

STAFF INFOSHEET

COVID-19

Check in TAS App – Policy and FAQs

From 1 July 2021 all State Service employees, officers, volunteers, contractors and visitors will ‘check in’ using the Check in TAS App on arrival when they enter the premises of a Government agency.

Purpose

The Check in TAS App has been developed to enhance contact tracing in relation to COVID-19.

Check in TAS records data in a format that is compatible with Public Health systems, is secure and can be quickly accessed when needed for contact tracing. High-quality data about places a person has attended while they were infectious will help target the Public Health response.

The use of Check in TAS is mandatory for specified business premises and event operators under a direction issued by the Director of Public Health on 18 March 2021. The use of Check in TAS is encouraged beyond the specific locations listed in the direction, to support enhanced contact tracing across Tasmania.

Heads of Agencies have agreed that the Head of the State Service will issue a whole of government policy that everyone aged 16 years and over entering the premises of a Government agency will use the Check in TAS app on arrival, to normalise the practice of checking in at work, business, and community premises. This demonstrates a shared commitment to improve the State’s contact tracing capacity and serves as an example for other organisations.

Employees, officers, volunteers, visitors and contractors will ‘check in’ once per day on arrival at each Government premise they enter.

Any inconvenience caused by using the Check in TAS App is far outweighed by the benefit to all Tasmanians in relation to safety during COVID-19.

The use of the Check in TAS App is a Tasmanian Government policy, however consideration is being given to a Public Health Direction in the future.

Using Check in TAS is in addition to Workplace Health and Safety obligations and will support workplace COVID Safety Plans.

Implementation

From 1 July 2021, all Government agencies will:

- Ensure separate Check in TAS QR codes exist for each of its premises;
- Display QR codes for each premises in prominent locations at all entry points;
- Strongly encourage the use of Check in TAS by its employees, officers, contractors, volunteers, and visitors aged 16 years and over:
 - when they attend the agency’s premises (once a day); and
 - at any off-site events managed by the agency (ie conferences, training etc).

This policy does not apply to students at a Government school or when visiting other Government premises as part of a school excursion.

This policy sets out overarching expectations regarding the use of Check in TAS. Further details on implementation at specific Government premises may be determined by each Head of Agency as required.

To the extent of any inconsistency between implementation of this policy and a direction under the *Public Health Act 1997*, the Public Health direction prevails.

Principles

Checking in on arrival at all Government agency premises recognises the importance of Check in TAS to assist contact tracing efforts, and to keep the community safe and Tasmania open for business.

Agencies need to champion, and employees need to contribute to, the contact tracing efforts of the Government.

This policy seeks to normalise the use of Check in TAS among State Service employees, officers, contractors, volunteers and visitors to Tasmanian Government agency premises.

A Tasmanian Government employee will not be denied access to their workplace as a result of this policy.

Similarly, other people entering the premises of a Government agency will not be denied access to Tasmanian Government services as a result of this policy.

FAQs – for Agencies

What Government agencies does this policy apply to?

The policy applies to all Agencies, including Government Departments and the following State Authorities: the Tasmanian Audit Office, Brand Tasmania, Integrity Commission, Macquarie Point Development Corporation, Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority, Tasmanian Dairy Industry Authority, TasTAFE, The Public Trustee, and Tourism Tasmania.

How do we register our premises with Check in TAS and get a QR code?

Information can be found at www.checkin.tas.gov.au.

After registering for the Check in TAS App, the agency will receive a pack that includes a poster (or posters) with the location's QR code. The agency must display these posters in prominent places at all entrances (including stairwells and carparks) and other appropriate places so employees (including officers, contractors and volunteers) and visitors can check in.

The Agency operates at multiple locations. Do we need to set up multiple codes?

Registration is based on a physical address, so a separate registration is required for each location. Where multiple agencies operate from the same building there will be one QR code for the building rather than each agency having a separate QR code.

Will there be separate QR codes for each floor of the same building?

Agencies will display their QR codes at entry points to Government premises. A separate QR code for each floor is not necessary, however Heads of Agencies may determine that their particular building should have multiple QR codes as required.

Is checking in at Tasmanian Government premises a legal requirement under a Public Health Direction or Workplace Health and Safety legislation?

There is no legal requirement to use Check in TAS at most of our Government premises, however it is best practice and the State Service should be leading the community.

Although not included in a Public Health Direction at the moment, it may be added in the future. If added, it would be a legal requirement.

Using Check in TAS is in addition to Workplace Health and Safety obligations and will support workplace COVID Safety Plans.

How does this relate to COVID-19 safety plans?

Use of Check in TAS could be considered as a risk reduction measure under an Agency's COVID Safety Plan. Agencies are encouraged to review their COVID Plans in relation to use of the Check in TAS App.

What about businesses operating from within State Government workplaces?

Premises that are subject to Contact Tracing Direction may operate from within State Government workplaces (e.g. cafes in hospitals). These premises are legally required to have their own QR codes and check patrons in separately.

What is the check-in process for shared workplaces?

Agencies should liaise with co-located organisations (e.g. with councils or private sector organisations) with a view to implementing Check in TAS for the shared workplace.

If an organisation declines to implement Check in TAS, the agency will still use Check in TAS for State Government employees and visitors.

What if someone doesn't want to check in via Check in TAS?

Agencies must use their best endeavours to encourage employees and visitors to check in. This could include:

- Active monitoring of points of entry.
- Requesting that visitors show staff the 'green tick'.
- Signage or messaging in clear view advising of the need to check in.

