



## The Bahamas & Turks and Caicos Islands

30 September 2021

### SITUATION IN NUMBERS

#### The Bahamas

The first confirmed case of COVID-19 was reported on 15 March 2020. During the period 24-30 September 2021, there were 595 newly confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 15 COVID-19 related deaths.

Among the new cases:

- 488 (82%) were from New Providence;
- 251 (42%) were males and 344 (58%) were females;
- 9 cases (8 from New Providence and 1 from Exuma) were travel-related.

The total number of real time PCR tests conducted to 30 September 2021 was 146,899 tests.

#### Turks and Caicos Islands

The first confirmed case of COVID-19 was reported on 23 March 2020. During the period 24-30 September 2021, there were 30 newly confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 1 COVID-19 related death.

Among new cases 27 (90%) were from Providenciales and 3 (10%) were from Grand Turk.

Among the total confirmed cases:

- 1369 (48.1%) were males and 1475 (51.9%) were females as of 29 September 2021;

The total number of Real time PCR tests and Rapid Antigen Tests conducted to 30 September 2021 was 33,953 and 246,220 tests respectively.

#### GLOBAL

233,192,840 Cases  
4,773,268 Deaths

#### REGION OF THE AMERICAS

89,869,785 Cases  
2,209,817 Deaths

#### THE BAHAMAS

21,198 Confirmed  
1,372 Active  
19,099 Recovered  
145 Hospitalized  
537 Deaths

#### TURKS & CAICOS

2,854 Confirmed  
43 Active  
2,779 Recovered  
23 Deaths

### Total cases and deaths, as of 30 September 2021

#### The Bahamas

Island	Confirmed cases	Deaths
New Providence	16172	388
Grand Bahama	2472	93
Abaco	631	13
Eleuthera	609	7
Exuma	346	6
Bimini/Cat Cay	237	9
Berry Islands	104	2
Inagua	35	0
Andros	266	4
Long Island	78	2
Cat Island	90	1
Acklins	9	0
San Salvador	16	0
Crooked Island	12	0
Mayaguana	17	1
Ragged Island	0	0
Pending	97	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21198</b>	<b>537</b>

#### Turks and Caicos Islands

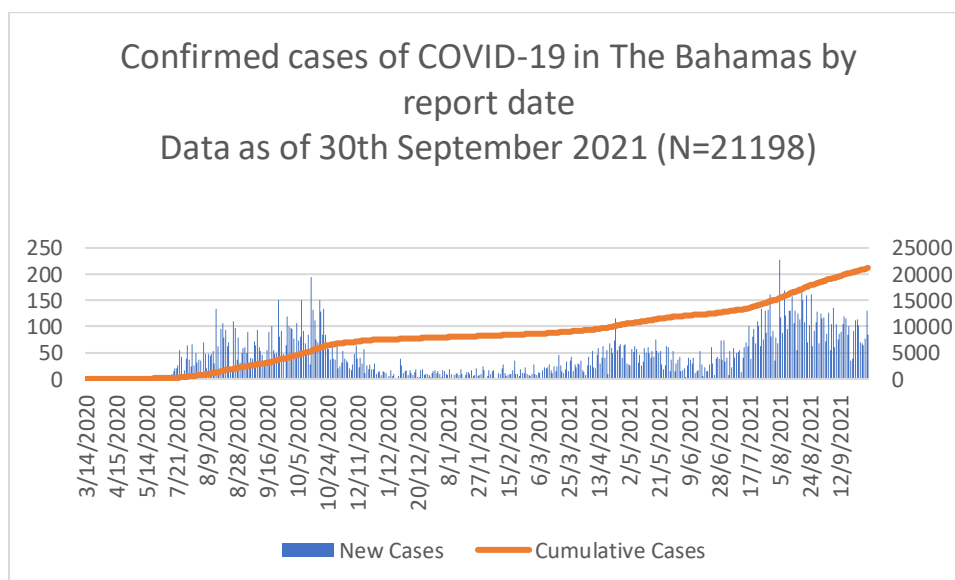
Island	Confirmed cases	Deaths
Providenciales	2336	18
North Caicos	98	0
Parrot Cay	13	0
Grand Turk	321	5
South Caicos	58	0
Middle Caicos	27	0
Ambergris Cay	1	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2854</b>	<b>23</b>

