



The Bahamas & Turks and Caicos Islands

16 September 2021

SITUATION IN NUMBERS

The Bahamas

The first confirmed case of COVID-19 was reported on 15 March 2020. During the period 10-16 September 2021, there were 695 newly confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 51 COVID-19 related deaths.

Among the new cases:

- 588 (85%) were from New Providence;
- 330 (47.5%) were male and 365 (52.5%) were female;
- 11 cases (8 from New Providence, 2 from Grand Bahama and 1 from Exuma) were travel-related.

The total number of real time PCR tests conducted to 16 September 2021 was 140,805 tests.

Turks and Caicos Islands

The first confirmed case of COVID-19 was reported on 23 March 2020. During the period 10-16 September 2021, there were 63 newly confirmed cases of COVID-19 and one COVID-19 related death.

Among new cases 59 (94%) were from Providenciales and 4 (6%) were from Grand Turk.

Among the total confirmed cases:

- 1337 (47.8%) were male, 1456 (52.1%) were female, and 1 (0.1%) was of unknown gender as of 16 September 2021;

The total number of Real time PCR tests and Rapid Antigen Tests conducted to 16 September 2021 was 31,827 and 238,023 tests respectively.

GLOBAL

226,457,592 Cases
4,660,686 Deaths

REGION OF THE AMERICAS

87,430,315 Cases
2,163,219 Deaths

THE BAHAMAS

20,030 Confirmed
1,662 Active
17,727 Recovered
176 Hospitalized
504 Deaths

TURKS & CAICOS

2,799 Confirmed
109 Active
2,661 Recovered
3 Hospitalized
21 Deaths

Total cases and deaths, as of 16 September 2021

The Bahamas

Island	Confirmed cases	Deaths
New Providence	15207	360
Grand Bahama	2412	88
Abaco	626	13
Eleuthera	548	7
Exuma	342	6
Bimini/Cat Cay	236	9
Berry Islands	102	2
Inagua	25	0
Andros	252	4
Long Island	60	2
Cat Island	86	1
Acklins	9	0
San Salvador	16	0
Crooked Island	11	0
Mayaguana	4	1
Ragged Island	0	0
Pending	94	11
TOTAL	20,030	504

Turks and Caicos Islands

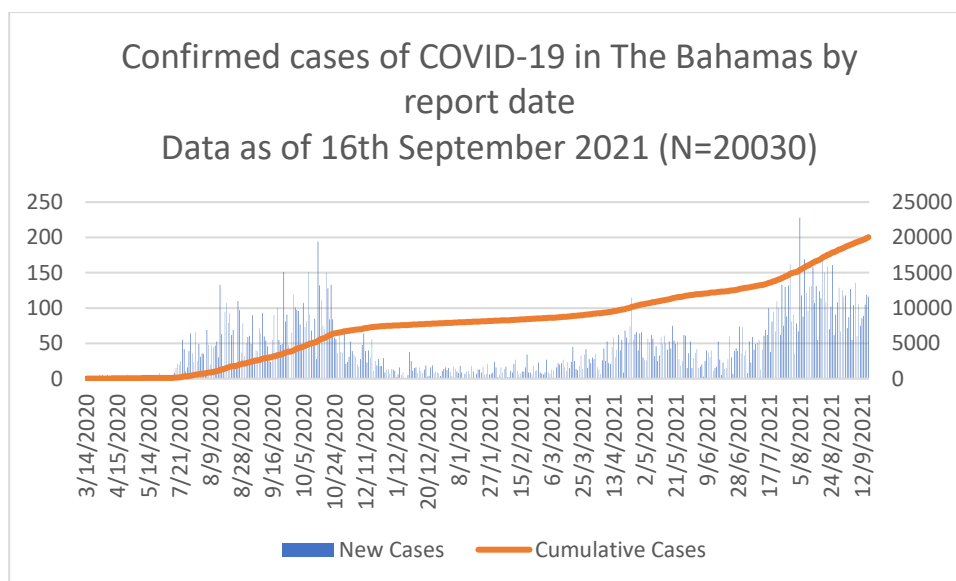
Island	Confirmed cases	Deaths
Providenciales	2286	16
North Caicos	98	0
Parrot Cay	13	0
Grand Turk	316	5
South Caicos	58	0
Middle Caicos	27	0
Ambergris Cay	1	0
TOTAL	2,799	21

