

Industry Restart Guidelines Accommodation

September 2020



Victoria's roadmap: Accommodation

On 6 September, the Victorian Government announced Victoria's roadmap for reopening which outlines considered and gradual steps to ensure that businesses can open safely and effectively.

As many Victorian businesses reopen, the priority will be the health and safety of workers and customers.

The industry roadmap includes four steps to easing restrictions and reopening businesses. These steps will be subject to trigger points, determined by our health team to consider any potential changes to the restrictions and will be based on case numbers, testing numbers and other factors.

- The trigger points mean that metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Victoria will take steps (and move to associated restriction levels) at different times.
- Each industry will also have a different restriction level depending on which step metropolitan Melbourne or Regional Victoria is in.

The below [Accommodation Roadmap](#) is intended to assist accommodation businesses to prepare to safely operate in accordance with the easing of restrictions, while also ensuring the public feels confident that their health and safety is being protected. This includes workplaces such as: hotels, hostels, Bed and Breakfasts, motels, serviced apartments, camping grounds, caravan parks, and private holiday rental facilities.

The current restriction levels for metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria are highlighted in the below roadmap.

		Metro Melbourne	Regional Victoria
First Step	Metropolitan Melbourne - First Step commenced from 11.59pm on 13 September.	Heavily restricted. For permitted purposes only.	Heavily restricted. For permitted purposes only.
Second Step	Metropolitan Melbourne – Move to the Second Step from the later of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaching an average daily case rate of 30-50 cases over the previous 14 days, and • 28 September Regional Victoria – moved to Second Step from 11.59pm on 13 September 2020		
Third Step	Metropolitan Melbourne: Move to the Third Step from the later of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaching <5 new cases (state-wide average over last 14 days) and <5 cases with unknown source (state-wide total last 14 days), and • 26 October 2020 Regional Victoria: Move to Third Step from 11.59pm on 16 September 2020 assuming the following requirements are met: <5 new cases per day (regional average over last 14 days) and 0 cases with unknown source (regional total last 14 days).	Restricted. Limited booking sizes. Density quotient applies.	Restricted. Limited booking sizes. Density quotient applies.
Last Step	Regional Victoria and metropolitan Melbourne: Move to the last step from the later of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaching no new cases for 14 days (state-wide), and • 23 November 2020 	Open with a COVIDSafe Plan. Record keeping requirements. No density quotient.	Open with a COVIDSafe Plan. Record keeping requirements. No density quotient.
COVID Normal	Regional Victoria and metropolitan Melbourne: Move to COVID Normal if we reach no new cases for 28 days (state-wide), no active cases (state-wide) and no outbreaks of concern in other states or territories.		

 Status as at 11.59pm on 16 September

Current restrictions on Accommodation businesses

All businesses need to know their obligations and ensure they have an understanding of the current restrictions in place throughout Victoria.

Under directions issued under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act*, all accommodation businesses must abide by the following restrictions in both metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria respectively, **effective from 11.59pm 16 September**.

These restrictions apply to all accommodation businesses, such as: hotels, hostels, bed and breakfasts, motels, serviced apartments, camping grounds, caravan parks, houseboats and private holiday rental facilities.

Heavily Restricted (metropolitan Melbourne): If your accommodation business is located in metropolitan Melbourne, you must remain closed, in compliance with directions issued under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act*. The information contained within these guidelines does not apply to you at this time.

The remainder of these guidelines outline the requirements for reopening under a **Restricted** level and apply to all accommodation businesses in **regional Victoria**.

	Metro Melbourne	Regional Victoria
	HEAVILY RESTRICTED	RESTRICTED
Booking restrictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No people on site except for emergency maintenance and repairs (exemptions apply: e.g. permanent residents) 	Open, but each group booking is restricted to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members of the public who have the same principal place of residence; OR Members of the public who are in an intimate personal relationship; OR Members of the public who have the same principal place of residence and no more than 5 other members of the public who have the same principal place of residence and are part of a nominated 'household bubble', AND Only members of the public whose principal place of residence is outside the Restricted Area (Metropolitan Melbourne); AND Members of separately booked groups do not share bedrooms at the facility.
Communal facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communal facilities, such as kitchens and bathrooms, closed (exemptions apply: e.g. permanent residents) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Density quotient (one person per four square metres) in indoor communal facilities, such as lounges, kitchens, meeting rooms Outdoor communal facilities open Customers can share communal bathrooms
Dining areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dining areas closed (exemptions apply: e.g. permanent residents) Hotel restaurants permitted to provide take-away only, consistent with Hospitality Guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent with the current Hospitality Guidelines Hospitality Guidelines includes further information about indoor and outdoor dining caps and density requirements, venue caps and group size caps
Fitness and recreation facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical fitness and recreation facilities closed Swimming pools and spas closed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indoor pools and indoor physical fitness and recreation facilities closed Outdoor physical fitness and recreation facilities and outdoor pools and chlorinated spas open following rules per Physical Recreation guidelines Spas and saunas closed
Face covering requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff and customers (e.g. permanent residents) must wear face coverings (exemptions apply) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff and visitors must wear face coverings (exemptions apply e.g. eating, drinking, or engaging in physical activity) Customers not required to wear face coverings in private rooms
Cleaning requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared spaces and spaces open to members of the public at any Work Premises must be cleaned regularly, including twice a day for frequently touched surfaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spaces that are shared and open to members of the public (e.g. toilet/shower blocks, BBQs) at any Work Premises must be cleaned regularly, including twice a day for frequently touched surfaces (e.g. counters, handrails)
Record keeping requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Venues must keep records of staff and customer details for contact tracing, where person attends work premises for longer than 15 minutes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Venues must keep records of staff and customer details for contact tracing, where person attends work premises for longer than 15 minutes
Signage requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Display signage at each public entry to each space indicating maximum capacity and COVIDSafe hygiene and physical distancing requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Display signage at each public entry to each space indicating maximum capacity and COVIDSafe hygiene and physical distancing requirements
Staff member bubbles		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employer must not permit a staff member to work at more than one work zone (geographic areas or sites) of the employer, unless it is not practical. The system to minimise this must be demonstrated (e.g. rosters) Where a staff member is working for different employers across multiple premises, they must provide a written declaration to employers, and employers must record this.

