

Industry Restart Guidelines

Allied Health and other primary health services

September 2020

Victoria's roadmap: Allied Health and other primary health services

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 public health team 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 [Allied Health and other primary health services Roadmap](#) is intended to assist workplaces 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 all allied health or primary health care private practice or primary care workplaces (but not including practices specific to general practitioners, community pharmacy, nursing and midwifery).

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.	Restricted Telehealth services preferred and density quotient applies. Indoor group classes permitted.
Second Step	Metropolitan Melbourne – Move to the Second Step from 11:59pm on 27 September 2020 Regional Victoria – Moved to Second Step from 11.59pm on 13 September 2020	Restricted For permitted purposes only	
Third Step	Metropolitan Melbourne: Move to the Third Step following a minimum of three weeks and when it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaches <5 new cases (state-wide average over last 14 days) and <5 cases with unknown source (state-wide total last 14 days), and • Aligns with public health advice Regional Victoria: Moved to Third Step from 11.59pm on 16 September 2020	Restricted. Telehealth services preferred and density quotient applies. No indoor group classes.	Restricted Telehealth services preferred and density quotient applies. Indoor group classes permitted.
Last Step	Regional Victoria and metropolitan Melbourne: Move to the last step following a minimum of three weeks and when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victoria reaches no new cases for 14 days (state-wide), and • It aligns with public health advice. 	Restricted Telehealth services preferred and density quotient applies. Indoor group classes permitted.	Restricted Telehealth services preferred and density quotient applies. Indoor group classes permitted.
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.	Open with a COVIDSafe Plan. Record keeping requirements. No density quotient.	Open with a COVIDSafe Plan. Record keeping requirements. No density quotient.

 Status as at 11.59pm on 27 September

Current restrictions on Allied Health and other primary health services

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 2008*, all allied health and other primary health businesses must abide by the following restrictions in both metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria respectively, **effective from 11.59pm 27 September**.

These restrictions apply to all private and primary care allied health providers including but not limited to: audiology, chiropractic, dietetics, exercise physiology, medical radiations (radiography, nuclear medicine and radiation therapy), occupational therapy, optometry, orthoptics, orthotics/prosthetics, osteopathy, pharmacy, physiotherapy, podiatry, psychology, social work and speech pathology. Additionally, the restrictions also apply to other primary health services such as myotherapy, remedial massage, naturopathy and kinesiology.

	Metro Melbourne	Regional Victoria
	RESTRICTED	RESTRICTED
Requirements for telehealth services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Telehealth services must be preferred as the first option for care delivery and provided where and as appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Telehealth services must be preferred as the first option for care delivery and provided where and as appropriate.
Requirements for clinical services	<p>All AHPRA-registered health workers - and in addition, social work, speech pathology, dietetics, audiology, exercise physiology, orthotists and prosthetists may provide face to face services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to prevent a significant change/deterioration in functional independence which would result in an escalation of care needs (e.g. an increase in frequency of treatment needed, an increased need for prescription medication due to a significant increase in pain, requirement for specialist input or review, an increase in care needs, and/or a substantial increase to anticipated recovery time associated with a delay in receiving services) to provide assessment and diagnostic services to clients / patients whose care have been delayed as a result of Stage 4 restrictions, with any further delay likely to result in deterioration in functional independence or adverse health outcomes (including access to diagnostic imaging services or assessment for prescription of assistive equipment and technology) to provide services that are essential as part of a broader plan of care with a medical practitioner (e.g. fitting a brace post-surgery) to provide services that are part of a conservative management plan to avoid or delay elective surgery (as agreed with treating team) to provide services immediately following elective surgery that prevent secondary complications or aid functional recovery (as agreed with treating team). <p>Any other health worker providing services required under a Chronic Disease Management Plan, a care plan endorsed by NDIS (including self-managed plans), TAC, Workcover or DVA - if care is required to prevent a significant change/deterioration in functional independence necessitating escalation of care (e.g. an increase in frequency of treatment needed, an increased need for prescription medication due to a significant increase in pain, requirement for specialist input or review, an increase in care needs, and/or a substantial increase to anticipated recovery time associated with a delay in receiving services).</p> <p>No group classes / services to be provided (face-to-face) unless the session can be conducted safely outdoors (maximum 2 people plus health worker).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most face-to-face clinical services provided with COVIDSafe Plan in place (except for indoor group classes as below).

