



The Bahamas & Turks and Caicos Islands

28 January 2022

SITUATION IN NUMBERS

The Bahamas

The first confirmed case of COVID-19 was reported on 15 March 2020. During the period 22-28 January 2022, there were 487 newly confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 16 COVID-19 related deaths.

Among the new cases:

- 347 (71%) were from New Providence;
- 240 (49.0%) were males and 247 (51.0%) females;
- 58 cases (45 New Providence, 6 Eleuthera, 4 Exuma, 2 Grand Bahama, and 1 unknown) were travel-related.

The total number of real time PCR tests conducted to 28 January 2022 was 208,843 tests.

Turks and Caicos Islands

The first confirmed case of COVID-19 was reported on 23 March 2020. During the period 22-28 January 2022, there were 168 newly confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 1 COVID-19 related death.

Among new cases, 124 (74%) cases were from Providenciales.

Among the total confirmed cases:

- 2710 (47.9%) were males, 2932 (51.8%) were females, and 17 (0.3%) unknown as of 26 January 2022;

The total number of Real time PCR tests and Rapid Antigen Tests conducted to 28 January 2022 was 53,101 and 371,072 tests respectively.

Total cases and deaths, as of 28 January 2022
The Bahamas Turks and Caicos Islands

Island	Confirmed cases	Deaths
New Providence	25605	539
Grand Bahama	3291	107
Abaco	775	22
Eleuthera	806	17
Exuma	524	9
Bimini/Cat Cay	271	13
Berry Islands	145	4
Inagua	85	3
Andros	360	9
Long Island	140	4
Cat Island	133	3
Acklins	41	0
San Salvador	18	0
Crooked Island	34	0
Mayaguana	21	2
Ragged Island	0	0
Pending	237	13
TOTAL	32486	745

Island	Confirmed cases	Deaths
Providenciales	4657	24
North Caicos	119	0
Parrot Cay	20	0
Grand Turk	747	8
South Caicos	114	1
Middle Caicos	30	0
Ambergris Cay	2	0
Pine Cay	1	0
Salt Cay	2	0
Unknown	0	2
TOTAL	5692	34

GLOBAL

365,419,875 Cases
5,637,186 Deaths

REGION OF THE AMERICAS

133,629,145 Cases
2,495,358 Deaths

THE BAHAMAS

32,486 Confirmed
7,132 Active
24,402 Recovered
121 Hospitalized
745 Deaths

TURKS & CAICOS

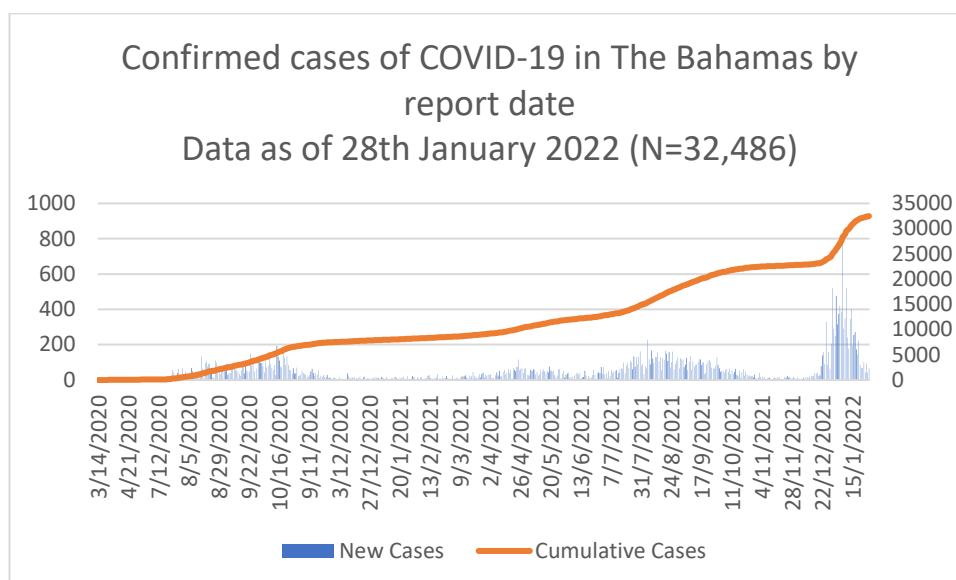
5,692 Confirmed
200 Active
5,446 Recovered
34 Deaths

