



## The Bahamas & Turks and Caicos Islands

5 August 2021

### SITUATION IN NUMBERS

#### The Bahamas

The first confirmed case of COVID-19 was reported on 15 March 2020. During the period 30 July-5 August 2021, there were 742 newly confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 9 COVID-19 related deaths.

Among the new cases:

- 593 (80%) were from New Providence;
- 335 (45%) were males and 407 (55%) were females;
- 63 cases (57 from New Providence, 3 from Exuma, 1 from Abaco, 1 from Grand Bahama and 1 from Eleuthera) were travel related.

The total number of real time PCR tests conducted to 5 August 2021 was 122,168 tests.

#### Turks and Caicos Islands

The first confirmed case of COVID-19 was reported on 23 March 2020. During the period 30 July-5 August 2021, there were 28 newly confirmed cases of COVID-19.

Among new cases 26 (93%) were from Providenciales and 2 (7%) were from Grand Turk.

Among the total confirmed cases:

- 1194 (47.9%) were males, 1291 (52%) were females, and 1 (0.1%) was unknown gender as of 4 August 2021;

The total number of Real Time PCR tests and Rapid Antigen Tests conducted to 5 August 2021 was 27,289 and 187,971 tests respectively.

#### GLOBAL

200,388,172 Cases  
4,259,360 Deaths

#### REGION OF THE AMERICAS

78,118,399 Cases  
2,023,469 Deaths

#### THE BAHAMAS

15,419 Confirmed  
2,187 Active  
12,824 Recovered  
122 Hospitalized  
295 Deaths

#### TURKS & CAICOS

2,509 Confirmed  
46 Active  
2,438 Recovered  
0 Hospitalized  
18 Deaths

### Total cases and deaths, as of 5 August 2021

#### The Bahamas

Island	Confirmed cases	Deaths
New Providence	11524	218
Grand Bahama	2103	38
Abaco	446	8
Eleuthera	386	4
Exuma	243	3
Bimini/Cat Cay	222	7
Berry Islands	95	2
Inagua	25	0
Andros	183	2
Long Island	26	1
Cat Island	71	1
Acklins	7	0
San Salvador	14	0
Crooked Island	7	0
Mayaguana	3	0
Pending	61	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15419</b>	<b>295</b>

#### Turks and Caicos Islands

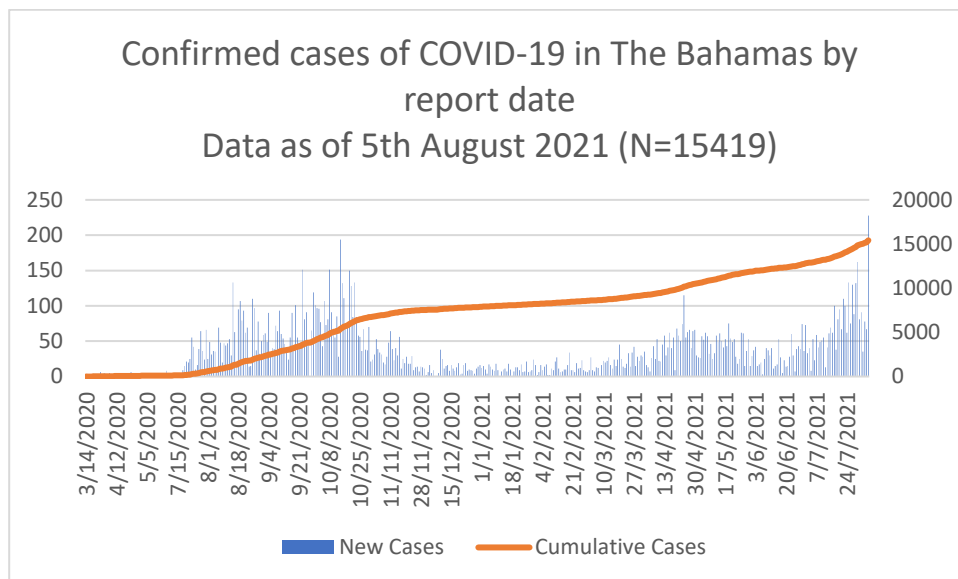
Island	Confirmed cases	Deaths
Providenciales	2024	13
North Caicos	96	0
Parrot Cay	13	0
Grand Turk	290	5
South Caicos	58	0
Middle Caicos	27	0
Ambergris Cay	1	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2509</b>	<b>18</b>