SITUATION SUMMARY

HIGHLIGHTS

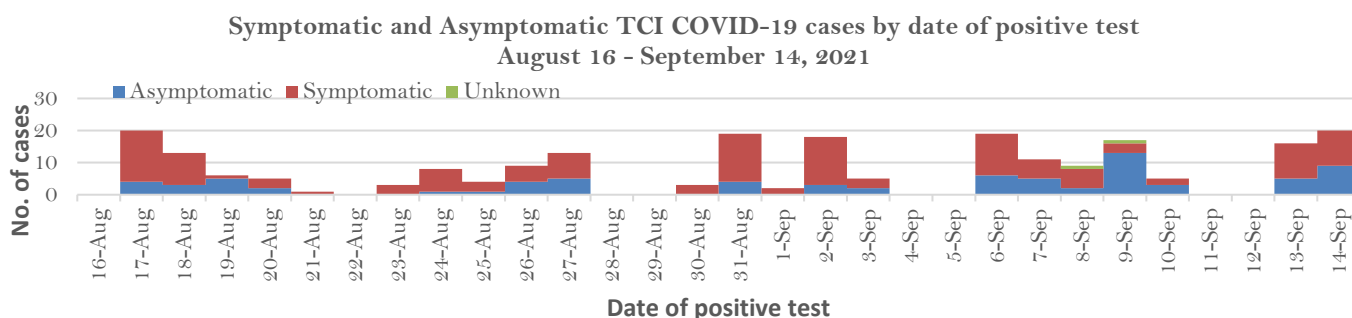
The Bahamas

- The number of reported cases has started to show a decreasing trend.
- Emergency Orders have been extended until 13 November 2021.
- On 12 September 2021, Emergency Powers were amended to allow quarantine persons to vote in the General Election held on 16 September 2021.
- On 16 September 2021, Emergency Powers were amended to extend the curfew hours throughout the country to 11:59 pm on the same day for the General Election.

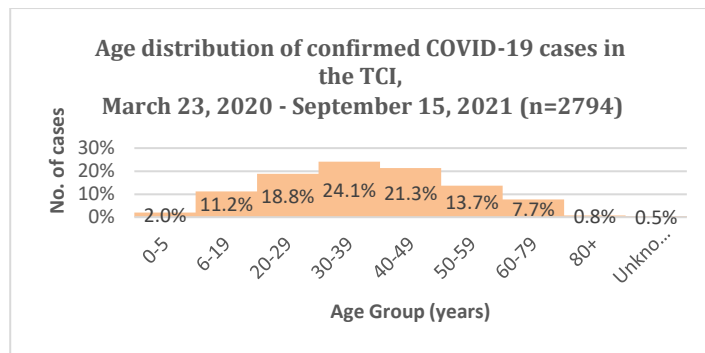


Turks and Caicos Islands

- There has been an increase in the daily number of newly 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.
- Effective 14 September 2021, all events must track customers/patrons.



Source: Turks and Caicos Islands Situation Report 74



Source: Turks and Caicos Islands Situation Report 74

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 continued throughout Grand Bahama and New Providence. AstraZeneca is only being given for second doses whilst Pfizer, and Janssen and Janssen are being given for persons requiring first doses.
- As of 10 September 2021, 110,712 persons received their first dose, and 65,915 persons received their second dose of COVID-19 vaccine.
- The COVID-19 Mobile Unit is operational and individuals who are homebound, hearing impaired, mentally challenged, physically challenged, and visually impaired as well as their caretakers may schedule an appointment to receive their COVID-19 vaccine via this means.
- Restrictions continue on the amount of traffic into and out of Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH) with only emergency cases being allowed entry for service. Hospitalizations continue to increase.
- The Public Hospitals Authority continues to request that all persons presenting to PMH for emergency care who have taken a COVID-19 test within 72 hours to present the same to the Emergency Room to accelerate triage and treatment.
- The PMH Morgue continues to operate beyond its capacity.
- Moderate to severe COVID-19 cases continue to be treated at PMH, Doctors Hospital West and the Rand Memorial Hospital (RMH) and less severe cases at the South Beach Health Center.
- COVID-19 laboratory PCR testing continues at the National Reference Laboratory (NRL), PMH, RMH and private sector laboratories.
- 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.
- The Alpha, Delta, and Gamma, variants of concern, and the Iota, variant of interest, were detected among samples previously sent to the Fiocruz Laboratory in Brazil for genomic sequencing.
- Results are pending for ten COVID-19 samples sent in March 2021 to the Caribbean Public Health Agency.
- 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.
- 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, in collaboration with PAHO/WHO and other partners, continue 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.

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 were 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 through 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 to the emergence and spread of COVID-19 variants in several countries from which tourists originate.
- While The Bahamas has the 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 general election took place on 16 September 2021 with heightened concerns about quarantined individuals being allowed to vote with the general public, campaigning activities and adherence to physical/social distancing protocols, and the third wave of cases including increased hospitalizations and deaths.