Last updated: 27 September 2020

Current restrictions on Allied Health and other primary health services

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 allied health and other primary health businesses must abide by the following restrictions in both metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria respectively, **effective from 11.59pm 27 September**.

These restrictions apply to all private and primary care allied health providers such as: audiology, chiropractic, dietetics, exercise physiology, medical radiations (radiography, nuclear medicine and radiation therapy), occupational therapy, optometry, orthotics/prosthetics, osteopathy, pharmacy, physiotherapy, podiatry, psychology, social work and speech pathology. And in addition other primary health services such as: Myotherapy, remedial massage, naturopathy, kinesiology

	Metro Melbourne	Regional Victoria
	RESTRICTED	RESTRICTED
Group classes for purpose of clinical intervention only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No indoor group classes / services (including hydrotherapy) to be provided Outdoor sessions may be conducted where appropriate with a maximum two people plus health worker. 	Indoor group classes may only be provided for clinical interventions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to prevent a significant deterioration in functional independence which would result in an escalation of care needs (such as increased frequency in treatment, significant increase in pain, specialist input, or substantial increase in recovery time as a result of delayed care) to provide essential pre-operative or post-operative elective surgery care
Physical distancing requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff should work from home if possible Apply density quotient of one person per four metres squared no carpooling to work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some staff should work from home if possible apply density quotient of one person per four metres squared Avoid carpooling where possible
Face covering requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All workers must wear face coverings (exceptions apply) and additional PPE where required. Ensure adequate PPE training and supply 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All workers must wear face coverings (exceptions apply) and additional PPE where required. Ensure adequate PPE training and supply
Cleaning requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auditing of cleaning schedules 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 Cleaning of equipment and surfaces must occur in between each patient / client 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auditing of cleaning schedules 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 Cleaning of equipment and surfaces must occur in between each patient / client
Record keeping requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask staff to declare verbally before each shift that are free of symptoms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask staff to declare verbally before each shift that are free of symptoms.
Signage requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Display signage at each public entry to each space indicating maximum number of members of the public that may be present in the space at a single time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Display signage at each public entry to each space indicating maximum number of members of the public that may be present in the space at a single time
Workforce bubbles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employer must not require a worker to work at more than one work site of the employer, unless it is not practical to do so. The system to minimise this must be demonstrated (e.g. rosters) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employer must not require a worker to work at more than one work site of the employer, unless it is not practical to do so. The system to minimise this must be demonstrated (e.g. rosters)

Last updated: 27 September 2020

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 at least 1.5 metres apart and there should be no overcrowded areas. This means:

- Workers should work from home if possible
- Ensure workers and customers are at least 1.5 metres 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 workers and customers in an enclosed area
- No carpooling between workers unless there is no alternative mode of transport to work



2. Wear a face covering

Workers 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 workers throughout the shift
- Ensure all workers wear face coverings while working
- Do not take face coverings off when talking on the phone or with others
- Use full personal protective equipment (PPE) for high-risk settings



3. Practise good hygiene

Operators must regularly clean high touch-surfaces and encourage good hygiene practices by workers 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 workers and customers and make soap and hand sanitiser available for all workers and customers throughout the workplace



4. Keep records and act quickly if workers become unwell

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

- Support workers 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 confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Keep records of worker and customer details for contact tracing



5. Avoid interactions in enclosed spaces

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

- Meetings
- Lunch breaks
- Customer registration



6. Create workforce bubbles

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

- Keep groups of workers rostered on the same shifts at a single worksite and ensure there is no overlap of workers during shift changes
- Maintain records of all workers who have disclosed that they reside with another worker and ensure that there is no cross-over between shifts
- Limit or cease the number of workers working across multiple work sites

Creating a COVIDSafe workplace: Offices and professional services

All Allied Health and other primary health workplaces **must** ensure they apply the six COVIDSafe Principles to help prevent the introduction of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the workplace.

Workplaces included: Private practice and primary care health services such as a physiotherapy, podiatry or myotherapy practice. Please note, these guidelines are not specific to general practice, community pharmacy or nursing and midwifery practice.