Last updated: 15 September 2020

For the latest information on Victoria's roadmap, visit:
<https://www.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-covid-19-restrictions-roadmaps>

Six COVIDSafe Principles

All work premises must have a **COVIDSafe Plan** (see [Creating a COVIDSafe Plan](#)). A COVIDSafe Plan applies the six COVIDSafe Principles and sets out actions to help prevent the introduction of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the workplace. Display COVIDSafe signage in appropriate, high visibility locations.



1. Ensure physical distancing

All people in the workplace should be 1.5m apart and there should be no overcrowded areas. This means:

- Staff should work from home if possible
- Ensure staff and customers are 1.5m apart at all times. Where this is not possible, the duration of the close contact should be minimised and additional precautions should be put in place
- Ensure the workplace abides by the four square metre rule density quotient
- Limit the total number of staff and customers in an enclosed area
- No carpooling between staff unless there is no alternative mode of transport to work



2. Wear a face covering

Staff and customers must always wear a face covering except when eating and drinking, exercising, or health or other exemptions apply. This means:

- Provide face coverings to employees throughout the shift
- Ensure all staff wear face coverings while working
- Do not take face coverings off when talking on the phone or with others
- Use full PPE for high-risk settings



3. Practice good hygiene

Operators must regularly clean high touch-surfaces and encourage good hygiene practices by staff and customers. This means:

- Schedule regular cleaning and disinfecting of high-touch surfaces (including all surfaces and handrails) and make gloves available for this purpose
- Encourage regular handwashing by staff and customers and make soap and hand sanitiser available for all staff and customers throughout the workplace



4. Keep records and act quickly if staff become unwell

Have a strict policy that any staff who feel unwell must stay at home. This means:

- Support staff to stay home and get tested even if they only have mild symptoms.
- Have a plan to immediately close down for cleaning and contact tracing if there is a coronavirus (COVID-19) case
- Keep records of staff and customer details for contact tracing



5. Avoid interactions in enclosed spaces

All activities are to be held in outside areas where practical, which don't have a roof or ceiling. This includes;

- Staff meetings
- Lunchbreaks
- Customer registration



6. Create workforce bubbles

Limit the number of people staff have prolonged close contact with. This means:

- Keep pools of staff rostered on the same shifts
- Avoid overlap in shift changes
- Reduce staff working across multiple sites

Creating a COVIDSafe workplace: Accommodation

All accommodation businesses **must** ensure they apply the six COVIDSafe Principles to help prevent the introduction of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the workplace.

Workplaces included: Hotels, hostels, bed and breakfasts, motels, serviced apartments, camping grounds, caravan parks and private holiday rental facilities

Restricted (Regional Victoria): Examples of applying the six COVIDSafe Principles are shown below.



Creating a COVIDSafe workplace: Accommodation

Workplaces included: Hotels, hostels, bed and breakfasts, motels, serviced apartments, camping grounds, caravan parks and private holiday rental facilities

Permitted communal areas and facilities in accommodation venues

Communal area or facility	HEAVILY RESTRICTED	RESTRICTED
<i>Non-essential communal areas and facilities</i>		
Gyms	X	X
Spas	X	X
Saunas	X	X
Outdoor swimming pools	X	✓ See Physical Recreation Guidelines
Indoor swimming pools	X	X
Indoor fitness studios	X	X
Toilet and shower blocks associated with indoor pools, gyms and fitness studios	X	X
BBQs and surrounding outdoor dining areas	X	✓ Density limits apply
Outdoor playground equipment	X	✓
Games rooms and indoor playground equipment	X	X
Outdoor sporting facilities, including lawn bowling greens, and tennis courts	X	✓ See Physical Recreation Guidelines
<i>Essential communal areas and facilities</i>		
Entry foyer, lifts and stairwells and pathways	X	✓
Bathrooms (where customers do not have access to their own bathroom)	X	✓
Toilet and shower facilities	X	✓
Laundry facilities	X	✓
Communal kitchens (where customers do not have access to their own facilities)	X	✓ Density limits apply
Indoor dining areas	X	✓ See Hospitality Guidelines
Outdoor dining areas	X	✓ See Hospitality Guidelines
Shared rubbish chutes and waste areas	X	✓
Car parking, storage facilities including bike racks	X	✓

Key: ✓ = should remain open X = must remain closed



1. Ensure physical distancing

Physical distancing remains one of the most effective ways of minimising the spread of COVID-19 and is a vital part of creating a safe working environment.

