

Ministers

Department of Health and Aged Care

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Changes to pre-departure testing for international arrivals to Australia

The Australian Government has reviewed the requirements for pre-departure testing for international arrivals to Australia and will make changes to provide more flexibility for people to demonstrate they have a negative COVID-19 test result prior to departure.

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The Australian Government has reviewed the requirements for pre-departure testing for international arrivals to Australia and will make changes to provide more flexibility for people to demonstrate they have a negative COVID-19 test result prior to departure.

Under the *Biosecurity Act 2015* the Government will change the requirements for a pre-departure test of any nucleic acid amplification test (such as PCR tests) within three days, to allow the flexibility for passengers to instead show a negative test result through a rapid antigen test (RAT) within 24 hours of the flight departure time.

These changes will come into effect from 1.00am Sunday 23 January 2022.

While PCR tests remain the gold standard test, a RAT within 24 hours is an acceptable indicator of whether a traveller has COVID-19 before flying to Australia.

This is consistent with moves within Australia to accept RATs for diagnostic purposes.

In addition to this, the time between receiving a positive test result and being able to be cleared for travel to Australia will be reduced from 14 to seven days. This will reduce wait times for travellers who contract COVID-19 overseas to return to Australia in line with the new domestic isolation requirements.

The pre-departure testing requirements will continue to be reviewed regularly, taking into account the domestic and international epidemiology.

Travellers to Australia must still wear a mask during their flight and follow the directions of state and territory governments regarding quarantine and on-arrival testing.

The Government will continue to take measures to protect Australia by preventing and controlling the entry, emergence, establishment and spread of COVID-19.

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Former ministers:

[The Hon Greg Hunt MP](#)