

## Critical COVID-19 Response Information for Victorian Employers

Current as at Tuesday 20 October 2020

The following information is intended to assist businesses to navigate the unprecedented changes arising out of enhanced responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. Information about Government Response measures were current at the time of publication however, given the rapidly evolving situation, businesses should monitor reliable Government sources for updated information.

### What is the current Stage Response?

Metropolitan Melbourne entered the Second Step of the Victorian Government's reopening roadmap at **11:59pm on 27 September 2020**.

From **11:59pm on 18 October 2020** restrictions in Metropolitan and Regional Victoria eased further.

**A significant number of workplaces in Metropolitan Melbourne remain subject to closure (if working from home is not possible) or limits on capacity. All workers permitted to continue to work must hold a Permitted Worker Permit. Details about Permitted Worker Permits and eligibility are [here](#).**

Currently, the use of face coverings outside the home is mandatory throughout Victoria.

Victorians who live in metropolitan Melbourne are subject to Stay at Home restrictions and can only leave home for the following four reasons:

1. Shopping for food and essential items within 25km of the person's home, unless the supermarket is more than 25km;
2. Medical treatment, compassionate reasons and caregiving;
3. Exercise or social interaction within 25km of a person's home (up to 10 people from a maximum of 2 households can meet in a public outdoor space, with no time limitations); and
4. Study and work (if work cannot be undertaken from home), which includes travelling to take children to school.

There are no limitations on how many times a day you can leave your home.

The local government areas currently in the Second Step of easing restrictions include:

- Banyule, Bayside, Boroondara, Brimbank;
- Cardinia, Casey;
- Darebin;

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- Frankston;
- Glen Eira, Greater Dandenong;
- Hobsons Bay, Hume;
- Kingston, Knox;
- Manningham, Maribyrnong, Maroondah, Melbourne, Melton, Monash, Moonee Valley, Moreland, Mornington Peninsula;
- Nillumbik;
- Port Phillip;
- Stonnington;
- Whitehorse, Whittlesea, Wyndham; and
- Yarra, Yarra Ranges.

**THE FOLLOWING RESTRICTIONS APPLY IN METROPOLITAN MELBOURNE:**

**Gatherings**

- Public outdoor gatherings of up to 10 people from up a maximum of 2 households;
- people living alone or single parents can nominate one person with whom they can form a 'single social bubble'. The single person and their one nominated person may visit each other;
- professional respite care.

**Sport and exercise**

- Individuals can exercise or undertake sporting activities outside with up to 10 people from 2 households provided that no person travels more than 25km of their home;
- Outdoor personal training can occur but with a limit of two clients;
- Indoor sport centres including gyms, training facilities and pools remain closed;
- Community sport training and competition cannot occur;
- Outdoor swimming pools are open subject to a maximum of 30 participants;
- Outdoor recreational activities such as golf, fishing, tennis, surfing and drive shooting can resume subject to
  - a maximum of 10 people or a minimum of a 100 metre distance between groups of 10 people; and

- the 25k rule;

- Indoor playcentres and playgrounds remain closed;
- Outdoor communal gym equipment and skate parks are open;
- Outdoor playgrounds open.

**A significant number of workplaces in Metropolitan Melbourne remain subject to closure (if working from home is not possible) or limits on capacity. All workers permitted to continue to work must hold a Permitted Worker Permit. Details about Permitted Worker Permits and eligibility are [here](#).**

**IN REGIONAL VICTORIA AND MITCHELL SHIRE AREAS, THE FOLLOWING APPLIES:**

### **Gatherings**

- outdoor public gatherings of up to 10 people from a maximum of two households can meet outdoors for social interaction; and
- households can form 'household bubbles'. Up to 5 people from one other household can visit your home.
- people living alone or single parents can nominate one person with whom they can form a 'single social bubble'. The single person and their one nominated person may visit each other. This bubble can be expanded to include up to 5 people from the nominated person's household. You can only form a household bubble OR a singles bubble.

