



The Bahamas & Turks and Caicos Islands

26 August 2021

SITUATION IN NUMBERS

The Bahamas

The first confirmed case of COVID-19 was reported on 15 March 2020. During the period 20-26 August 2021, there were 812 newly confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 24 COVID-19 related deaths.

Among the new cases:

- 649 (80%) were from New Providence;
- 356 (44%) were males and 456 (56%);
- 47 cases (40 from New Providence, 4 from Exuma, 2 from Abaco, 1 from Eleuthera, and 1 from Exuma) were travel related.

The total number of real time PCR tests conducted to 26 August 2021 was 132,232 tests.

Turks and Caicos Islands

The first confirmed case of COVID-19 was reported on 23 March 2020. During the period 20-26 August 2021, there were 27 newly confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 1 COVID-19 related death.

Among new cases 22 (81%) were from Providenciales and 5 (19%) were from Grand Turk.

Among the total confirmed cases:

- 1259 (47.9%) were males, 1364 (52.06%) were females, and 1 (0.04%) was unknown gender as of 25 August 2021;

The total number of Real time PCR tests and Rapid Antigen Tests conducted to 26 August 2021 was 29,427 and 220,422 tests respectively.

GLOBAL

214,033,757 Cases
4,464,463 Deaths

REGION OF THE AMERICAS

82,868,668 Cases
2,088,341 Deaths

THE BAHAMAS

17,940 Confirmed
2,851 Active
14,595 Recovered
170 Hospitalized
354 Deaths

TURKS & CAICOS

2,628 Confirmed
60 Active
2,541 Recovered
2 Hospitalized
20 Deaths

Total cases and deaths, as of 26 August 2021

The Bahamas

Island	Confirmed cases	Deaths
New Providence	13475	268
Grand Bahama	2270	38
Abaco	578	12
Eleuthera	479	6
Exuma	318	5
Bimini/Cat Cay	228	7
Berry Islands	98	2
Inagua	25	0
Andros	217	3
Long Island	51	1
Cat Island	73	1
Acklins	7	0
San Salvador	16	0
Crooked Island	7	0
Mayaguana	4	0
Ragged Island	0*	0
Pending	88	11
TOTAL	17940	354

Turks and Caicos Islands

Island	Confirmed cases	Deaths
Providenciales	2128	15
North Caicos	96	0
Parrot Cay	13	0
Grand Turk	305	5
South Caicos	58	0
Middle Caicos	27	0
Ambergris Cay	1	0
TOTAL	2628	20

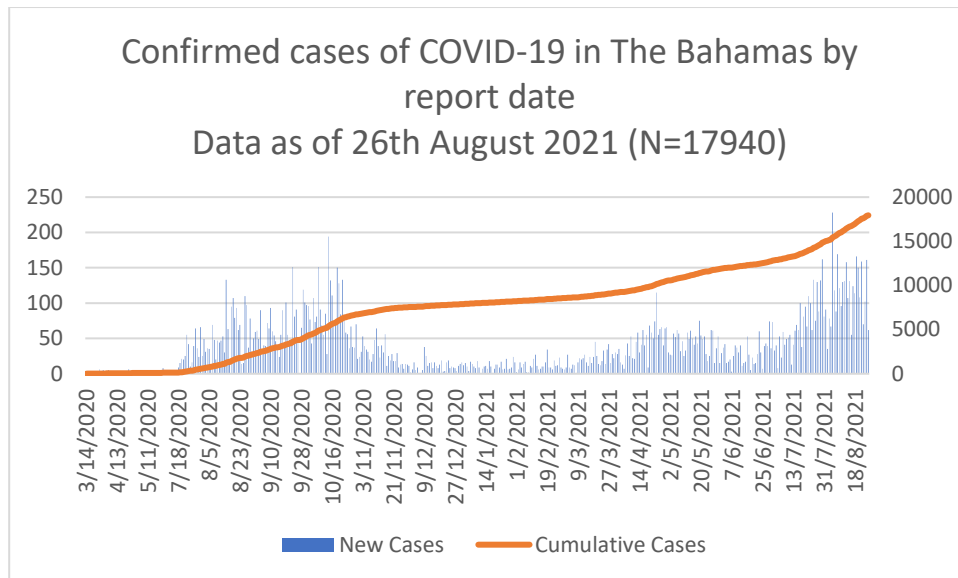
*Case reported last week in Ragged Island did not originate there and was reclassified to New Providence.

