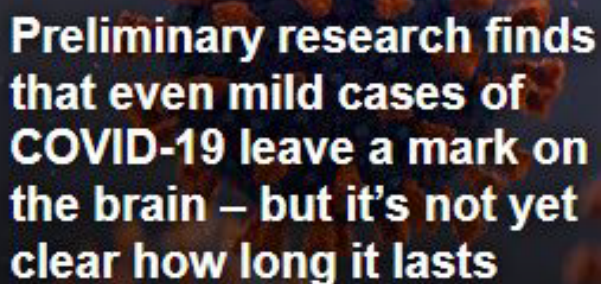
It's normal to have questions or concerns, and possibly feel a little hesitant about getting a COVID vaccine. When you're looking for more information to answer your questions or allay any concerns you might have, check out this NSW Health webpage to help you make an informed decision – [IS IT TRUE?](#)





'Are you double dosed?' How to ask friends and family if they're vaccinated, and how to handle it if they say no

Jessica Kaufman, Murdoch Children's Research
Institute and Julie Leask, University of Sydney



Preliminary research finds that even mild cases of COVID-19 leave a mark on the brain – but it's not yet clear how long it lasts

Jessica Bernard, Texas A&M University



Why are males still the default subjects in medical research?


Severine Lamon, Deakin University and Olivia
Knowles, Deakin University

COVID-19 VACCINATIONS ARE FREE

All COVID-19 vaccination services must be bulk-billed (or free for [non-Medicare eligible](#)). Vaccination providers [cannot charge for the COVID-19 vaccine for Medicare eligible or ineligible patients](#).

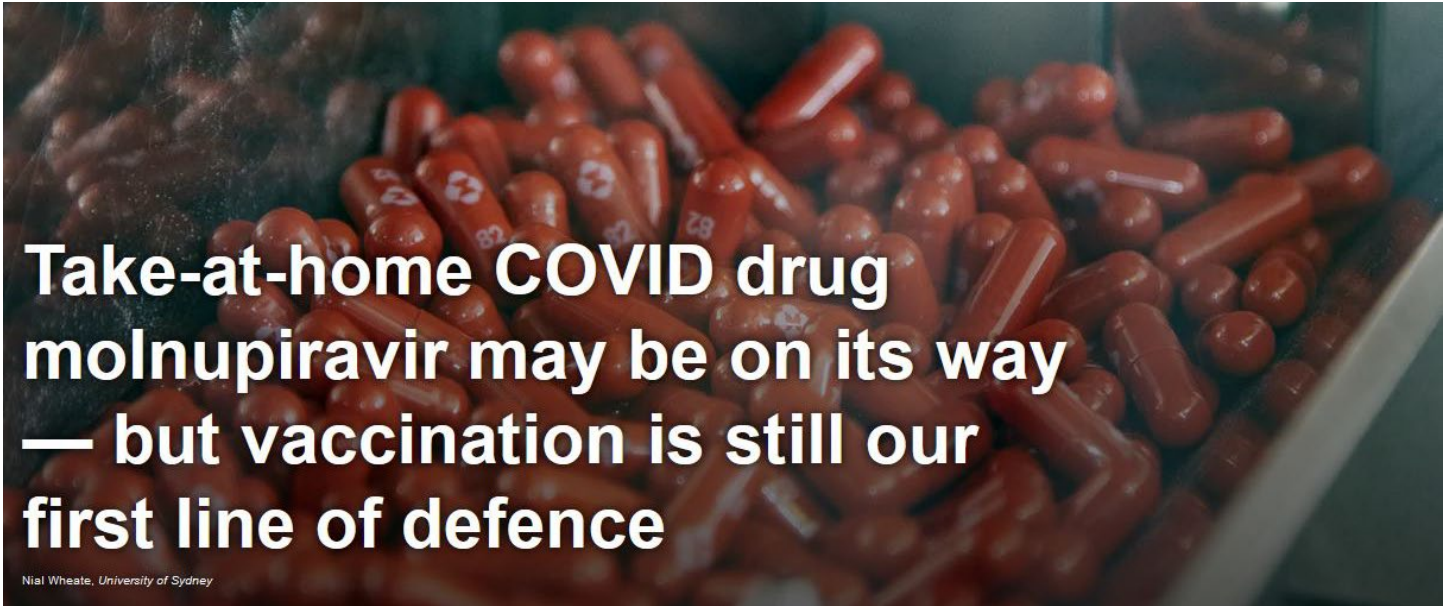
COVID-19 vaccination services for Medicare eligible or ineligible patients **cannot** be made contingent on any other service or fee, including (but not limited to):

- ✓ Patient registration fees for patients new to a practice
- ✓ Book-keeping or registration fees for the appointment
- ✓ General health checks or
- ✓ Any other service which the practice or practitioner requires before any COVID-19 MBS item.



