

# Media Release

**Mr Colin Brooks MP**

Minister for Child Protection and Family Services

Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers



Sunday, 24 July 2022

## FREE RATS PROGRAM FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY EXTENDED

The Andrews Labor Government is continuing to provide free rapid antigen tests to eligible Victorians with disability, extending support to some of the most vulnerable in our community over the winter months.

People with disability in Victoria can continue to access 20 free rapid antigen tests per visit from state-run testing sites and from Disability Liaison Officers, with the program extended until the end of September.

Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers Colin Brooks said the extension would ensure everyone with disability has access to rapid antigen tests to keep themselves, their loved ones and carers safe – helping some of the most vulnerable to continue to be protected and live safely this winter.

Carers can also access the tests on behalf of eligible people with disability.

People with disability are at higher risk if they contract COVID-19 and the tests will help ensure earlier diagnosis, supporting vulnerable people to get appropriate treatment as early as possible.

Eligible people include NDIS participants, disability support pensioners and people with a disability who receive a Transport Accident Commission benefit.

People unable to attend a state-run testing site can contact a Disability Liaison Officer to help organise access to the RATS.

The free rapid antigen tests program was announced in April 2022 to initially run for three months but has been extended following a review.

To find out which testing sites have rapid antigen tests, visit [coronavirus.vic.gov.au/get-pcr-test-covid-19](https://coronavirus.vic.gov.au/get-pcr-test-covid-19).

More information about Disability Liaison Officers is available on the [Vaccination for people with disability or special requirements page](#).

Further information about rapid antigen testing can also be obtained by calling the 24/7 Coronavirus Hotline on 1800 675 398.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers Colin Brooks

*“Early detection of COVID-19 helps protect people from serious illness by ensuring earlier diagnosis and treatment – and this is especially so for the most vulnerable in our community who experience its effects more harshly.”*

*“We are continuing to provide free rapid antigen tests for people who need them most, supporting Victorians with disability to stay safe during the coming winter months.”*