## SITUATION SUMMARY

### HIGHLIGHTS

#### The Bahamas

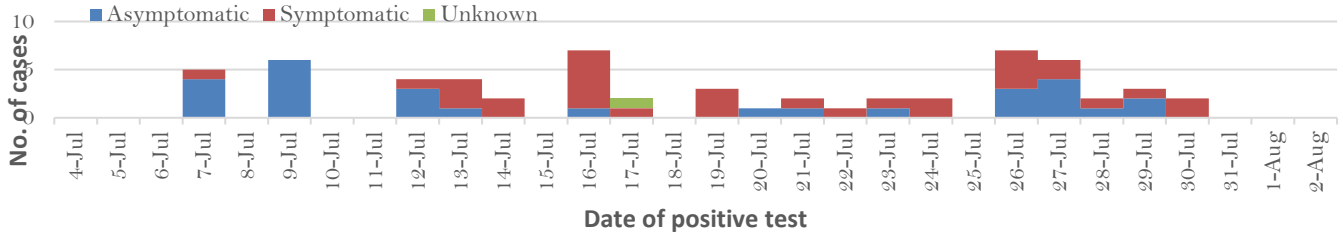
- The number of reported cases has shown an increasing trend.
- Emergency Orders have been extended until 13 August 2021.
- New travel requirements were announced for fully vaccinated travellers entering or travelling within The Bahamas. Effective 6 August 2021, these travellers, and children between ages 2 and 11 years will need to have a COVID-19 negative test (either PCR or rapid antigen) done within five days of travel into country or from Abaco, Bimini, Exuma, Grand Bahama, Harbour Island, New Providence and North and South Eleuthera.



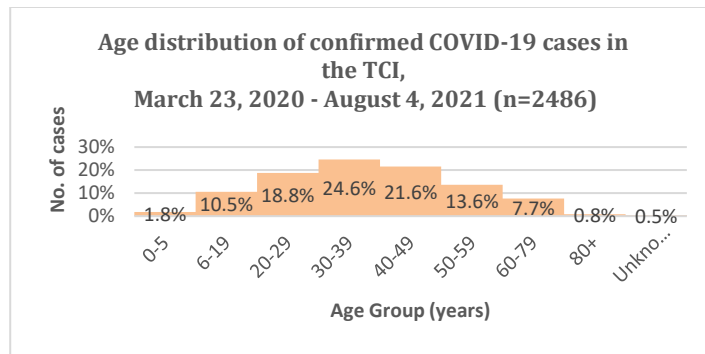
#### Turks and Caicos Islands

- There has been a slight 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.
- The cruise port will remain closed until 30 September 2021.
- Cabinet approved the following amendments which will become effective 6 August 2021:
  - Maximum of 50 persons to attend public and private social gatherings including at hotels, villas, and other tourist accommodations;
  - A fine of USD \$550 for persons not wearing face masks or coverings in public including at hotels, villas and other tourist accommodations;
  - A fine of USD \$5,000 for businesses and venues where persons are found in breach of not wearing face masks or coverings. If a business or venue has been fined three times, the business or venue will be closed for three months.

Symptomatic and Asymptomatic TCI COVID-19 cases by date of positive test  
July 4 - August 2, 2021



Source: Turks and Caicos Islands Situation Report 68



Source: Turks and Caicos Islands Situation Report 68

## 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 second dose only continued in Grand Bahama and New Providence.
- Only one COVID-19 vaccination site is operational on New Providence, that is Loyola Hall.
- A donation of two patient care tents was received from Samaritan's Purse on 30 July 2021. These tents will increase the COVID-19 bed capacity by 18.
- As of 31 July 2021, 61,803 persons received their first dose, and 46,793 persons received their second dose of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine.
- On 3 August 2021, 33,600 doses of the Astra Zeneca COVID-19 vaccine were received in country from the COVAX facility.
- There has been an increase in hospitalizations for COVID-19 cases at the Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH). Restrictions continue on the amount of traffic into and out of PMH with only emergency cases being allowed for service.
- The Rand Hospital Morgue continues to operate over its capacity.
- Moderate to severe COVID-19 cases continue to be treated at PMH, Doctors Hospital West and the Rand Memorial Hospital and less severe cases at the South Beach Health Center.
- 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 to the Caribbean Public Health Agency for genomic sequencing in March 2021.
- 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, Rand Memorial Hospital and private sector laboratories.
- 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.
- 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.
- The PAHO/WHO Consultant who is providing support to the Ministry of Health in Disease Surveillance and a National PAHO/WHO Consultant along with two Ministry of Health personnel visited Abaco, The Bahamas from 29 to 31 July 2021 to conduct surveillance assessments of healthcare facilities.



*Figure 1: Nurse in Charge conducting tour of Cooper's Town Clinic, Cooper's Town, Abaco, The Bahamas*



*Figure 2: Surveillance Assessment with PAHO/WHO Consultant for Surveillance, National PAHO/WHO Consultant and Nurse in Charge Marsh Harbour Clinic, Marsh Harbour, Abaco, The Bahamas*

## Turks and Caicos Islands

- COVID-19 vaccine distribution continued throughout the islands including for children ages 12-15 years of age.
- Approximately 66% of the population is fully vaccinated.
- The Delta B.1.617.2 Variant of Concern was confirmed to be in-country on 30 July 2021 based on results of four samples sent for genomic sequencing at the Caribbean Public Health Agency. Previous variants identified in-country were the Alpha and Gamma Variants of Concern.
- The appointment of the new Minister of Health, the Honorable Jamell Robinson, was announced on 4 August 2021 during the Cabinet Meeting.
- 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 through a bilateral agreement between the two countries.

## **GAPS/CHALLENGES**

- Vaccine rollout in The Bahamas is being adversely affected due to limited access to, and delayed delivery of vaccines. Vaccine deployment plans constantly have to be adapted.
- 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 to 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 reduced vaccine uptake due to vaccine hesitancy.