Cleaning and disinfecting schedule

Implement and display a cleaning schedule so it is easily accessible to workers

Density quotient of one person per four square metres applies for people in common areas (e.g. lunchrooms)

Air conditioner set to optimum air flow at the start of each work day

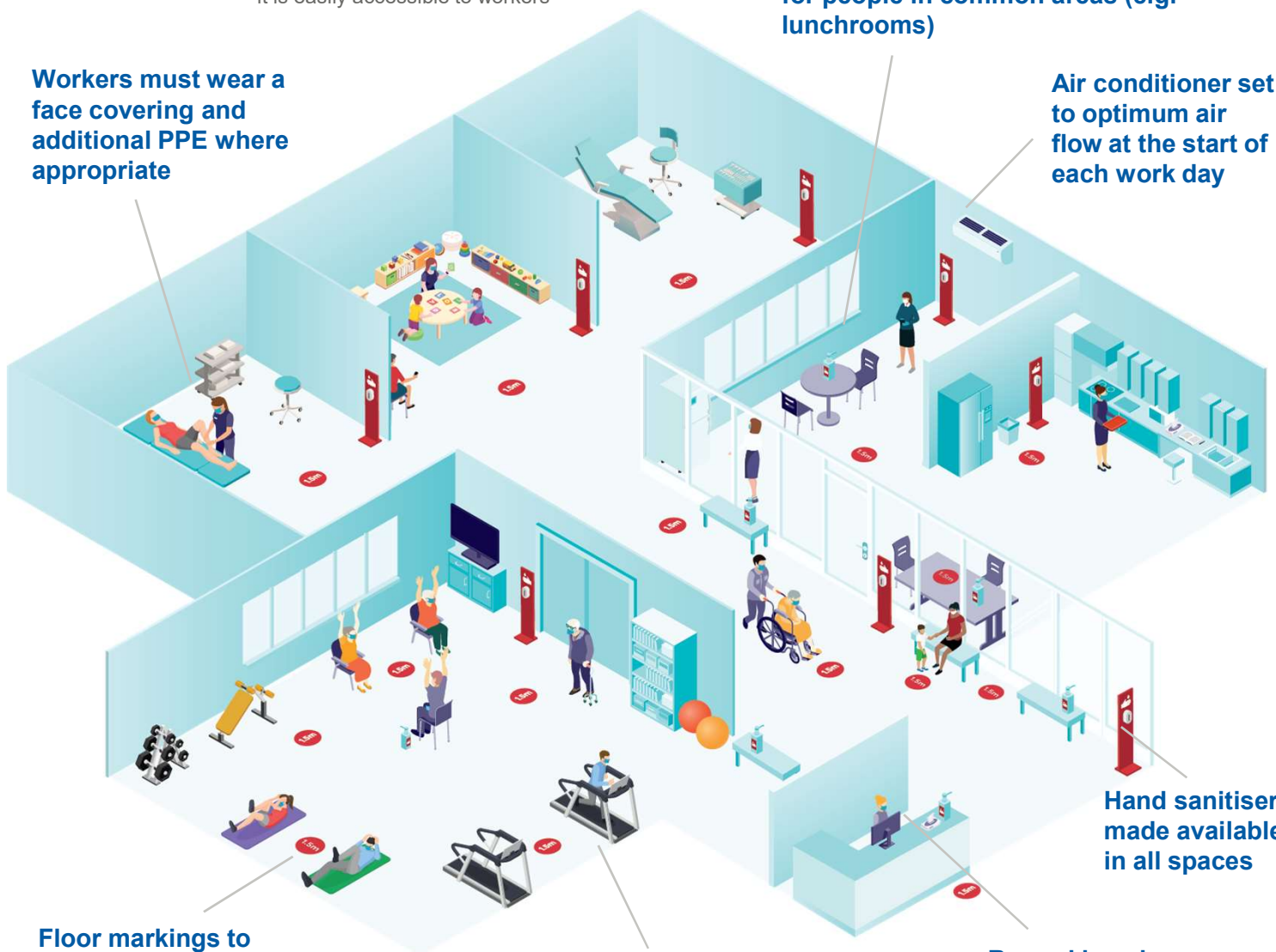
Workers must wear a face covering and additional PPE where appropriate

Hand sanitiser made available in all spaces

Floor markings to reinforce social distancing

Clean all equipment and surfaces after each user

Record keeping at entrance for clients to complete





1. Ensure physical distancing

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

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

Ensuring physical distancing between workers

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. Close non-essential communal areas that do not allow for physical distancing.