Employers **must** implement physical distancing measures to create a COVIDSafe workplace. This means keeping a minimum distance of 1.5m between workers, visitors and customers.

Restricted (Regional Victoria):

Each group booking is restricted to:

- Members of the public who have the same principal place of residence; OR
- Members of the public who are in an intimate personal relationship; OR
- Members of the public who have the same principal place of residence and no more than 5 other members of the public who have the same principal place of residence, and are part of a nominated 'household bubble' AND
- Only members of the public whose principal place of residence is outside the Restricted Area of metropolitan Melbourne; AND
- Members of separately booked groups do not share bedrooms at the facility.

The density quotient (maximum one person per four square metres) applies.

Ensuring physical distancing between staff

Staff breaks

Spread out staff break times to reduce the number of people using communal facilities at the same time.

Minimise contact

Removing excess chairs and tables from communal break areas to encourage staff to stay a minimum 1.5 metres from one another.

Back of house

Reconfigure office spaces, kitchens or workstations so that workers do not face each other where possible and can remain 1.5 metres apart.

Staff change rooms

Increase the number of areas for changing and consider staggering change times where practicable.

Discourage carpooling

Staff should avoid carpooling to work. Employers should discourage carpooling and where possible, assist staff to find alternate transport options

Implement virtual meetings

Staff pre-shift meetings and trainings should be held virtually or in areas that allow for appropriate physical distancing between staff. Food and beverages, should not be shared.





1. Ensure physical distancing - continued

Physical distancing remains one of the most effective ways of minimising the spread of COVID-19 and is a vital part of creating a safe working environment.

Ensuring physical distancing between customers

Table spacing

Each table in a communal area (e.g. shared living area, lounge) must be spaced so that customers on a neighbouring table remain 1.5 metres apart when seated. Different groups must be separated by 1.5 metres.

Maintain physical distancing

Provide physical barriers or floor markings to ensure physical distancing is maintained at reception desks and queues; consider installation of sneeze guards and separate entry and exit points if practicable to minimise customer movement.

Control the number of customers

Display a sign at each public entry that includes information on the maximum number of people that can be in the space at a single time.

Outdoor activities

See Physical Recreation Guideline.

Minimise congregation

Consider reservation-only recreational activities arrangements (e.g. tennis courts, pre-booking timeslots for swimming pools) and staggered check-ins to minimise opportunities for people to mix whilst waiting for service (for example, closing lobbies/waiting areas).

Separating communal areas

Where a premise has multiple communal areas such as lounges and living areas, each area must be separated by permanent structures or be a discrete area of the premises that is sufficiently separated from any other area of the premises.

Walls separating areas should be either reach from floor to ceiling, or be at least 2.1 metres high for the space to be considered sufficiently separate.

Temporary structures should not be installed to create separate areas.

If communal areas cannot be separated, staggered times for use should be considered where multiple parties require access.

Reduce risks

Use other reasonable physical distancing measures to implement relevant recommendations by the Victorian Government to manage public health risks at your workplace.





2. Wear a face covering

You and your staff **must** wear a face covering at work, and to and from work, unless you have a lawful reason for not doing so.

A face covering needs to cover both your nose and mouth.

Employers **must** ensure employees wear a face covering while at work, unless an [exemption applies](#).

Employers should encourage their workers to bring their own face covering where possible, however there is an obligation for employers to provide a face covering if a worker does not have one. Where the work or task requires the use of specific types of face coverings in the workplace, these must be provided by the employer. Where a worker seeks to provide and use their own face covering at work, an employer must ensure that it is meeting its obligations under the current Public Health Directions and the OHS legislative framework.

Employers have a responsibility to identify whether there is a risk to the health of employees from exposure to coronavirus (COVID-19) at their workplace.

Employers and workers have legal duties under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004. See [WorkSafe Victoria](#) for information about minimising health risks in your workplace.

Wearing a face covering in accommodation venues

Responsibility for wearing a face covering

Responsibility for wearing a face covering rests with the individual. Employers must take reasonable steps to ensure their employees and customers wear a face covering at all times when at the premises, unless customers are in private rooms, or when a lawful exception applies.

Can customers take their face covering off while in private areas?

Customers must wear a face covering at all times while on the premises, except whilst in private/non-communal areas (e.g. hotel room, inside tent or caravan), whilst undertaking physical exercise, or in order to consume food or drink in dining rooms. This means the face covering must be worn by the customer when they are seated in communal areas, and be worn when moving about the premises.

Type of face coverings required by accommodation industry

Staff at accommodation businesses can wear any type of face covering, such as cloth masks or single use surgical mask. A face mask is recommended over a face shield and other forms of face coverings for better protection. Face shields should only be used in limited situations where a face mask is not practical or safe for a person.

