



The Bahamas & Turks and Caicos Islands

19 August 2021

SITUATION IN NUMBERS

The Bahamas

The first confirmed case of COVID-19 was reported on 15 March 2020. During the period 12-19 August 2021, there were 856 newly confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 18 COVID-19 related deaths.

Among the new cases:

- 642 (75%) were from New Providence;
- 408 (47.6%) were males, 445 (52%) were females and 3 (0.4%) unknown;
- 63 cases (57 from New Providence, 4 from Exuma, and 2 from Berry Islands) were travel related.

The total number of real time PCR tests conducted to 19 August 2021 was 129,213 tests.

Turks and Caicos Islands

The first confirmed case of COVID-19 was reported on 23 March 2020. During the period 12-19 August 2021, there were 43 newly confirmed cases of COVID-19.

Among new cases 35 (81%) were from Providenciales and 8 (19%) were from Grand Turk.

Among the total confirmed cases:

- 1226 (48.16%) were males, 1319 (51.8%) were females, and 1 (0.04%) was unknown gender as of 11 August 2021;

The total number of Real time PCR tests and Rapid Antigen Tests conducted to 19 August 2021 was 28,756 and 211,837 tests respectively.

GLOBAL

209,477,327 Cases
4,395,239 Deaths

REGION OF THE AMERICAS

81,226,913 Cases
2,065,148 Deaths

THE BAHAMAS

17,128 Confirmed
3,031 Active
13,632 Recovered
157 Hospitalized
330 Deaths

TURKS & CAICOS

2,601 Confirmed
73 Active
2,502 Recovered
3 Hospitalized
19 Deaths

Total cases and deaths, as of 19 August 2021

The Bahamas

Island	Confirmed cases	Deaths
New Providence	12826	245
Grand Bahama	2233	38
Abaco	543	12
Eleuthera	456	6
Exuma	299	5
Bimini/Cat Cay	228	7
Berry Islands	96	2
Inagua	25	0
Andros	197	2
Long Island	31	1
Cat Island	72	1
Acklins	7	0
San Salvador	16	0
Crooked Island	7	0
Mayaguana	3	0
Ragged Island	1	0
Pending	88	11
TOTAL	17128	330

Turks and Caicos Islands

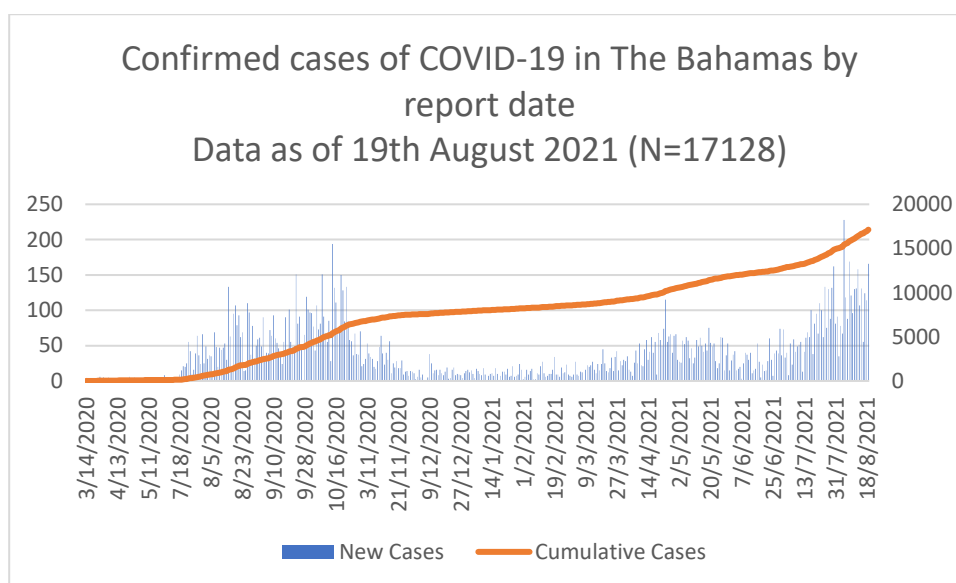
Island	Confirmed cases	Deaths
Providenciales	2106	14
North Caicos	96	0
Parrot Cay	13	0
Grand Turk	300	5
South Caicos	58	0
Middle Caicos	27	0
Ambergris Cay	1	0
TOTAL	2601	19

