

Critical COVID-19 Response Information for Victorian Employers

Current as at Monday 9 November 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?

Victoria entered the Third Step of the Victorian Government's reopening roadmap at **11:59pm on 8 November 2020**, easing restrictions and removing the differentiation in permitted activities for metropolitan and regional Victoria.

A significant number of workplaces in Victoria remain subject to closure (if working from home is not possible) or limits on capacity.

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

Victorians are no longer subject to Stay at Home restrictions and can leave home for any reason. However, you must continue to work from home if you can.

There are no limitations on how many times a day you can leave your home, or the distance you can travel.

The following restrictions continue to apply throughout Victoria:

Gatherings

- Public outdoor gatherings of up to 10 people from up a maximum of 2 households;
- Households can welcome up to two adult visitors per day. Dependents and intimate partners are not included in this maximum.

Sport and exercise

- Outdoor exercise and recreation is allowed;
- There are no limits on duration or frequency of outdoor exercise and recreation;
- Individuals can exercise or undertake sporting activities indoors with a maximum of 1 person per 8m². Participants must wear a face mask while exercising, unless they are out of breath.
- Outdoor personal training can occur but with a limit of two clients;
- Community sport training and competition is permitted for children under 18 years only, with a minimum

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distance of 1.5 metres per participant, and spectator restrictions;

- Indoor swimming pools can open subject to a maximum of 20 participants. 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.
- Libraries and toy libraries can open subject to a maximum of 20 people inside at one time;
- Outdoor communal gym equipment and skate parks are open;
- Indoor skateparks and trampoline centres are open to children under 18 years only, with a maximum of 1 child per 4m².
- Outdoor playgrounds open.

Hospitality and accommodation

- Hospitality venues can open subject to a maximum of 1 person per 4m² inside, and up to 1 person per 2m² outside (subject to patron caps);
- Accommodation can open subject to booking limits and restrictions on shared facilities;
- Tour vehicles can operate subject to:
 - if physical distancing is not possible, a limit of one household plus two other adults; or
 - if physical distancing is possible, a maximum of 10 people.

Hospital visitors

- Patients can have one visit per day, from a maximum of one household.

Recreation

- Live music can resume subject to performance being a minimum of 5m from the audience, performers maintaining a 2m distance from each other, and capacity limits.
- Cinemas, music halls, concert halls and auditoriums, galleries, zoos and museums can open subject to a maximum of 20 people per space and staggered booking times.
- Outdoor sport such as fishing, golf, boating, tennis surfing with up to 10 people, provided that 1.5 metre distance can be maintained;

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- outdoor sporting facilities where physical distancing limits can be adhered to and no use of shared equipment or communal facilities.
- Casinos, subject to a maximum of 10 people per room.
- Creative spaces with a maximum of 1 person per 4m².

Business, travel, retail and personal services

- Abattoirs, meat, poultry, and seafood processing workforce caps removed;
- Auction houses are open subject to the 4m² rule;
- Real estate auctions can operate outdoors with up to 10 people plus those carrying out the auction;
- Beauty therapy, tanning, waxing, nail salons, spas, tattoo parlours, massage parlours are open subject to the 4m² 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 4m² rule;
- Nightclubs, brothels, strip clubs and sex on venue premises are closed.

The following **is permitted**:

- Markets and shopping centres; and
- Other retail may remain open, subject to density quotient and provided that patrons are attending the premises for necessary goods and services.

A significant number of workplaces in Victoria remain subject to closure (if working from home is not possible) or limits on capacity.

For how long will the current Stage Response be in place?

The State of Disaster expired on **8 November 2020 and has not been renewed**. The State of Emergency will remain in place until at least 7 December 2020.

Current Third Step restrictions are expected to continue until **22 November 2020** at which point it is proposed that there will be a further easing of restrictions subject to case numbers at that date.

Are the borders closed?

Victoria's borders are currently open, meaning it is possible to enter Victoria. There is no requirement in Victoria to quarantine when travelling domestically.

All people arriving in Victoria from overseas must go into immediate compulsory quarantine for 14 days at a state designated facility in Melbourne.

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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:

- Border community residents;
- NSW residents returning home;
- Boarding school/university students or staff (and their parents);
- People providing critical services;
- People entering for child access or care arrangements;
- Interstate residents transiting through NSW;
- Seasonal workers;
- People who need medical or hospital treatment; and
- People who need to meet their legal obligations.

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.

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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