



The Bahamas & Turks and Caicos Islands

4 March 2022

SITUATION IN NUMBERS

The Bahamas

The first confirmed case of COVID-19 was reported on 15 March 2020. During the period 26 February - 4 March 2022, there were 50 newly confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 0 COVID-19 related deaths.

Among the new cases:

- 38 (76%) were from New Providence;
- 32 (64%) males and 18 (36%) females;
- 13 cases (all from New Providence) were travel-related.

The total number of real time PCR tests conducted to 4 March 2022 was 222,309 tests.

Turks and Caicos Islands

The first confirmed case of COVID-19 was reported on 23 March 2020. During the period 26 February - 2 March 2022, there were 15 newly confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 0 COVID-19 related deaths.

Among new cases, 13 (87%) cases were from Providenciales and 2 (13%) cases were from Grand Turk as 2 March 2022.

Among the total confirmed cases:

- 2811 (47.9%) were males, 3040 (51.8%) were females, and 19 (0.3%) unknown as of 2 March 2022;

THE BAHAMAS

33,171 Confirmed
190 Active
31,998 Recovered
9 Hospitalized
771 Deaths

TURKS & CAICOS (as of 2 Mar. 2022)

5,870 Confirmed
18 Active
5,801 Recovered
0 Hospitalized
36 Deaths

Total cases and deaths

The Bahamas (as 4 March 2022)

Island	Confirmed cases	Deaths
New Providence	26101	547
Grand Bahama	3377	121
Abaco	793	23
Eleuthera	832	18
Exuma	552	10
Bimini/Cat Cay	271	13
Berry Islands	152	4
Inagua	85	3
Andros	375	9
Long Island	144	4
Cat Island	134	3
Acklins	41	0
San Salvador	18	0
Crooked Island	35	0
Mayaguana	21	2
Ragged Island	0	0
Pending	240	14
TOTAL	33171	771

Turks and Caicos Islands (as of 2 March 2022)

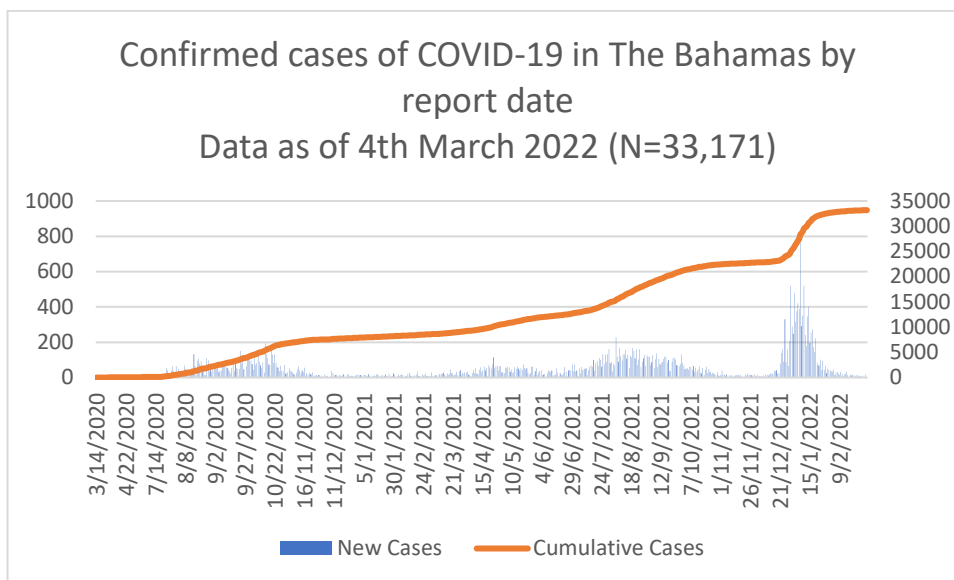
Island	Confirmed cases	Deaths
Providenciales	4806	24
North Caicos	129	0
Parrot Cay	20	0
Grand Turk	770	9
South Caicos	103	1
Middle Caicos	36	0
Ambergris Cay	3	0
Pine Cay	1	0
Salt Cay	2	0
Unknown	0	3
TOTAL	5870	36

