

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Friday, 26 February 2021

VICTORIA TO RETURN TO COVIDSAFE SETTINGS

Victoria will return to its previous COVIDSafe settings from tonight, allowing for more visitors in the home, reduced mask wearing and increasing the number of workers heading back to the office.

The move to further ease restrictions follows a reduced exposure risk and low community transmission.

From 11:59pm tonight, masks will only be required on public transport, in rideshare vehicles and taxis, in sensitive settings such as aged care facilities – and in some larger retail settings including indoor shopping centres, supermarkets, department stores, indoor markets.

While masks are no longer mandated in most circumstances, the evidence is clear wearing a face covering makes a real difference in slowing the spread of the virus – so masks continue to be recommended indoors or outdoors when distancing can't be maintained.

Victorians will be able to host up to 30 people in their home per day. Outdoor gatherings in public places – the beach, the park – can increase to 100 people.

The planned increase for office workers to return to work can go ahead at 75 per cent across both public and private sectors from 11:59pm tonight. For most workers, this will mean returning to the office from Monday 1 March.

Density limits in pubs, restaurants and cafes will remain at 1 person per 2sq metres for both indoors and outdoors with no other cap, so long as electronic record keeping – a QR code – is used.

For small operations, there'll be no density limits if the patron number is under 25 and they will still be required to keep records.

For beauty services, businesses remain at 1 person per 2sq metres – if they also introduce electronic record keeping. For businesses where that's not possible, density limits of 1 person per 4 sq metres will apply.

Retail businesses also remain at 1 person per 2sq metres and electronic record keeping is recommended where practical.

Funerals and weddings are subject to a density limit of 1 person per 2sq metres. The same rules will apply to nightclubs and our community facilities, like our libraries, RSLs, and community halls.

In gyms, the density limit remains 1 per 4sq metres – with exercise classes limited to 50 indoors and 100 outdoors.

The State of Emergency – which needs to be declared so the Chief Health Officer can issue directions to respond to the pandemic and keep Victorians safe – will be extended to 11:59pm, 15 March 2021.

For more information on the new coronavirus settings visit coronavirus.vic.gov.au

Quote attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"I want to thank every Victorian for making today's announcement possible – and I want to thank every Victorian for their patience. It's been a hard slog, but Victorians are doing what they do best as we work to beat this virus: staying the course and looking out for each other."

For more information call the coronavirus hotline on 1800 675 398 or visit coronavirus.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Martin Foley

“Thanks to the incredible work of our public health team and all Victorians, we’re now able to continue our road to recovery – but we know the risk to Victorians is far from over.”

“The need for our public health team to have the legal ability to enforce measures that keep us safe are at the heart of recovery, which is why the amendment to the Public Health and Wellbeing Act before parliament is so important.”

“We expect this legislation to be passed so we can continue to use the tools we need to respond to this global pandemic and keep Victorians safe.”