SITUATION SUMMARY

HIGHLIGHTS

The Bahamas

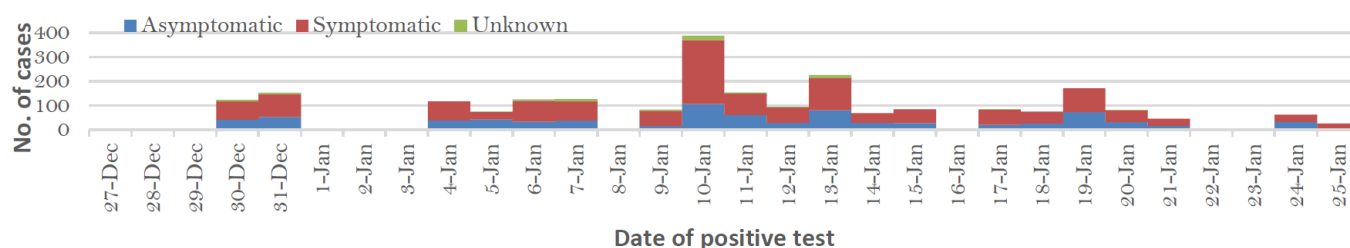
- The country is currently undergoing a fourth wave with an increase in confirmed cases of COVID-19 and hospitalizations, though daily numbers of cases have been decreasing and it appears that this wave has peaked.
- The Health Services (COVID-19) (Prevention and Management of Community Spread) Rules, 2021 and the Health Services (COVID-19) (General) Rules, 2021 remain in effect.



Turks and Caicos Islands

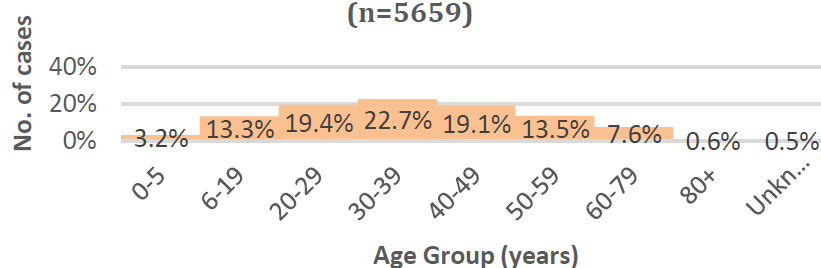
- The country is currently undergoing the fourth wave with an increase in confirmed cases of COVID-19 hospitalizations, and deaths, though daily numbers of cases have been decreasing and it appears that this wave has peaked.
- The Public and Environmental Health (COVID-19 Pandemic) Regulations 2021 are in effect until 28 February 2022.
- The following measures went into effect 28th January 2022:
 - Entry to Churches, religious services, weddings and funerals will be limited to 50% of their approved capacity;
 - Only persons 16 and over who are fully vaccinated or present a negative COVID-19 test taken within 24 hours will be allowed entry into bars, discos, nightclubs, restaurants and social gatherings. Persons under 16 years of age who accompany those over 16 years of age are exempted from these requirements;
 - Incoming travellers and unvaccinated persons two years of age and older must present a negative PCR or Rapid Antigen test taken within three days prior to arrival;
 - Fully vaccinated residents must take a COVID-19 test within two days of arrival via the TCIG program at no cost;
 - Unvaccinated minors travellers must take a COVID-19 test within two days of arrival.