Refusing service of customers not wearing a face covering

For the safety of employees and other customers, a business owner or worker can refuse service to customers not wearing a face covering.

How should individuals change their face covering?

It is recommended that customers carry a spare face covering in a plastic zip pocket to change their face covering when required. A workplace could also consider displaying signage that highlights the importance of washing hands before and after changing a face covering.

When do customers need to wear a face covering in an accommodation venue?

Customers do not need face coverings while in private areas, while exercising, or eating/drinking (or if a lawful exemption applies). However if the customer enters a communal space or takes a break from the activity/meal (for e.g. to use the facilities or to step outside to take a call), then the face covering must be worn.



3. Practise good hygiene

Additional hygiene measures are a priority. Accommodation providers should review these guidelines to maintain good hygiene in their premises, and document hygiene practises in their COVIDSafe plan.

Health and hygiene go hand in hand. To ensure the safety and wellbeing of your staff, business owners are encouraged to refer to WorkSafe Victoria, '[How employers can use occupational health and safety \(OHS\) practice to plan for a pandemic](#)'.

The Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009 set out the requirements for businesses registered under the Act. Proprietors and staff should be familiar with the Australian Standards as they relate to their premises and businesses.

Workplace cleaning and disinfecting

Undertake initial pre-opening deep cleaning and implement an environmental cleaning schedule to ensure frequent cleaning and disinfection of high touch surfaces and bathrooms.

Further advice about cleaning can be found at [DHHS cleaning and disinfecting information](#).

Cleaning and disinfecting schedule

Ensure surfaces are cleaned regularly, and high-touch surfaces cleaned at least twice on each given day.

Accessible cleaning products and disinfectants

Make cleaning products available near commonly used surfaces where possible (for example, placing hand sanitiser near the register, on tables and chairs, and in bathrooms).

Reduce high touch-points

Reduce touch points where possible, such as using contact-less payments and workplace access-cards, and using contact-less drink fountains and entry-points.

Educate customers and staff

Display posters on good hygiene and handwashing practices in prominent places and establish hygiene stations (with hand sanitiser) at entrances and throughout the Workplace to encourage hand hygiene of staff and customers.

Free infection control training

Free, short, accredited training is available to help staff identify and manage the ongoing risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) infections in the workplace.

[Free infection control training](#) will help businesses prepare to safely reopen and ensure their customers and workforce are protected.

Promotion of hygiene tips for workers

- Wash your hands often with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Wash or disinfect hands after making or receiving deliveries.
- Sneeze and cough into your sleeve.
- If you use a tissue, discard immediately and wash your hands afterward.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Avoid high-touch areas, where possible, or ensure you clean your hands after.
- If you are required to wear gloves do not touch your face with gloved hands. Take care when removing gloves. Ensure you wash your hands after removing them.
- Wash your clothes as soon as you get home.

Workplaces should regularly check that they are complying with current directions and advice provided by health authorities.



4. Keep records and act quickly if staff or customers become unwell

All businesses **must** keep records of every person who attends the workplace and should have a response plan, as part of their COVIDSafe Plan, ready for the possibility of a person with coronavirus (COVID-19) at their premises.

Workplace attendance register

Under current public health advice, all Victorian workplaces are required to establish and maintain a '[workplace attendance register](#)' of every person who attends the workplace for a period of more than 15 minutes. This includes all workers (including sub-contractors) and any customers or visitors permitted in the workplace (including workplace inspectors).

If a staff member or customer tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), a current and accurate workplace attendance register will allow the employer to immediately identify anyone who has been in close contact with that person within the 48 hours prior to the onset of their symptoms.

For more information regarding the definition of a close-contact, see: [DHHS coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Information](#)

If a customer or employee who is a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) has attended your business while they are infectious, you must:

Shut down premises

Immediately shut down premises by default upon confirmation of positive case, until DHHS advises next steps.

Contact DHHS and WorkSafe

- Notify DHHS of the case as per the Employer obligations in the Workplace Directions, providing it with your workplace attendance registers.
- Consult with DHHS on whether the business is required to stay closed for a short period to facilitate cleaning and enable contact tracing.
- Report the case to [WorkSafe](#)

Determine hot spots

- Determine what areas of the business were visited, used, or impacted by the persons with coronavirus (COVID-19).

Clean the premises

- Close the affected area to prevent access prior to and during cleaning and disinfection
- Consider engaging suitably qualified personnel to clean and disinfect the area
- Open doors and windows to increase air circulation
- The workplace should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before it can be re-opened and workers can return to work.

For more information, see [How to clean and disinfect after a COVID-19 case in non-healthcare settings](#)



4. Keep records and act quickly if staff or customers become unwell - continued

All businesses **must** keep records of every person who attends the workplace and should have a response plan, as part of their COVIDSafe plan, ready for the possibility of a person with coronavirus (COVID-19) at their premises.

Next steps: Slowing the spread

DHHS actions

DHHS will liaise with operators where someone has been at the business while infectious with coronavirus (COVID-19). DHHS may request information from the operator to assist with contact tracing. DHHS may also request that the operator to assist with contact tracing. DHHS will contact anyone who is identified as a close contact of the case.