Discourage carpooling

Staff should not carpool to work unless there are no alternative options. Employers should discourage carpooling and where possible, assist staff to find alternate transport options

Implement virtual meetings

Workers meetings and trainings should be held virtually or in areas that allow for appropriate physical distancing between staff.

Install screens or barriers

Where 1.5m distancing between workers is not possible, install screens or plastic strip curtains where practicable to minimise the risk of droplet transmission from one employee to another. Screens need to be high enough to prevent potential droplets from coughing or sneezing directly reaching other employees.



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.

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

A face covering includes a fitted face mask that covers the nose and mouth to provide the wearer protection against infection. Face shields on their own do not meet these requirements. Please refer to the [Department of Health and Human Services' guidelines](#) for further information.

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 the workplace

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 wear a face covering at all times when working at the employer's premises, unless a lawful exception applies.

Workers wearing face coverings

Workers must wear a face covering at all times while on the premises, except in order to consume food or drink. Workers do not need face coverings while eating or drinking.

When can workers remove their face covering?

Workers must wear their face covering at all times unless they are eating or drinking (or if a lawful exemption applies). However if the worker enters a communal space or takes a break from the meal (for e.g. to use the facilities or to step outside to take a call), then the face covering must be worn.

Sole traders

If a worker is working alone in an enclosed space (like an office) the workers does not need to wear a face covering, but the worker must carry it with them.

Removing face coverings to communicate

A face covering may be removed where a worker is communicating with another person who is deaf or hard of hearing, and / or the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication and treatment. You should maintain physical distancing of at least 1.5 metres.

Provide training on how to use PPE

Provide all workers with trainings/guidance on how to use PPE (e.g. masks, face shields, gloves, etc) while undertaking work tasks and socialising during breaks.



3. Practise good hygiene

Additional hygiene measures are a priority. All Managers / Owners 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 [here](#).

Cleaning and disinfecting schedule

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

All surfaces and equipment should be wiped down in between seeing clients / patients.

Accessible cleaning products and disinfectants

Make cleaning products available near commonly used surfaces where possible (e.g. placing hand sanitiser in all treatment spaces, near the printer/copiers, on tables and chairs, and in bathrooms).

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 office to encourage hand hygiene of workers, visitors and clients.

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.

Hygiene tips for workers

- ☐ Stay home if you are sick.
- ☐ Wash your hands often with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitiser.
- ☐ Wash or sanitise 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.
- ☐ 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 workers 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 worker 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 worker who is a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) has attended your business while they are infectious, you must:

☐ Undertake a risk assessment

You must undertake a risk assessment to help determine what actions are required. This may include closing part or all of the work premises to allow a comprehensive clean, as well as the identification and notification of [close contacts](#).

For more information see the [Workplace guidance for managing suspected and confirmed cases \(including risk assessment template\)](#).

☐ 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 reopened 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 workers 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

The Department of Health and Human Services (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 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, workers and other visitors (e.g. 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 worker who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) should remain in home isolation until they have been notified by DHHS that they are no longer required to self-isolate and have met its criteria for release. The worker should follow DHHS guidance and their employer's policy.

Close contacts

Workers 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.

Contingency plans

If multiple workers are directed to be quarantined and this affects operational capacity, the business will need to consider its own contingency plans for disposing of raw materials (especially fresh ingredients), any work in progress, or short shelf-life stock to ensure food safety is maintained.

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 worker is quarantining, check in on their wellbeing regularly and monitor their mental health.

Additional resources

Workers who have been required to self-quarantine after a coronavirus (COVID-19) test may be eligible to receive a one-off payment of \$450 from the Victorian Government. Workers who are confirmed as coronavirus (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 and maintain a working environment that is safe and without risks to the health of employees.

As part of creating a safe working environment that addresses risks associated with potential exposure to coronavirus (COVID-19), businesses should have a plan in place to minimise the amount of interactions 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. Where activity cannot be moved outdoors, heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC) systems may have a role in decreasing the risk of transmissions in indoor spaces by increasing the rate of air change, decreasing recirculation and increasing the use of outdoor air.