SITUATION SUMMARY

HIGHLIGHTS

The Bahamas

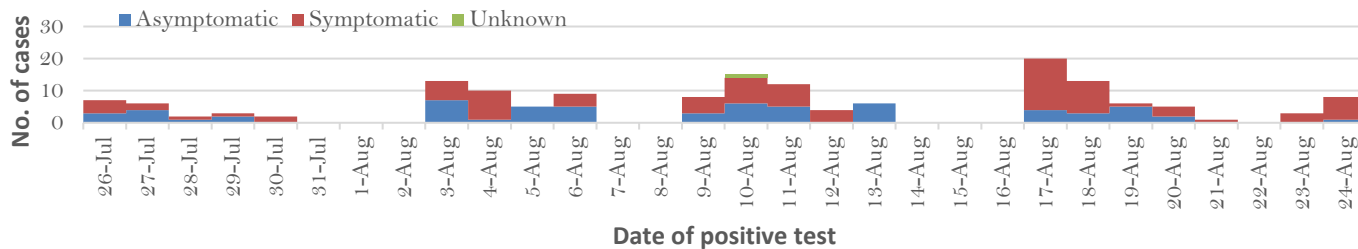
- The number of reported cases has shown an increasing trend.
- Emergency Orders have been extended until 13th November 2021.
- The nightly curfew in Abaco was adjusted to accommodate the distribution of vaccines on 26th and 27th August 2021.
- The Ministry of Education announced public schools will reopen on 30th August 2021 via virtual means. Private schools may seek approval to open face to face.



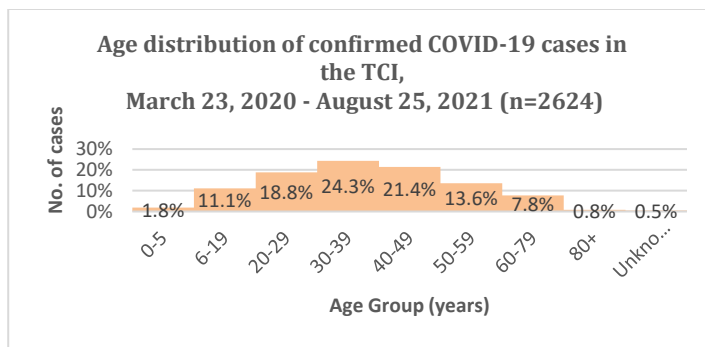
Turks and Caicos Islands

- There has been an increase in the daily number of new confirmed cases of COVID-19.
- The pandemic public health regulations and protocols continue and will remain in effect until 30 September 2021 at 5:00 am. The following, however, will come into effect 1 September 2021:
 - Events of 50 or more persons should not be held unless prior approval was received from the Chief Medical Officer or Chief Environmental Health Officer;
 - Performers will not be granted any work permits to host or perform at social events;
 - For bars and night clubs:
 - Occupancy reduced to 50%;
 - Patrons must be fully vaccinated and provide proof of the same;
 - Identification and vaccination status must be checked for each patron;
 - Logbook of all patrons must be kept and submitted Mondays to both Ministry of Health and the Environmental Health Department.
- Effective 14 September 2021, all events must track customers/patrons.

Symptomatic and Asymptomatic TCI COVID-19 cases by date of positive test
July 26 - August 24, 2021



Source: Turks and Caicos Islands Situation Report 71



Source: Turks and Caicos Islands Situation Report 71

RESPONSE

PAHO/WHO continues to provide both The Bahamas and Turks and Caicos Islands with access to updated technical guidelines, technical assistance and situational updates related to the COVID-19 response.