Business actions

Work with DHHS to ensure that all appropriate preventative measures have been taken prior to reopening the business.

Provide DHHS with a list of the customers, staff, and other visitors (for example, contractors, delivery workers) who may be close or casual contacts. Employers must keep a record of all workers and visitors who attend the workplace for longer than 15 minutes over the past 28 days.

Any staff member who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) should remain in home quarantine until they have been notified by DHHS that they are no longer required to quarantine and have met its criteria for release. The staff member should follow DHHS guidance and their employer's policy.

Close contacts

Staff who are determined by DHHS as close contacts of a person with coronavirus (COVID-19) must quarantine and should not come to work for 14 days after their last close contact with the confirmed case. They should watch for symptoms and seek medical assessment and testing if they become symptomatic.

A note on privacy

Please respect the privacy of people with a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) and treat their condition with understanding and compassion.

If a staff member is quarantining, check in on their wellbeing regularly and monitor their mental health.

What should I do if I am contacted by the media?

You do not have to speak to the media, but if you do, ensure you have taken the time and considered the key messages you want to say. However, this should only be done in coordination with DHHS. Don't respond immediately, take time to consider your key messages, focus on the wellbeing of the affected staff member or customers and measures undertaken to disinfect your property. Remember to respect people's privacy and not give out names of people who have a confirmed case of coronavirus.

Additional resources

Staff who have been required to self quarantine after a COVID-19 test may be eligible to receive a one-off payment of \$450 from the Victorian Government. Staff who are confirmed as COVID-19 positive may be eligible to receive a one-off \$1500 payment from Commonwealth Government's Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment for Victoria. Further information on coronavirus-related pay and leave entitlements can be found through the Fair Work Ombudsman at:

- [Pay and Leave During Coronavirus](#)
- [Health and Safety in the Workplace During Coronavirus](#)



5. Avoid interactions in enclosed spaces

In Victoria, employers have OHS duties and obligations to do what is reasonably practicable to provide a working environment that is safe and without risks to the health of staff or customers.

As part of creating a safe working environment that addresses risks associated with potential exposure to coronavirus (COVID-19), businesses should have a plan to minimise the amount of interactions conducted in enclosed spaces and maximise ventilation, air quality and use of outdoor spaces.

This means, wherever possible, moving activities outside or to well-ventilated areas and keeping doors and windows open as practicable to ensure maximum ventilation.

Restricted (Regional Victoria): Restrictions apply to indoor dining – see Hospitality Guidelines. If the business is approved for outdoor dining by the relevant local council, the business is encouraged to direct customers to outdoor dining spaces. If your business is not approved for outdoor dining, consider whether applying for a licence is appropriate for your business.

Actions your business can take

Air quality and ventilation

Open windows and outside doors where possible to maximise ventilation. Use air conditioning to enhance the flow of air, however ensure that you are not using the 'recirculate' mode.

Air quality when cleaning

Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation before commencing cleaning and disinfection. Keep doors and windows open after cleaning and disinfection to allow the cleaning agents to disperse in the airflow.

Move meetings and functions outside

Where possible, move internal meetings and activities to an outdoor area. Encourage staff to take any breaks outdoors as well.

Outdoor seating

If you have a licence to provide outdoor seating, prioritise outdoor seating as much as possible.

Even in outdoor seating areas, ensure the 1.5 metre distance between tables is maintained

Where you are not licenced to provide outdoor seating, consider whether applying to do so is appropriate for your business. Applications for outdoor seating should be made to the relevant [local council](#).

Smoking areas

You can convert an outdoor smoking area into an outdoor dining area. However, smoking would no longer be allowed in that space.

If you chose to relocate your smoking area to create more dining space in your workplace, you must also take into account the requirements of the Tobacco Act, which are set out on the [BetterHealth website](#).



6. Create workforce bubbles

Having 'workforce bubbles' can help minimise the risk of infection and support contact tracing initiatives.

A 'workforce bubble' is a group of staff who limit their in-person interactions to other members of the group. This strategy focuses on reducing the number of contact individuals, rather than the number of interactions. Should a staff member test positive or have symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), it will contain the spread to a minimum number of people within the bubble, rather than requiring the whole business to undergo quarantine.

To minimise possible exposure and contact, businesses should:

Limit

the number of people that staff have prolonged close contact with

Modify

processes to minimise interactions between staff members during breaks, shifts, or when transitioning into or out of work periods where possible

Consult

with staff whose work is not essential to the physical operation of the business to determine if working from home or remotely is reasonably practicable

Review

shift arrangements to create smaller teams and avoid mixing staff across shifts.

Actions your business can take

Set up 'pools' of rostered staff

Reviewing shift arrangements to create smaller teams and have each team work independently (known as cohorting) and avoid mixing staff across shifts.

Stagger shifts

Stagger or increase the time between shifts to eliminate bottlenecks and avoid intermingling between different teams.

Limit staff movement between work zones

Limit staff or contractor movements to one work zone (e.g. areas within a venue, sites, or geographic areas) unless it is not reasonable and practical (e.g. where cleaners must work between different properties).

Where a staff member is working for different employers across multiple premises, they must provide a written declaration to employers. Employers must ensure declarations are collected and recorded.