SITUATION SUMMARY

HIGHLIGHTS

The Bahamas

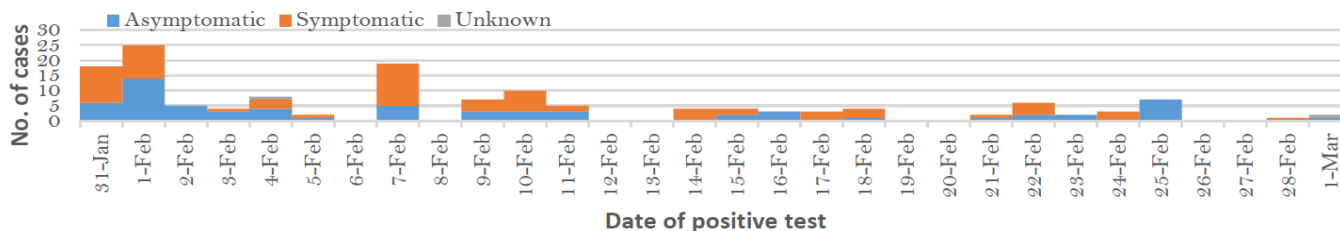
- There is a decrease in the incidence of new COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations in country.
- The Health Services (COVID-19) (Prevention and Management of Community Spread) Rules, 2021 and the Health Services (COVID-19) (General) Rules, 2021 remain in effect.



Turks and Caicos Islands

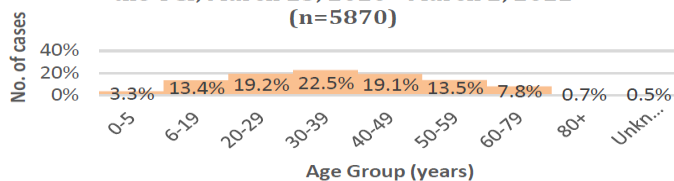
- There is a decrease in the incidence of new COVID-19 cases in country.
- Effective 28 February 2022, the following Public and Environmental Health (COVID-19 Pandemic) Regulations 2021 applied:
 - Patrons of bars, discotheques, nightclubs and restaurants no longer required to be fully vaccinated or have a negative COVID-19 test done within 24-hours;
 - No restrictions for commercial/excursion boat owners;
 - No logbooks required for any establishment.

Symptomatic and Asymptomatic TCI COVID-19 cases by date of positive test January 31 to March 1, 2022 (n=144)



Source: Turks and Caicos Islands Situation Report 98

Age distribution of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the TCI, March 23, 2020 - March 2, 2022 (n=5870)



Source: Turks and Caicos Islands Situation Report 98

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.
- On 28 February 2022, the Ministry of Health and Wellness completed a data cleaning exercise which altered the number of active cases based on a new working definition of active and recovered cases based on whether the COVID-19 case is able to transmit the virus on to another person. For mild to moderate cases they are no longer able to transmit after 10 days after date of onset of symptoms and after 20 days for those with severe illness or who are immunocompromised.
- 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.
- On 25 February 2022, it was announced that PMH will relax some visitation restrictions commencing 28 February 2022 in which visitors will be permitted on the General Wards for persons 65 and older, Intensive and Neonatal Care, and Paediatric Units.
- On 4 March 2022, it was announced that regular clinic services will resume at the Community Clinics and Outpatient Specialty Clinics in Grand Bahama commencing 7 March 2022. Further, the RMH will also relax some visitation restrictions to permit visitors to the Diah, Obstetrics, and Paediatrics Wards, Intensive Care and Step-Down Unit commencing 7 March 2022.
- Moderate to severe COVID-19 cases continue to be treated at PMH, Doctors Hospital West and the RMH.
- 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.
- 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.
- Incoming travellers and persons travelling from Grand Bahama or New Providence must present a negative COVID-19 test taken within 72 hours. For fully vaccinated persons, this may be a RT-PCR test or Rapid Antigen COVID-19 test and for non-vaccinated persons this will be a RT-PCR test.
- For persons out to sea on the second day of their stay in-country, they must take a Rapid Antigen COVID-19 test at the first Port of Call and submit results to the travel health visa website.
- 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.
- More than 83% 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.