Who can't have a COVID vaccine and how do I get a medical exemption?

Margie Danchin, Murdoch Children's Research
Institute



Take-at-home COVID drug molnupiravir may be on its way — but vaccination is still our first line of defence

Niall Wheate, University of Sydney

ARE ALL PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV IMMUNOCOMPROMISED?

Positive Life NSW [has become aware there are some misleading assumptions](#), particularly by the media but also by other sources, that people living with HIV are immunocompromised (defined as CD4 count below 200 cells/mL) and therefore may be ineligible for the COVID-19 vaccine.

Due to HIV antiretroviral treatment, the **majority of people living with HIV are not immunocompromised**, unless they are taking immunosuppressive therapy (e.g. for a kidney, lung or liver transplant) or other cancer treatments, not taking HIV antiretroviral medication or have a CD4 count below 200 cells/mL

Like anyone else living in the community, people living with HIV face no barriers to getting a COVID-19 vaccination as they wish. We offer this information to our community and the media, to combat this misinformation, and also allay the concerns of anyone living with HIV for whom this may be causing anxiety.

People living with HIV with a low CD4 count (below 200 cells/mL) should seek medical advice about the priority of getting vaccinated.



There is medical consensus from a range of national and international professional societies that **people who are immunocompromised receive a COVID-19 vaccine as a matter of priority** given their risk of experiencing a more severe illness from COVID-19 should they contract the coronavirus. The Australian Government strongly recommends anyone who is immunocompromised receive the COVID-19 vaccination.

If you need any further information about your eligibility for a COVID-19 vaccine, or have any further questions about the COVID-19 vaccine itself, please speak with your GP or HIV specialist. If you are living with HIV in NSW, you can also call Positive Life NSW on (02) 9206 2177, 1800 245 677 (freecall outside metro) or email contact@positivelife.org.au

GET IMMEDIATE SUPPORT FROM BEYOND BLUE 24/7



Call 1300 22 4636

24 hours / 7 days a week



Chat online

11am - 12am AEST / 7 days a week



Email us

Get a reply in 24 hours



Online forums

24 hours / 7 days a week

COVID-19 RELIEF PAYMENTS UPDATE



Once NSW reaches 70% fully vaccinated:

COVID-19 Disaster Payment

The automatic renewal will stop and recipients will need to reapply on a week to week basis if they are still out of work or lost hours/wages.

Once NSW reaches 80% fully vaccinated:

Disaster relief payments will reduce over a two week period:

- Week 1: \$450
- Week 2: \$320
- Week 3: \$0.00 – Ends

Centrelink Welfare Boost

People receiving income support or any government benefits who have lost work can still claim the \$100 boost

Week 1: \$100

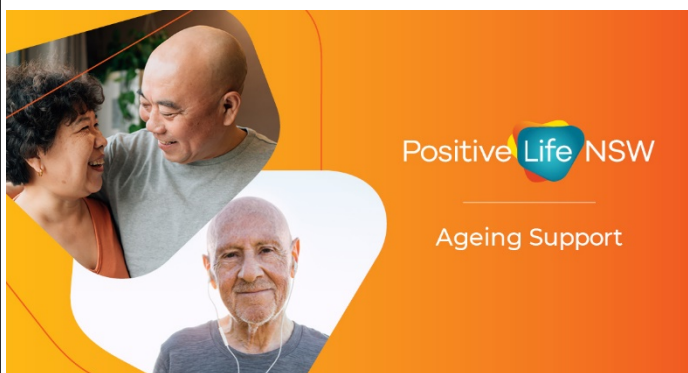
Week 2: \$0.00 ends

Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment

- If you test positive and are ordered to isolate or self-quarantine for two weeks you may be eligible.
- Need to apply for the payment immediately through Service NSW
- A lump sum payment of \$1500 to cover the entire two weeks.