Keep contact records

Keep records that will help businesses enforce workforce bubbles, such as knowing which staff are in different pools, start and end times of shifts etc. Employers must keep a record of all staff and visitors who attend the workplace for longer than 15 minutes in the past 28 days.

Coordinate other services

Where possible, businesses should try to coordinate other services, such as food deliveries to align with staff 'pools'.



Creating a COVIDSafe Plan

Every business is required to complete a COVIDSafe Plan in order to reopen their workplace.

All businesses **must** have a completed [COVIDSafe Plan](#) for each workplace to continue their operation in metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria.

As part of a spot check by Victoria Police or other authorities, businesses must be able to demonstrate that they have an adequate COVIDSafe Plan (see next page).

If a business has an existing COVIDSafe Plan, you must conduct regular reviews to ensure it meets up-to-date requirements (e.g. on face coverings).

Your COVIDSafe Plan must set out

- ✓ Your actions to help prevent the introduction of coronavirus (COVID-19) in your workplace
- ✓ The level of face-covering or personal protective equipment (PPE) required for your workforce
- ✓ How you will prepare for, and respond to, a suspected or confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) in your workplace
- ✓ How you will meet all of the requirements set out by the Victorian Government. Some higher-risk industries or workplaces have additional requirements of employers and staff.

The thumbnail shows the cover page of the COVIDSafe Plan document. It features the title 'COVIDSafe Plan' and the Victorian State Government logo. Below the title is a section titled 'About the COVIDSafe Plan' which explains the purpose of the plan and lists key requirements. Another section, 'How to develop your COVIDSafe Plan', provides a numbered list of steps: 1. Understand your responsibilities, 2. Prepare your plan, and 3. Implement your plan. The document also includes a 'Please note' section with a warning symbol and a list of mandatory requirements.

Workplaces should regularly check that they are complying with current directions and advice provided by health authorities.

Occupational Health and Safety Act

A [COVIDSafe Plan](#) forms part of the development of a safe system of work.

Workplaces should also note that the workplace health and safety obligations remain under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (OHS Act) with respect to identifying hazards and eliminate or, where is not possible to eliminate, reduce risks as far as reasonably applicable.

Staff must also comply with their obligations under the OHS Act.

For further information on your obligations under the OHS Act, please visit [the WorkSafe website](#).

For more information about creating a COVIDSafe workplace, please visit:

- [WorkSafe: Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [WorkSafe: Preparing a pandemic guide](#)
- [DHHS: Business and industry - coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [DHHS: Preventing infection in the workplace](#)
- [DHHS: Workplace obligations](#)
- [DHHS: Confirmed case in the workplace](#)



Compliance and enforcement

Venues should regularly check that they are complying with current directions and advice provided by health authorities.

Each business has an obligation to ensure that their workplace is deep cleaned prior to re-opening or re-commencing operations. Deep cleaning involves a thorough and extensive cleaning and disinfection regime with a focus on surfaces that may have been exposed to the virus.

Workplaces may consider nominating a staff member to be the COVID-19 Response Officer (or similar) to oversee the implementation of the workplace's COVIDSafe plan, ensuring that correct processes are being followed, any relevant documentation is complete, staff are trained, and procedures are kept up-to-date to comply with current health information.

Evidence of compliance with the directions of the Victorian Chief Health Officer may be requested from a relevant compliance/enforcement officer. Victoria Police and other authorities involved in the regulation of businesses may conduct spot checks to ensure compliance with the directions issued under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act*. WorkSafe will continue compliance and enforcement action under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (OHS Act).

Where can I find further information on safely reopening my workplace?

Business Victoria is ready to support businesses and answer questions about preparing for a safe reopening. Business Victoria can be contacted on 13 22 15 or online by the [Contact Us form](#).

For information on health and safety requirements under the OHS Act, businesses should refer to [WorkSafe Victoria's website](#) or contact its advisory service on 1800 136 089.

How will you enforce compliance? Who will enforce it?

Victoria Police, and other authorities involved in the regulation of businesses may conduct spot checks to ensure compliance with the directions of the Victorian Chief Health Officer.

WorkSafe will continue compliance and enforcement action under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (OHS Act). For information on health and safety requirements under the OHS Act, businesses should refer to [WorkSafe Victoria's website](#) or contact its advisory service on 1800 136 089

Fines and penalties

Victoria Police can issue on the spot fines of up to \$1,652 for individuals and up to \$9,913 for businesses for:

- Refusing or failing to comply with the emergency directions;
- Refusing or failing to comply with a public health risk power direction; or
- Refusing or failing to comply with a direction by the Victorian Chief Health Officer.

Fines can be extended through the Magistrates' Court to a maximum of \$20,000 for individuals and \$100,000 for businesses.

WorkSafe may take a range of compliance and enforcement action against an employer which fails to comply with its duties under the OHS Act.



More FAQs that apply to all businesses are available at the Business Victoria website.

Can I accept bookings from customers in metropolitan Melbourne?

No. Tourism is not one of the reasons that people from a Restricted Area can leave home. Accommodation facilities must use reasonable endeavours to satisfy themselves that their customers do not live in metropolitan Melbourne. This can be confirmed using a driver's licence or other relevant forms of ID.