### **Sports and recreation**

- outdoor exercise and recreation is allowed;
- there are no limits on duration or frequency of outdoor exercise and recreation;
- outdoor personal training allowed with a maximum of 10 people per trainer;
- outdoor pools are open subject to the four square metre rule;
- gyms are closed;
- outdoor community facilities are open;
- indoor play centres and toy libraries are closed;
- indoor pools are closed
- indoor sport centres and venues and playcentres are closed;
- outdoor full-contact training and competition is open for people under 18, and closed for anyone over 18.

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- Non-contact competition sports are open for everyone.
- libraries, galleries, museums, national institutions, historic sites, outdoor amusement parks, drive-in cinemas, zoos and arcades may open are closed;
- indoor cinemas, movie theatres, concert venues, theatres and auditoriums are closed.

The following is **permitted**:

- outdoor sport such as fishing, golf, boating, tennis surfing with up to 10 people, provided that 1.5 metre distance can be maintained;
- outdoor sporting facilities where physical distancing limits can be adhered to and no use of shared equipment or communal facilities.

**Business, travel, retail and personal services**

- auction houses are open subject to the four square metre rule;
- real estate auctions can operate outdoors with up to 10 people plus those carrying out the auction;
- open house inspections are permitted by appointment;
- restaurants, cafes and pubs are open only for delivery and takeaway.
- bars, clubs, nightclubs are closed.
- overnight stays in private residences are allowed;
- camping and tourist accommodation are allowed (including the use of shared facilities);
- beauty therapy, tanning, waxing, nail salons, spas, tattoo parlours, massage parlours are open subject to the four square metre rule, and face masks remaining in place;
- saunas and bathhouses are closed;
- food courts (except for the provision of take away or delivery) remain closed;
- market stalls are open subject to the four metre square rule;
- casinos and electronic gaming areas at pubs and clubs remain closed;
- brothels, strip clubs and sex on venue premises are closed.

	<p>The following is permitted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• markets and shopping centres; and</li><li>• other retail may remain open, subject to density quotient and provided that patrons are attending the premises for necessary goods and services.</li></ul>
<b>For how long will the current Stage Response be in place?</b>	<p>The State of Disaster declaration has been extended through to <b>8 November 2020</b>.</p> <p>Current Second Step restrictions are expected to continue until <b>1 November 2020</b> at which point it is proposed that there will be a further easing of restrictions subject to case numbers at that date.</p>
<b>Are the borders closed?</b>	<p>Victoria's borders are currently open, meaning it is possible to enter Victoria. There is no requirement in Victoria to quarantine when travelling domestically.</p> <p>All people arriving in Victoria from overseas must go into immediate compulsory quarantine for 14 days at a state designated facility in Melbourne.</p> <p>The New South Wales and South Australian Governments have imposed restrictions for Victorians who intend to cross the border. A permit is required to travel from Victoria to New South Wales. Victorians can enter New South Wales with a permit if they fall within the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Border community residents;</li><li>• NSW residents returning home;</li><li>• Boarding school/university students or staff (and their parents);</li><li>• People providing critical services;</li><li>• People entering for child access or care arrangements;</li><li>• Interstate residents transiting through NSW;</li><li>• Seasonal workers;</li><li>• People who need medical or hospital treatment; and</li><li>• People who need to meet their legal obligations.</li></ul> <p>Travel into SA is limited to individuals defined as essential travellers including members of cross border communities. South Australians will no longer be able to return to SA from Victoria.</p>

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**What should I be thinking about in implementing working from home arrangements?**

Kingston Reid has developed a [Working from Home Checklist](#), to which employers may refer in preparing employees to work from home.

This Checklist is not exhaustive, and employers should have regard to any particular safety, information security and other considerations that may be unique to the work undertaken by particular employees.

**What are other safety measures that I should be considering right now?**

The nature of the Response measures and the effect of isolation will invariably have an impact upon the mental health of all workers. Check in regularly with employees at home and ensure that all are reminded of Employee Assistance Programs.

Employers should remain mindful that, if employees are directed to undertake non-essential work, and they become infected, there will foreseeably arise exposure to workers' compensation and potentially negligence claims under the workers' compensation scheme.

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