POSITIVE LIFE AGED CARE SUPPORT

Living with HIV in NSW, over 45 years and want a hand to make life a little easier? Call (02) 9206-2177 or 1800 245 677 (freecall) or email contact@positivelife.org.au



Positive Life NSW COVID-19 Toolkit

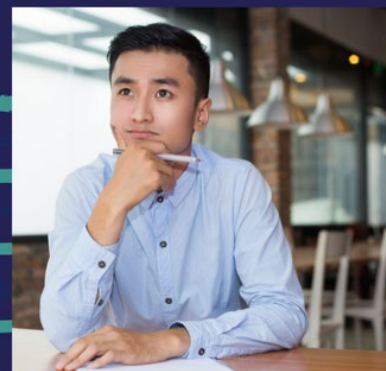
CAN INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS WITH A WORK VISA GET THE COVID-19 DISASTER PAYMENT ?

Yes! the COVID-19 Disaster Payment is an exceptional payment because it is payable to people who are in Australia with a temporary visa giving them the right to work.

If you're on a temporary visa giving you the right to work you'll need to ring Services Australia on 180 22 66.

If in doubt, you can claim providing full details to Centrelink and they will assess your eligibility. If you think they have unfairly knocked back your claim, you can contact the **Welfare Rights Centre NSW** for free legal advice on **1800 226 028**.

Can international students with work rights get COVID-19 Disaster Payment?



Welfare
Rights
Centre

No equipment? No worries!



Mail order NSP available NOW

If you're self isolated or quarantined and need injecting equipment, don't put yourself at risk by reusing or sharing equipment. Instead, contact NUAA — we will mail you out however much you need of all sorts of injecting equipment (including speciality gear like wheel filters). Visit our website for more info about how COVID-19 might affect you as a person who uses drugs.

Ph: (02) 8354 7300 or freecall 1800 644 413 | visit nuaa.org.au



LOW COST & FREE MEALS DIRECTORY

Online Directory covering suburbs from the Inner West and Eastern Suburbs, to Western and South-Western Sydney:

Marrickville, Newtown, Petersham, Ashfield, Surry Hills, Kings Cross, Bondi, Kensington

Auburn, Granville, Silverwater, Parramatta, Westmead, Mt Drutt, Penrith

Canterbury, Bankstown, Fairfield, Cabramatta, Liverpool, Campbelltown, Bargo

Low Cost and Free Meals Directory

South-West Sydney

Canterbury – Bankstown – Fairfield – Cabramatta – Liverpool – Campbelltown – Bargo



Organisation & Service Type	Address & Phone Number	Day / Time Open	Cost or conditions	Public Transport Options
Anglicare Campbelltown Food parcels	Shop 1 & 2/31-35 Chamberlain Street, Campbelltown (02) 4621 6666	Call to arrange	Need to call to be assessed & register Free	15-minute walk from Campbelltown Station Bus routes: 870, 872
Nagle Centre Family Care and Support Service Food vouchers	22 Loranthe Street, Campbelltown (02) 4628 2928	Call to arrange	Area residents only Free	9-minute walk from Campbelltown Station Bus routes: 870, 871, 872, 877, 880
South West Multicultural & Community Centre Food hampers	4 Surrey Street, Minto (02) 9603 2500	Tuesday 3.30-5pm	\$10 Call in advance as demand is high	4-minute walk from Minto Station Bus routes: 873, 874, 875
Tallwood Community Centre Takeaway meals	2 Littler Way, Ambarvale (02) 4625 7333	Every 2nd Tuesday 12.30-1.30pm	Free	Bus routes: 887, 888
Ambarvale/Rosemeadow Community Fruit and veggie box	6 Macbeth Way, Rosemeadow 0472 912 558	Thursday 11.30am	\$2	Bus Routes: 887, 888
Whole Heart Communities Food hampers, delivery or collection	223 Great Southern Road, Bargo 0402 406 492	Hours vary, phone or order online	\$20-50	1-minute walk from Bargo Station Bus routes 900, 911, 912 Home delivery available

www.tmnlinks.net.au/assets/information_files/nsw-rhs-low-cost-and-free-meals-directory.pdf

COVID-19 VACCINATION

POSITIVE LIFE TREATMENTS SUPPORT

For all your HIV treatment questions and support, including COVID-19 concerns, call (02) 9206-2177, 1800 245 677 (freecall outside metro) Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm or email contact@positivelife.org.au



Want to talk about your HIV and health?

Contact a Positive Life Treatments Officer
02 9206 2177 or 1800 245 677 (freecall)

Positive Life NSW

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We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land that we live and work on, and recognise, respect and value the deep and continuing connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to land, waters, community and culture. We pay our respects to Elders, past and present.

Positive Life NSW

The voice of all people living with HIV