Do I need to keep electronic records or would written down (pen and paper) suffice?

Businesses can determine how to best securely record and store visitor details. A simple handwritten log or register will suffice but considerations should be made on how to minimise the risk of transmission if staff and customers share the record-keeping materials. For example, only have one staff member per shift collect customers' details and/or regularly clean the pens used to write down details.

Do all transactions need to be cashless?

Cash can still be accepted as a form of payment, but it is strongly recommended that all businesses use contactless payments.

How often should surfaces be cleaned?

Cleaning and disinfecting common contact surfaces will help to slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). This should be done regularly (at least twice a day) for high-touch surfaces, between users, and immediately after spills. Surfaces and fittings should also be cleaned immediately when visibly soiled. See [Cleaning and disinfecting to reduce coronavirus \(COVID-19\) transmission - tips for business and construction sites](#)

Personal items used in the workplace, such as glasses and phones, should be cleaned and disinfected frequently (e.g. by using isopropyl alcohol wipes). Workplace amenities, including kitchens, lunchrooms, communal areas, change rooms, toilets, drink fountains and vending machines, should also be regularly cleaned.

Should I wash all bedding (such as blankets, pillows, mattress protectors, bed covers, cushions and throws), as well as sheets?

Bedding that comes into direct contact with a customer (such as sheets, quilt covers and pillow cases) must be washed before the next booking, and other items should follow routine practice. The laundering of linen should be conducted using the warmest setting possible that is in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. Dry items completely. Do not shake dirty laundry as this may disperse the virus through the air.

I rent out a house or room/s through an online booking platform – can I start to have customers stay?

Yes, you can have customers stay at your property. However, bookings cannot be taken from residents of metropolitan Melbourne under current restrictions. Houses or room/s rented out must be cleaned between groups. See [Cleaning and disinfecting to reduce coronavirus \(COVID-19\) transmission - tips for business and construction sites](#).

I operate a facility or caravan park with communal areas (bathroom, kitchen, living areas, etc.) – can customers access these areas?

Yes, see Table regarding communal facilities in the section **Creating a COVIDSafe workplace**. Subject to physical distancing and requirements. The patron limit for communal areas is determined by the density quotient, which is calculated by measuring the total area of a space (in square metres) then dividing by 4.

Communal facilities are subject to the cleaning requirements (see **How often should surfaces be cleaned?**).

Shared equipment is to be cleaned & disinfected with a disinfectant with anti-viral properties.

Venues should also implemented rostered use of these facilities and the provision of cleaning products for people using them.



More FAQs that apply to all businesses are available at the Business Victoria website.

I run a hostel with shared dorm rooms and no private facilities (recreational, dining, kitchen, bathroom) – can I accept customers?

Yes, hostels can accept customers provided that members of separate group bookings do not share the same rooms.

Dormitories can only be occupied by members of the same household.

Communal spaces must be cleaned regularly, including twice a day for frequently touched surfaces (e.g. counters, handrails).

The density quotient (one person per four square metres) applies to communal spaces.

My operation has a communal sauna and spa – can people use it?

No. Communal saunas and spas must remain closed. See Table regarding communal facilities in the section **Creating a COVIDSafe workplace**.

My operation has a pool – can people use it?

Indoor swimming pools must remain closed.

Outdoor swimming pools (including those in accommodation facilities) may open to the public according to the Physical Recreation guidelines.

These guidelines include:

- Number of people in the pool or chlorinated spa subject to the density quotient of the pool itself or 50, whichever is smaller
- No access to saunas
- Record-keeping, cleaning and signage requirements are met.

How can I best maintain physical distancing with contractors such as delivery drivers?

Delivery drivers and other contractors visiting the premises should minimise interaction with staff. Use electronic paperwork where possible and, instead of a signature, send a confirmation email or take a photo of the goods onsite as proof of delivery.

Do I need to adjust air conditioning (HVAC)?

Where possible, open windows and adjust air conditioning to enhance fresh airflow.

How can I limit interaction between customers and reception/front of house staff?

There are a number of ways interactions can be limited to reduce the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) transmission.

These include:

- Space out reception or check-in areas or using alternate methods of checking in.
- Encourage customers to use contactless payment methods such as credit or debit cards, phone or other payment-enabled devices instead of cash.
- Consider using physical barriers, such as plexiglass screens, at counters where interactions with customers frequently occur.

If practicable, set up separate workplace entry and exit points.

Can my indoor and outdoor dining areas be treated as separate areas?

Yes. Separate areas, whether indoor or outdoor, can each have up to the customer limit, subject to meeting the density quotient of one customer per four square metres of customer-accessible area (for indoor dining) and one customer per two square metres for outdoor dining.



Please note that the checklists below outline the restrictions and requirements that apply from 11:59pm on 16th September 2020.

Checklist for business owners/managers

Prepare your COVIDSafe Plan

Every workplace is required to have a [COVIDSafe Plan](#) that is regularly updated in order to reopen their workplace.

