

# Australia's New South Wales sets new high for COVID deaths

January 12 2022

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Traffic marshalls direct cars at a drive-through COVID-19 testing clinic at Bondi Beach in Sydney, Australia, on Jan. 8, 2022. Australia's most populous state, New South Wales, made the reporting of rapid antigen test results mandatory Wednesday, Jan. 12, as it experienced its deadliest day of the pandemic. Credit: AP Photo/Mark Baker, File

Australia's most populous state, New South Wales, made the reporting of rapid antigen test results mandatory Wednesday as it experienced its deadliest day of the pandemic with 21 deaths.

State Premier Dominic Perrottet said residents who failed to register a positive rapid antigen test would face a fine of up to 1,000 Australian dollars (US\$721) starting next week.

Perrottet said the registration process was simple and would help [health officials](#) provide more support to people with underlying health conditions.

The 21 deaths reported in New South Wales on Wednesday topped the previous record of 18 set on Monday. The state saw 34,759 new COVID-19 cases and 2,242 hospitalizations, including 175 patients in [intensive care](#).

Victoria state, whose capital Melbourne is hosting the Australian Open starting next week, also reported 21 deaths Wednesday along with 40,127 new cases as the state government announced that 1,000 first-year healthcare students and retired nurses would be recruited as vaccinators to meet rising demand for booster shots.

Deputy Premier James Merlino said the state's healthcare system is strained, with around 6,600 workers off duty after testing positive or coming into close contact with a positive case.



Empty shelves of dairy products are seen at a supermarket in Sydney, Wednesday, Jan. 12, 2022. Australia's most populous state, New South Wales, made the reporting of rapid antigen test results mandatory Wednesday as it experienced its deadliest day of the pandemic. The recent spike in COVID-19 infections has caused major logistical disruptions, with staff members, truck drivers and distribution centre workers among those forced to stay at home with the virus or awaiting test results. Credit: Bianca De Marchi/AAP Image via AP

New pandemic orders coming into force in Victoria on Wednesday make booster shots mandatory for critical workers in various fields including [health care](#), disability care, aged care, emergency services, correctional facilities, hotel quarantine and [food distribution](#).

Workers in food and beverage manufacturing, distribution and packing

will be allowed to continue working after coming into close contact with a positive COVID-19 case.

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