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 meeting and activities to an outdoor area. Encourage workers to take their lunch breaks and any other breaks outdoors as well.

Consider steps to improve ventilation

Work with your building owner or manager to improve ventilation in the private practice or primary care setting. Measures include increasing the percentage of outdoor air and disabling demand-control ventilation (DCV) controls that reduce air supply based on temperature or occupancy.



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 workers who limit their in-person interactions to other members of the group. This strategy focuses on reducing the number of individuals a worker comes into contact with, rather than the number of interactions. Should a worker 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 workforce 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 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 workers

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

Stagger shifts

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

Define work zones

Define work zones in order to keep workers spread out and prevent accidental worker congregation.

Limit staff movement between sites

Limit staff movements to one worksite unless it is not reasonable and practical.

Keep contact records

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

Ensure staff members are not working across multiple work sites

Employers must keep a log of all employees working across multiple sites including date, time and place of attendance.

Employees must provide a written declaration to each employer to advise that they are working at more than one work site.



Creating a COVIDSafe Plan

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

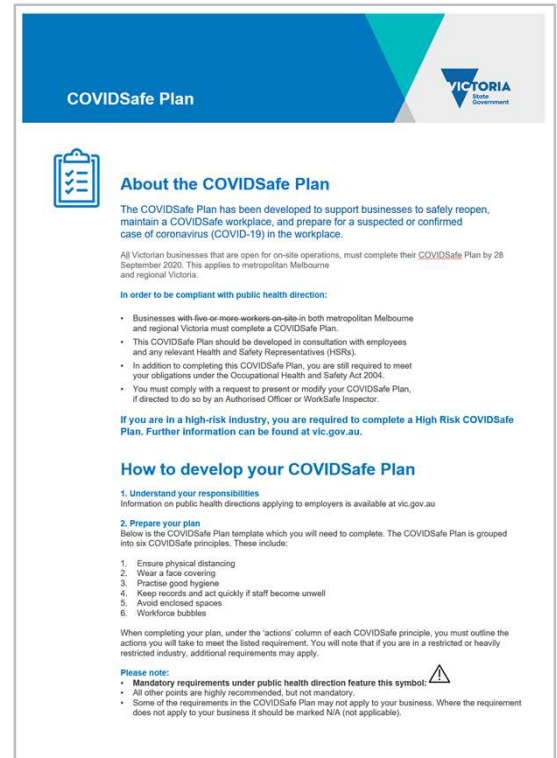
All businesses **must** have a completed [COVIDSafe Plan](#) for each workplace to continue operating in metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria.

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 workers.



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 reopening or recommencing 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.

When can I re-commence providing all my usual allied health services?

Providers in metropolitan Melbourne can recommence most services with a COVID safe plan from the Third Step. The only exception is indoor group physical recreation classes which cannot recommence until the last step.

What is the difference between current Stage 4 restrictions in metro Melbourne and Second Step restrictions?

In addition to critical care (Stage 4), people will be able to access urgent care services from a limited selection of allied health practitioner groups for pain management, as well as for essential pre-operative or post-operative elective surgery care.

Access to Telehealth services is unrestricted.

Do permitted work premises still apply to Allied Health services under the Second Step restrictions for metro Melbourne?

Yes – all practitioners who were able to provide services within a permitted work premise (such as a public/private hospital or aged care facility) during Stage 4 restrictions can continue to deliver services for the clinical indications listed - urgent care, pain management or pre/post-operative elective surgery care.

I provide contracted services to a permitted premises, is this OK?

Yes, the provider can be contracted to provide services by the work premise however providers contracted by a patient/client to provide services for an individual within a permitted work premises are not covered under this guidance.

Which Allied Health disciplines can provide care during the second step of restrictions for metro Melbourne?

All Ahpra registered allied health professionals; chiropractic, medical radiations (radiography, nuclear medicine and radiation therapy), occupational therapy, optometry, osteopathy, pharmacy, physiotherapy, podiatry and psychology
Plus audiology, dietetics, exercise physiology, orthotics/prosthetic, social work and speech pathology

In addition, people will be able to see any healthcare worker (such as a myotherapist or naturopath) for urgent care, pain management and pre/post-operative elective surgery care, where this is part of an endorsed plan of care (such as a chronic disease management plan, TAC, DVA, Workcover or NDIS plan).