Ensure workplace is set up to adhere to customer limits

- see table in the section **Current restrictions on Accommodation businesses**-for customer limits
- a density quotient of one customer per four square metres of the are accessible to customers
- all seating is spaced so that customers are 1.5 metres apart if/when seated

Prepare a cleaning schedule

- Businesses should conduct a deep clean of the premise.
- Establish new processes and schedules for cleaning and disinfecting to maintain good hygiene, including frequent cleaning of high touch points (see our [Cleaning and Sanitising Fact Sheet](#)).

Signage requirements

- Display signage for staff and customers in appropriate, high visibility locations, to include:
 - At workplace entrance to advise of the maximum number of customers allowed
 - Information about the symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) and the need to stay home when unwell
 - Hygiene and physical distancing practices.
- Display a poster at the workplace confirming staff have reviewed the guidelines and evidence that at least one staff member has completed the recommended training.
- Promote physical distancing, including between staff and customers, with floor or wall markings or signs. Use physical barriers where possible (e.g., installation of sneeze guards).

Establish your record keeping

- Record the contact details of any customer who attends your workplace for longer than 15 minutes (this includes contractors and delivery workers), to include: first name and a contact phone number to support contact tracing. Retain for at least 28 days following the visit.
- Maintain Staff Coronavirus (COVID-19) Health Questionnaires to be completed at the start of each shift.
- Set up a roster to ensure staff do not work across multiple sites, or for multiple employers unless an exemption applies.

Consult with staff

Employers must, so far as is reasonably practicable, consult with staff and HSRs (if any), on matters related to health or safety that directly affect, or are likely to directly affect them.

Checklist for business owners/managers cont.

Staff and management policies, practices and training

- Ensure you as the operator or manager understand your obligations under the Occupational Health and Safety Act and have reviewed the coronavirus (COVID-19) guidance from WorkSafe Victoria available at [here](#).
- Encourage staff to complete [free infection control training](#) and download the COVIDSafe App. It is the Government's expectation that:
 - at least one staff member at every workplace will have completed the training
 - staff should make themselves familiar with these guidelines
- Consider appointing a staff member to be your coronavirus (COVID-19) Response Officer to ensure policies and practices are being followed, staff are trained, and records are kept.



Additional resources

For additional information about creating a COVIDSafe workplace, please refer to the following guidance:

- WorkSafe: [Industry obligations](#)
- WorkSafe: [Managing COVID-19 risks – face coverings in workplaces](#)
- DHHS: [Preventing infection in the workplace](#)
- DHHS: [Preparing for a case of coronavirus \(COVID-19\) in your workplace](#)
- DHHS: [Planning and responding to cases of coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- DHHS: [Cleaning and disinfecting to reduce COVID-19 transmission](#)
- WorkSafe: [Other relevant industry specific guidance](#)

Returning to work



Please note that the checklists below outline the restrictions and requirements that apply from 11:59pm on 16th September 2020.

Checklist for staff



Complete free infection control training

All current staff are encouraged to complete [free infection control training](#). Any new staff being engaged also need to complete this training.



Do not carpool with other colleagues



Wear a face covering at work, and to and from work unless you have a lawful reason not to doing so



Practice good hygiene

- Be rigorous in maintaining the new cleaning and disinfecting schedule (for example, touch points such as tables and counters need to be cleaned and disinfected before and after use by customers).

Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds at the very minimum:

- On arrival at work
- Before preparing or delivering food and/or beverages to tables
- After collecting/clearing used food and beverage items
- Before returning to food or beverage preparation areas
- At the start and end of each meal break
- Before and after touching a customer or their belongings
- After handling money
- Before leaving work
- Before and after changing your face covering
- After blowing your nose, coughing, sneezing, or using the toilet.



Stay home if unwell

- If you have symptoms, get tested for coronavirus (COVID-19). Stay in quarantine at home until you get the result and it is negative for COVID-19.
- Do not come to work if you have a fever (a temperature of 37.5°C or greater), or if you have any symptoms.

Staff health questionnaire



STAFF CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRE

We encourage each staff member to complete this questionnaire before starting any shift and give your completed questionnaire to the shift manager to keep as a record.

Staff name: _____

Date: _____ Time of shift _____

Are you currently required to be in **quarantine** because you have been diagnosed with coronavirus (COVID-19)?

YES NO

Have you been directed to a period of 14-day quarantine by the Department of Health and Human Services as a result of being a close contact of someone with coronavirus (COVID-19)?

YES NO

If you answered YES to either of the above questions you should not attend work until advised by the Department of Health and Human Services that you are released from quarantine or until your 14-day quarantine period is complete.

If you answered NO to the above questions, proceed to the symptom checklist below.

Are you experiencing these symptoms?

Fever (If you have a thermometer, take your own temperature. You are considered to have a fever if above 37.5oC) YES NO

Chills YES NO

Cough YES NO

Sore throat YES NO

Shortness of breath YES NO

Runny nose YES NO

Loss of sense of smell YES NO

If you answered **YES** to any of the above questions you should **not** enter your workplace (or should leave your workplace). Tell your employer, go home, and get tested for coronavirus (COVID-19).

If you answered **NO** to all the above questions, you can enter your workplace.

If you develop symptoms, stay at home and seek further advice from the 24-hour coronavirus hotline 1800 675 398 or your general practitioner.