If someone refuses to check in, the agency should highlight the importance of the checking in to assist the contact tracing efforts, to keep the community safe and Tasmania open for businesses.

However, the policy is not legally binding on employees or visitors:

- No Tasmanian Government employee will be denied access to their workplace as a result of this policy.
- No person will be denied access to Tasmanian Government services as a result of this policy.

What if someone doesn't have a device to check themselves in?

If a person does not have a smartphone or is unable to use one, others attending the premises with that person can use their own phone to check them in.

Agencies should also have a manual process for employees who are unable to check in on their own devices and the business profile function in the app supports this.

More information on the business profile function is available via www.checkin.tas.gov.au

Does the requirement apply to students in Government schools and colleges?

The policy does not apply to students in Department of Education schools and colleges, either in relation to the school/college they attend or other Government premises that the student visits as part of a school excursion.

Does the requirement apply to students at TasTAFE?

Yes, if they are 16 years old or over.

What if employees or visitors experience errors using the QR code?

If the QR code doesn't scan, the six-digit number located on the QR code poster at the venue can be entered manually into the app instead. If there are still problems, an agency employee can check in on their behalf.

If there is no internet access or working device, the agency can check the person in manually on paper.

If the agency is having difficulties with their QR codes they can phone the Public Health Hotline 1800 671 738 or email checkin.tas@health.tas.gov.au

FAQs – for Employees

How is Check in TAS being used by the Tasmanian Government?

The Tasmanian Government uses the Check in TAS App to collect information about everyone who spends time at a Tasmanian Government premises or event. This is done by employees, officers, volunteers, visitors and contractors scanning a unique QR code when entering the premises for the first time each day.

Is there any cost?

No, the Check in TAS App is free, easy to use and ready for download from the Google Play Store and Apple App Store.

You will have to have an account with Apple or Google to download the app, and accounts require a credit card attached to them – but the Check in TAS App is free.

Why do employees need to use Check in TAS? Doesn't my agency already have access to data from my swipe card access?

The data collected when a Tasmanian State Service employee swipes their access card is not suitable for contact tracing by Public Health. There are multiple swipe-card systems in use, the data collected is limited and the time it would take to access the data makes it impractical.

The Check in TAS App has been custom made for contact tracing purposes. It records data in a format that is compatible with Public Health systems, is secure and can be quickly accessed when needed.

Why is Government implementing this policy to check-in using Check in TAS?

The use of separate QR codes for each workplace will assist contact tracers to quickly identify close contacts and minimise the workforce impacts.

Tasmania must have an effective contact tracing system that protects the health and safety of Tasmanians and contains the spread of disease in the event of a case or an outbreak. In the event of a detection of COVID-19 in the community, we need to act quickly. If there are delays in getting contact tracing information, if information is incomplete or provided in a way that is difficult for Public Health to use, it costs time. In that time, or if contacts are missed, people may unknowingly spread infection, risking lives and requiring strong control measures.

Am I legally required to check-in at work using Check in TAS?

There is no legal requirement to use Check in TAS at most of our Government premises, however it is best practice and the State Service should be leading the community.

Although not included in a Public Health Direction at the moment, it might be added in the future. If added, it would be a legal requirement.

Using Check in TAS is in addition to Workplace Health and Safety obligations and will support workplace COVID Safety Plans.

What if I don't have a smartphone or can't use one?

The agency will make arrangements for you to check in manually in situations where you do not have a smartphone, or the check in does not work.

If I don't have the Check in TAS App, will I be refused entry?

Using Check in TAS when visiting Government premises is Tasmanian Government policy. However, no Tasmanian Government employee will be denied access to their workplace as a result of this policy. Likewise, no person will be denied access to Tasmanian Government services as a result of this policy.

How do I know that my information won't be used for other purposes?

The information provided through the Check in TAS App is collected for the purposes of managing the threat to public health posed by COVID-19. The information is only disclosed for the management, detection, notification, treatment or prevention of COVID-19 as authorised under the *Public Health Act 1997*.

How long is the data kept?

Check in TAS information is automatically deleted after 28 days.

Do I have to check in every time I enter my work premises?

This policy is about checking in to Government premises on arrival. You are not being asked to check in on re-entry to the workplace where you have already checked in on the same day, unless otherwise determined by your Head of Agency.

How long will we have to do this for?

There is no end date currently identified for this policy. While COVID-19 continues to present a risk to the health and wellbeing of the people of Tasmania, Public Health needs to implement the most effective measures possible to help protect us all.

Does every person need to check in or is it one person per group?

Each person aged 16 years and over must check in, or be checked in by someone they are with, when entering a Tasmanian Government agency workplace. Checking in someone else is very easy to do using the Check in TAS App.

When will the requirement apply to Government schools and colleges?

The policy will apply to schools and colleges, from 5 July 2021. Parents and carers who enter school buildings for school drop-off and pick-up will be encouraged to use the Check in TAS App.

How do I add someone else to my Check in TAS App so I can check them in on my device?

You can easily add people to your Check in TAS App profile. Open the app on your device, click on the three bars in the top left corner of the app, click on 'Frequent' and follow the prompts

More information

Further information on COVID-19 and Tasmanian State Service employment can be found at www.dpac.tas.gov.au.

Further information about COVID-19 can be obtained by visiting the Tasmanian Government Coronavirus website at www.coronavirus.tas.gov.au