SITUATION SUMMARY

HIGHLIGHTS

The Bahamas

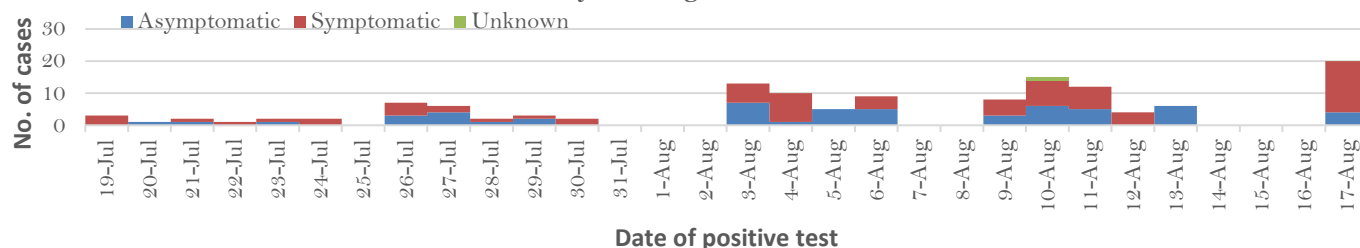
- The number of reported cases has shown an increasing trend.
- Emergency Orders have been extended until 13th November 2021.
- Effective 3 September 2021, cruise ships will only be permitted to enter the country if a manifest with vaccination status of crew and passenger was provided by the Captain or Master to the Port Medical Officer prior to entry, all persons 12 and older are fully vaccinated, and the ship was compliant with health protocols submitted to the Competent Authority.
- A nightly curfew was implemented on Andros from 8:00 pm to 5:00 am and changed on Abaco to 8:00 pm to 5:00 am.
- Parliament was dissolved on 19 August 2021 and General Election announced for 16 September 2021.



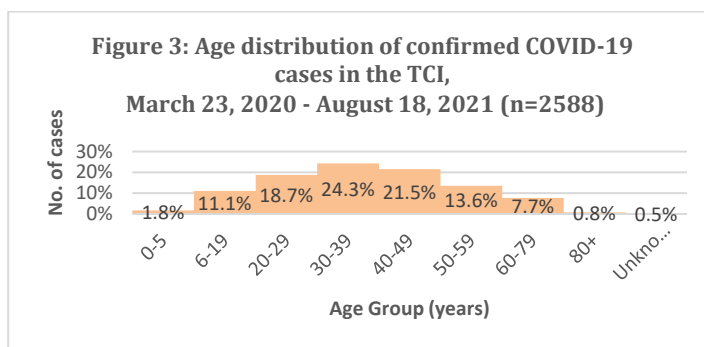
Turks and Caicos Islands

- 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.
- Nightly curfew continued on all islands except Salt Cay from 1:00 am to 5:00 am as well as daily business closures from 12:00 midnight to 5:00 am.
- Cabinet approved on 18 August 2021 the following:
 - For entry into the country only the following list of vaccines will be acceptable:
 - Comirnaty (Pfizer)
 - Janssen
 - Moderna
 - Oxford/Astra Zeneca
 - Pfizer/BioNTech
 - Spikevax (which was COVID-19 Moderna)
 - Vaxevria (which was COVID-19 Astra Zeneca)
 - Vaccine certification will only be accepted as following:
 - Certification by medical professional or authorized government entity
 - Electronic certificate
 - Vaccination cards accepted by the European Union, United Kingdom and United States
 - Extension of the Cuban Brigade for another six months

Figure 1: Symptomatic and Asymptomatic TCI COVID-19 cases by date of positive test
July 19 - August 17, 2021



Source: Turks and Caicos Islands Situation Report 70



Source: Turks and Caicos Islands Situation Report 70

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 resumed and continued for the second dose in both Grand Bahama and New Providence.
- As of 14 August 2021, 68,323 persons received their first dose, and 51,150 persons received their second dose of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine.
- On 14 August 2021, a baby born two days earlier tested positive for COVID-19.
- On 16 August 2021, a pilot rollout of the Pfizer vaccine was held for an identified group of persons 12 years and older. Further, appointments for children 12 years to 17 years also to receive the Pfizer vaccine commenced. Parents or legal guardians must consent and provide proof of identification upon presentation for the vaccine with children.
- On 19 August 2021, rollout of the Pfizer vaccine commenced at the Kendal G. L. Isaacs Gymnasium. Further, 38,400 doses of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine were received in-country
- 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. Data released during a press conference hosted by the National Consultative Committee on 15 August 2021 show that of 411 persons hospitalized with COVID-19 at PMH from 14 March 2021 to 31 July 2021, 400 were unvaccinated and 11 had one dose of the vaccine and of the deaths during the same time period, 52 were unvaccinated and 1 had one dose of the vaccine.
- The Sandilands Rehabilitation Centre joined in the sickout with staff of PMH, and the Grand Bahama Health Services.
- 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.

- On 17 August 2021, Doctors Hospital, the private facility assisting with the care of COVID-19 patients advised of shortages in resources at their facilities including human resources and supplies and increase in deaths from COVID-19.
- 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- and ten-days post entry.
- 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.
- Fully-vaccinated travellers, unvaccinated 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.
- On 13 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 Bimini, 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.
- 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

- Following the receipt of 128,700 doses of the COVID-19 Pfizer vaccine donated by the USA and 38,400 Johnson & Johnson vaccine, vaccine deployment plans in The Bahamas are being adapted to accelerate vaccination.
- Public compliance with public health protocols and vaccination hesitancy continue to present

challenges in both The Bahamas and Turks and Caicos Islands.

- 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.
- Both countries are challenged with vaccine uptake due to vaccine hesitancy, especially among health care workers.
- 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.