I am a healthcare worker not included in the list of specified professions – can I provide services for urgent care, pain management or pre/post-operative elective surgery care where these are not part of an endorsed care plan (e.g. as fee for service)?

For professional groups not specifically named, urgent care, pain management or pre/post-operative elective surgery care can only be provided as part of an endorsed care plan.

What is an endorsed care plan?

An endorsed care plan must be current and includes one of the following:

Chronic disease management plans, NDIS plans (including self-managed plans), TAC plans, Workcover plans, or DVA plans

I am a healthcare worker not included in the list of specified professions - can I provide urgent care for someone who has a referral from their GP?

No. A GP referral is not one of the listed endorsed care plan options.



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

Can I provide preventative health or health maintenance services under the Second Step restrictions for metro Melbourne?

No. The clinical indications for Allied Health do not allow for face-to-face preventative health or health maintenance services, both of which are routine care. However, there are no restrictions on the delivery of these services via Telehealth.

Can I provide individual hydrotherapy sessions in metro Melbourne?

Yes, during the second step 1:1 hydrotherapy sessions are permitted

What services will I be able to provide in the third and last step for metro Melbourne?

All practitioner groups will be able to recommence most services from the third step with a COVID Safe Plan.

The exception is indoor group physical recreation classes which can only commence from the last step where physical distancing and density quotients can be followed.

Can I assess or provide care to a child to ensure normal development progresses and not just to prevent deterioration?

Yes, if there is a significant risk that the child's normal development will be impacted by any delays.

When can I offer indoor group therapy classes in metropolitan Melbourne?

Indoor group exercise classes (for example, hydrotherapy, clinical pilates and other therapy groups) will be able to re-commence when we move to the last step of opening.

What about outdoor group classes in metropolitan Melbourne?

During the second and third step any treatment that can be conducted safely outdoors may be provided so long as there is a maximum of two people plus the allied health provider / health worker.

Can I provide a group therapy class if they are from the same household during the second step in metropolitan Melbourne?

No, indoor group exercise classes are not permitted in metro Melbourne until the last step.

I am an allied health provider in regional Victoria. What services can I provide during the Second, Third and Last Steps?

Whilst telehealth services should be preferred, all Allied Health providers (as well other primary health care providers such as myotherapy and remedial massage) can provide most face to face services with a COVID Safe Plan in place.

The exception is indoor group classes which must adhere to density quotients and can only be for clinical interventions:

- to prevent a significant deterioration in functional independence which would result in an escalation of care needs (such as increased frequency in treatment, significant increase in pain, specialist input, or substantial increase in recovery time as a result of delayed care)
- to provide essential pre-operative or post-operative elective surgery care

Indoor group classes will be unrestricted from the last step in regional Victoria.



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

Can I provide 1:1 care to more than person in an open treatment space?

The restrictions do not prevent treatment being provided in an open space, however the intent of these restrictions is to minimise interactions between people who are not in the same household. Therefore, where possible 1:1 treatments should be provided in separate rooms from other patients receiving treatment.

Under the Second Step, are therapies, such as myotherapy, naturopathy and remedial massage therapy, able to work on site?

Selected therapies may only work on site when they are providing services that are part of a patient's endorsed care plan and where these therapies are needed to help prevent a significant deterioration in functional independence, resulting in an escalation of care needs (such as increased frequency in treatment, significant increase in pain, specialist input, or substantial increase in recovery time as a result of delayed care).

Reopening my business



Please note that the checklists below outline the restrictions and requirements that apply from 11:59pm on 27th 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 the density quotient

- ☐ see table in the section **Current restrictions on Allied Health and Other Health Services** for customer limits
- ☐ a density quotient of one client or practitioner per four square metres of the space accessible to the public
- ☐ all seating is spaced so that clients are at least 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 patients 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 appropriate (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.

Reopening my business



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, unless they are from the same household



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



☐ Practise good hygiene

- ☐ Be rigorous in maintaining the new cleaning and sanitising schedule (for example, touch points such as tables and counters need to be cleaned and sanitised 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
- ☐ 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 isolation 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 for record keeping purposes.

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 (DHHS) 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 any of these symptoms?

Fever (If you have a thermometer, take your own temperature. You are considered to have a fever if above 37.5C) ☐ 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 you should leave your workplace, if already there). 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.