



24 April 2020

Hello,

We hope that you are staying safe and well during these uncertain times. This is our third COVID-19 Update. In addition to this update, YMAC's [website](#) contains regular blog posts, media statements and advocacy updates being undertaken, as well as links to key government information.

## YMAC UPDATE

YMAC offices remain partially closed, with staff working remotely from home. We continue to provide native title and corporate services and staff can still be contacted via email, or the office reception phone numbers.

## COMMUNITY ACTION

YMAC continues to work with Pilbara Aboriginal leaders to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and contribute to the [REcov19ER website](#). This online resource was established for not only the Pilbara community, but others affected by the frequent changes impacting regional and remote WA.

We also continue to work collaboratively with leaders in the Yamatji region towards a localised response to ensure better outcomes for Aboriginal people in the region. Call Chris Dann, Regional Manager – Geraldton Office on (08) 9965 6222 if you would like to find out more.

## STATE GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Gun ammunition advice

YMAC recently wrote to Hon Fran Logan, MLA Minister for Emergency Services and Mr Christopher Dawson, Commissioner of Police and State Emergency Commissioner, seeking further advice on how the *Closure of Gun Shops (No.2) Direction – Aboriginal Person Entitled to Exercise and Native Title Right to Hunt* is being implemented. Specific advice was sought about how native title holders can provide evidence to gun shop owners that they are “an Aboriginal Person who is entitled to exercise a native title right to hunt over particular land and waters...”.

In most native title determinations of the Federal Court of Australia, the definition of “native title holder” includes subjective components such as self-identification, and identification by the broader community. The broader community identification is the responsibility of each determined native title group's prescribed body corporate (PBC). It may be challenging for some PBCs to provide this written support during this period of self-isolation and travel restrictions, and therefore also challenging for Aboriginal people to obtain ammunition in accordance with this Direction.

YMAC is pleased to advise that this [statutory declaration](#) can now be used by native title holders, to support provision of evidence of their right to exercise native title rights.

For more information on this topic, please visit [YMAC's website](#).

## Rapid COVID-19 testing – regional Western Australia

The McGowan government in collaboration with PathWest is rolling out rapid COVID testing analysers in regional areas. This will mean faster turn-around-times for some of our most vulnerable people and further increasing State-wide testing capacity.

Faster turn-around-times in regional areas will be available for urgent cases with the introduction of regional on-site testing analysers for COVID-19 - with results available within an hour.

The first three sites are in Broome, Kalgoorlie and Geraldton. Feasibility studies are underway for further roll-out to Port Hedland, Albany and Esperance.

More information can be found in the [media statement](#) from the State Government.

This State Government initiative for **regional** areas is in addition to the rapid COVID-19 testing that the Federal Government announced last week for **rural and remote** areas (more information on this can be found under Federal Government Announcements below).

## Return to school

A 'soft' Term 2 opening for public schools has been announced by the Premier Mark McGowan and Minister for Education Sue Ellery. Parents can choose whether they send their children to school for classroom learning or keep them home with online learning in place. Year 11 and 12 students are encouraged to attend school. More information can be found [here](#).

Catholic schools will be offering one mode of learning to students - online learning from home for children until 22 May 2020. Students of parents who cannot work from home will be supervised at school, but will be expected to utilise online learning. Year 11 and 12 students in Catholic Education are encouraged to attend school.

Some Independent schools are following the public school model and others are choosing to adopt the Catholic School model.

## FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Rapid COVID-19 testing - remote and rural

Further to our last COVID-19 Update the Government has announced that there will be 83 rapid testing sites across Australia, under the Remote Point of Care Testing Program for remote and rural Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

More information about the location of these sites will be released over the next few weeks with final roll out of the program expected by mid-May. We will keep you updated with these locations in future updates.

## HEALTH INFORMATION

- Together we can keep our mob safe and stop the spread.
- Coronavirus is a sickness that can spread from person to person.
- Coronavirus can affect everyone in our communities. It can be dangerous, especially for our Elders or people who are already unwell.
- Stay at home as much as possible. It's important to remember to stay home, stay in community.
- Keep your distance, two big steps (at least 1.5m), from other people to protect our communities.
- Where possible, wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds to keep your hands clean.
- Cough or sneeze into your arm or elbow, not your hands.
- Put your tissues in the bin after you use them and wash your hands after.
- Avoid touching your face with dirty hands – especially your eyes, nose and mouth. This is where the virus can enter your body.
- Clean surfaces regularly such as tables, kitchen benches, door handles, railings as well as commonly used items such as toys, phones, keys and wallets. Use antibacterial spray or disinfectant to remove the germs.
- Information is changing regularly. Stay up to date at [Australia.gov.au](http://Australia.gov.au) or follow #keepourmobsafe on social media.

The COVID-19 situation continues to evolve, the following links are useful resources to provide you with the latest information and advice to keep yourself safe:

- Australian Government: [\*\*Keep our Mob Safe, Stop The Spread\*\*](#) - Information for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities on coronavirus (COVID-19) created by NIAA and Department of Health
- West Australian Government [\*\*Coronavirus 2019 Health Alert\*\*](#) advice for public
- World Health Organisation [\*\*Advice for Public\*\*](#) page
- Mental health and COVID-19 the [\*\*Think Health WA\*\*](#) has useful information on managing mental health during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

From everyone at YMAC, we hope you stay safe and well during this time.

## CONTACT US:

Perth: (08) 9268 7000

Geraldton: (08) 9965 6222

Port Hedland: (08) 9160 3800

[www.ymac.org.au](http://www.ymac.org.au) [www.recov19er.com.au](http://www.recov19er.com.au)