## SITUATION SUMMARY

### HIGHLIGHTS

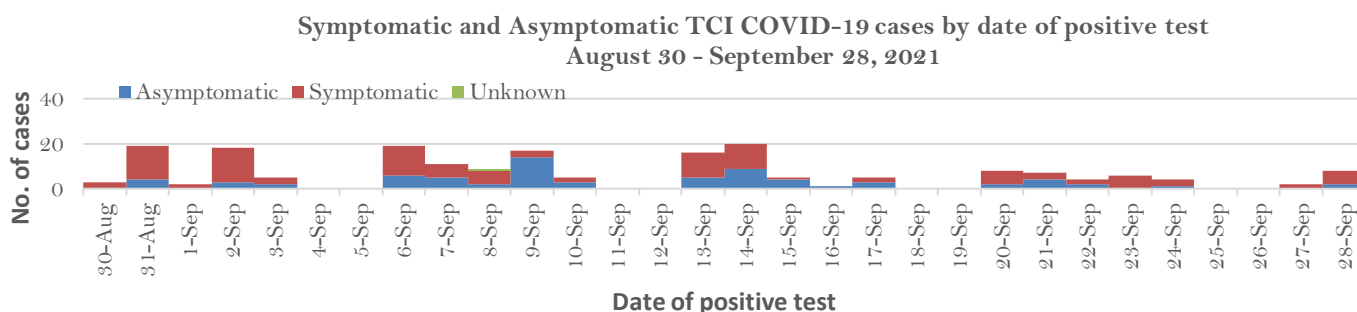
#### The Bahamas

- The number of reported cases is steady.
- Emergency Orders have been extended until 13 November 2021.
- On 24 September 2021, Emergency Powers Orders were amended as follows:
  - No travel visa for inter-island travel within the country. However, for incoming entry into the country it is still required for all persons and only visitors are subject to the fee.
  - Only proof of a negative rapid antigen test (approved by the Ministry of Health) is needed for inter-island travel from Grand Bahama and New Providence for fully vaccinated persons at point of departure. A negative RT-PCR test, however, is needed for non-vaccinated persons.
  - Only a negative rapid antigen test (approved by the Ministry of Health) is needed for inter-island travel from all other islands at point of departure.
  - Testing on day five for inter-island travel has been discontinued.
  - Retail businesses and construction operations are now permitted on Sundays.
  - All incoming cruise passengers must be vaccinated to enter the country.

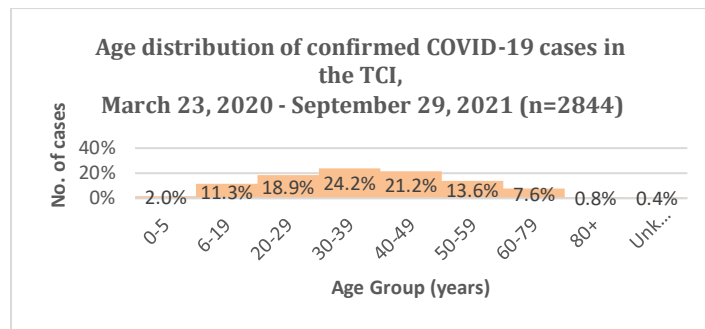


#### Turks and Caicos Islands

- 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.
- Effective 14 September 2021, all events must track customers/patrons.



Source: Turks and Caicos Islands Situation Report 76



Source: Turks and Caicos Islands Situation Report 76

## 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 the islands.
- As of 25 September 2021, 119,566 persons received their first dose of either the Astra Zeneca or Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine, and 92,310 persons were fully vaccinated including those who received the one dose Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine.
- The COVID-19 Mobile Unit continues to operate and provide vaccinations to individuals who are homebound, hearing impaired, mentally challenged, physically challenged, and visually impaired as well as their caretakers.
- 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.
- 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 over 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 and .
- 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.
- 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, 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.

## 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 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 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 Bahamas, 5-10% of health care workers in the public sector are in quarantine.
- Recent influx of Haitian migrants into the Southern Bahamas is a cause of concern given the current economic and health crisis in Haiti.