Symptomatic and Asymptomatic TCI COVID-19 cases by date of positive test
Dec 27, 2021 - Jan 25, 2022



Source: Turks and Caicos Islands Situation Report 93

Age distribution of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the TCI, March 23, 2020 - January 26, 2022
(n=5659)



Source: Turks and Caicos Islands Situation Report 93

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 including extended and booster dose vaccinations continued throughout The Bahamas.
- As of 22 January 2022, 149,359 persons received their first dose of either the Astra Zeneca or Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine, and 158,288 persons were fully vaccinated including those who received the one dose Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine.
- Free COVID-19 Rapid Antigen testing commenced in Grand Bahama on 22 January 2022 at the Foster B. Pestania Centre.
- Free COVID-19 Rapid Antigen testing continued at both the Kendal G. L. Isaacs Gymnasium and the Melia Hotel for asymptomatic persons and at the South Beach Health Center for RT-PCR testing for symptomatic persons. On 28 January 2022, the Melia Hotel ceased to operate as a COVID-19 vaccination and testing site.
- On 26 January 2022, the Ministry of Health and Wellness conducted a community walkabout in the Centreville regarding COVID-19 and to promote the pop-up vaccination site to be held in the community on 29 January 2022.
- 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 the Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH) and the Rand Memorial Hospital (RMH) in Grand Bahama with only emergency cases being allowed for service.
- 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.

- 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.
- An on-line contact tracing course continues to be offered through the University of The Bahamas.
- Go.Data continues to be utilized for data collection of confirmed COVID-19 cases and contact tracing.
- Health visas are no longer needed for Bahamian citizens and permanent residences returning to The Bahamas. However, the testing requirements to enter the country for Bahamian citizens and permanent residents remain in place.
- Non-Bahamian citizens and non-residents must present a travel health visa for entry into the country.
- Vaccinated travellers aged 12 and over are required to present a negative RT-PCR or Rapid Antigen test obtained no longer than three days prior to check-in for travel. Unvaccinated travellers aged 12 and over are required to present a negative RT-PCR test obtained no longer than three days prior to check-in for travel.
- Incoming visitors remaining in the country after 48 hours will be required to take a COVID-19 test regardless of vaccination status.
- The Public Hospital's Authority continues to distribute personal protective equipment across all public hospitals and clinics.
- A Cuban health contingent of 42 Cuban specialized Nurses continues to support clinical care through a bilateral agreement between the two countries.
- Ministry of Health and Wellness continues to provide telemedicine, telepsychology, mental health, and psychosocial support services.
- Ministry of Health and Wellness, 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.
- PAHO/WHO continues to assist The Bahamas in obtaining swabs for COVID-19 testing.

Turks and Caicos Islands

- COVID-19 vaccine distribution continued throughout the islands, including for children ages 12-15 years of age.
- 82% of the population is fully vaccinated with 88% of persons receiving at least their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccination.
- Persons aged over 50 years and the most vulnerable population continue to receive booster vaccines.
- All persons over the age of 18 years and high-risk persons over 16 years of age may receive a third dose or booster shot of the COVID-19 vaccine.
- The Alpha, Gamma, Delta B.1.617.2 and Omicron 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.
- A Cuban health contingent of 20 persons was given an extension of an additional six months to support operations in the TCI Hospitals through a bilateral agreement between the two countries.
- PAHO/WHO continues to assist with coordination for genomic sequencing of samples to the FioCruz Laboratory in Brazil.

GAPS/CHALLENGES

- Public compliance with public health protocols and vaccination hesitancy and resistance continue to present challenges in both The Bahamas and Turks and Caicos Islands. Vaccine hesitancy/resistance is of particular concern among health care workers and other emergency and frontline workers.
- 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.
- A nursing shortage has been identified in The Bahamas and 50 Cuban nurses were recently hired to address this issue as well as staff burnout.
- In The Bahamas, 5-10% of health care workers in the public sector are in quarantine.
- Both countries risk importation of new variants as they immerge. While confirmation of the variant was made in the Turks and Caicos Islands, the epidemiological situation in The Bahamas is suggestive of the circulation of the Omicron variant.