The Bahamas

- COVID-19 vaccine distribution for the first dose and second dose continued in both Grand Bahama and New Providence and resumed in Abaco on 24 August 2021.
- As of 21 August 2021, 76,174 persons received their first dose, and 55,291 persons received their second dose of COVID-19 vaccine.
- Restrictions continue on the amount of traffic into and out of Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH) with only emergency cases being allowed for service. Hospitalizations continue to increase.
- On 20 August 2021, the Public Hospitals Authority announced resumption in services at the Grand Bahama Health Services and The Sandilands Rehabilitation Centre following an eight-day sickout. However, issues remained with PMH and delays were expected.
- The PMH Morgue continues to operate over its capacity.
- Moderate to severe COVID-19 cases continue to be treated at PMH, Doctors Hospital West and the RMH and less severe cases at the South Beach Health Center.
- Both the Alpha and Iota, variant of concern and variant of interest respectively, were detected among samples.
- Results are pending for ten COVID-19 samples sent in March 2021 to the Caribbean Public Health Agency and 100 samples sent in August 2021 to the Fiocruz Laboratory in Brazil for genomic sequencing.
- A National Respiratory Surveillance Genomics Database is in use by the NRL for genetic analysis. Several genomic deletions and variant mutations have been identified by the NRL.
- COVID-19 laboratory PCR testing continues at the NRL, PMH, RMH and private sector laboratories.
- On 23 August 2021, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention changed its travel advisory for The Bahamas from a Level 3: Exercised increased caution to Level 4: Do not travel due to high COVID-19 cases.
- The national authorities continue to require non-fully vaccinated travelers to have a negative real time PCR test, the completion of a daily on-line survey for fourteen days after arrival and depending upon the responses, rapid antigen testing five- days post entry for persons 12 and older only.

- Fully-vaccinated travellers, and children between ages 2 and 11 years continue to require a COVID-19 negative test (either PCR or rapid antigen) done within five days of travel into country or for travel between Abaco, Bimini, Exuma, Grand Bahama, Harbour Island, New Providence and North and South Eleuthera.
- An on-line contact tracing course continues to be offered through the University of The Bahamas.
- A SharePoint platform continues to be utilized for multiple user entry of contact tracing data, case investigation and laboratory test results.
- From 23 to 24 August 2021, the PAHO/WHO Representative and the PAHO Consultant providing support to the Ministry of Health in Disease Surveillance and one Ministry of Health personnel visited Grand Bahama, to conduct surveillance assessments of healthcare facilities
- The Public Hospital's Authority continues to distribute personal protective equipment across all public hospitals and clinics.
- Ministry of Health continues to provide telemedicine, telepsychology, mental health, and psychosocial support services.
- Ministry of Health continues to implement a communication campaign to increase immunization coverage for influenza and other vaccines.
- Work continues in adapting and implementing the National COVID-19 Vaccine Plan to the changing situation with respect to access to vaccines, with support from PAHO/WHO.
- The communication campaign for COVID-19 vaccine continues.

Turks and Caicos Islands

- COVID-19 vaccine distribution continued throughout the islands including for children ages 12-15 years of age.
- Approximately 69% of the population is fully vaccinated.
- The Alpha, Gamma and Delta B.1.617.2 Variants of Concern was confirmed to be in-country.
- Persons continue to register for the COVID-19 vaccine via the online portal which is available in three languages: English, French-Creole, and Spanish.
- Go.Data continues to be utilized for field data collection and contact tracing investigations.
- Community drive-through services continue to provide access to COVID-19 tests throughout the islands.
- The National Public Health Laboratory continues to conduct COVID-19 PCR testing.
- The communication education campaign continues with communication materials on the COVID-19 vaccine shared via traditional means and social media. COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy public service announcements were released this past week.
- A Cuban health contingent of 20 persons continues to operate in medical facilities though a bilateral agreement between the two countries.

GAPS/CHALLENGES

- Vaccine deployment plans in The Bahamas continue to be adapted to accelerate vaccination as more vaccines are currently in-country.
- Public compliance with public health protocols and vaccination hesitancy continue to present challenges in both The Bahamas and Turks and Caicos Islands. Vaccine hesitancy is of particular concern among health care workers.
- There continues to be a risk of introduction of additional new variants to both The Bahamas and Turks and Caicos Islands due the emergence and spread of COVID-19 variants in several countries from which tourists originate.
- While The Bahamas has capacity to identify the presence of COVID-19 variants, neither The Bahamas nor Turks and Caicos Islands have in-country sequencing capacity. This presents a challenge for the timely identification of new variants.
- Both countries are challenged by the limited global supply of Cepheid Test Kits and other supplies required for COVID-19 testing. Turks and Caicos Islands is particularly challenged as it is only possible for them to source Cepheid Test Kits through the United Kingdom Government.
- The Bahamas risks using current stocks of syringes for their National Immunization Programme for COVID-19 vaccine distribution due to limited global supply.

- A nursing shortage has been identified in The Bahamas and there are concerns about the delivery of healthcare services.
- In the Turks and Caicos Islands, stigma and discrimination of COVID-19 confirmed, and suspected cases remain a concern.
- In The Bahamas, the next general election was announced to take place on 16 September 2021 with heightened concerns of effects of campaigning and physical/social distancing protocols and the third wave including increased hospitalizations and deaths.