



Wednesday, 1 April 2020
Issue 8.0

VACC has been fielding many questions regarding the newly announced JobKeeper package.

I would like to remind members that the fine detail of this package is not yet available and the legislation is still to be passed by Parliament.

In the meantime, VACC recommends you register your interest on the dedicated Australian Tax Office (ATO) website available [HERE](#). This will ensure you are immediately notified of any updates from government.

The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) has also produced a valuable employer guide: [JobKeeper Payment - Quick Employer Guide - Edition 1](#). More information on the Guide is included in subsequent sections of this Update. We thank our colleagues at ACCI for their swift work in providing this resource.

As always, members can contact either VACC IR or OHSE teams for advice:

- VACC IR call centre: 03 9829 1123
- VACC OHSE call centre: 1300 585 136

1. INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

JobKeeper Payment – Quick Employer Guide – Edition 1

The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry's (ACCI) Workplace Relations team has prepared a guide for employers on the JobKeeper subsidy package: [JobKeeper Payment - Quick Employer Guide - Edition 1](#). This is in direct response to the queries both VACC and ACCI have received from members since the announcement.

This guide sets out to explain to employers, with the information currently at hand, how to navigate this new subsidy.

This is a working document and will be updated, with new editions, as more information comes to light and legislation drafted.



Apprentice Subsidy and the JobKeeper Allowances

The guidelines for Supporting Apprentices and Trainees says “An employer or GTO will not be eligible for Supporting Apprentices and Trainees where the employer has received, or is in receipt of the Australian Apprentice Wage subsidy or equivalent Australian Government wage subsidy for the same Australian Apprentice” (p. 95 of the guidelines). The Department of Education, Skills and Employment has confirmed that the JobKeeper subsidy is considered ‘equivalent’ so an employer could not be in receipt of both payments for the same apprentice/trainee. The department is working on some Q and As and this will be covered in those.

The outcome of this is that there will be far less people needing to take up the apprentice subsidy, although there is a difference in timing. There will also be those apprentices whose employment was terminated from a small business (and were not rehired) that will still attract the subsidy on re-engagement with another business.

Migration

The following table details up-to-date FAQs from the Department of Home Affairs.

More specifically, VACC notes that the JobKeeper allowance has posed other questions about temporary visa holders (as they are not eligible) and puts more pressure on the need to know what the social welfare supports there will be should they be out of work.

Question	Answer
<p>I am needing to permanently close my business, what are my ongoing obligations to my temporary visa holder whom my business has sponsored?</p>	<p>Employers sponsoring overseas workers must advise the Department in writing, when certain events occur like business shutdown.</p> <p>The business must email sponsor.notifications@abf.gov.au, or complete the notification of sponsors form in ImmiAccount.</p> <p>More information on sponsorship obligations can be found here:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sponsorship obligations for Standard business • Sponsorship obligations for Temporary activity sponsor

<p>Can the work hour limitations places on international students be extended beyond supermarkets to other critical industries such as health or cleaning?</p>	<p>Extended work hours for supermarkets, aged care and nursing. The Department of Home Affairs has put together a list of all the entities which are eligible to access the temporary relaxation of working hours. https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-listing/student-500/temporary-relaxation-of-working-hours-for-student-visa-holders</p>
<p>Can visas be extended for international students who were otherwise due to have their visas expiring between now and the 30th June 2021?</p>	<p>Student visas can't be extended. The student will need to apply for a new visa. You should apply for a new Student visa six weeks before your existing Student visa expires. There is no need to provide evidence of impacts of COVID-19 with your Student visa application.</p>

2. GENERAL

Importance of going contactless

VACC encourages members to adopt a contactless service model to limit transition of the coronavirus. We suggest you promote this via appropriate communication channels (e.g SMS messaging, email, social media) to reassure customers you are taking all necessary actions to maintain a healthy workplace.

Contactless servicing includes, but are not limited to the following:

- Pickup and delivery
- Key drop-off box facilities
- Contactless payment i.e. online banking or over the phone payment
- Emailing of invoices
- Repair orders can also be authorised via email

Coronavirus: Stage 3 impact on industry

Prime Minister, Scott Morrison announced on 29 March that Stage 3 restrictions had come into effect. These new restrictions prohibit the indoor/outdoor gathering of more than two people.

Stage 3 restrictions apply to all non-essential gatherings. Exemptions include workplaces. No significant impacts have been imposed on the automotive industry with the exception of indoor/outdoor vehicle auctions, which are no longer allowed to take place, except online.

But this does not exempt businesses from reducing the risk of transmission of Coronavirus, as far as reasonably practicable, by adhering to social distancing requirements and maintaining good hygiene practices in the workplace. For advice on steps to take click [HERE](#).

'Stay at home' and 'Restricted activities' directions - Frequently Asked Questions

The Victorian Government is directing all Victorians to stay at home, restricting sporting, cultural, recreational and commercial activities to help limit the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). If you can stay home, you must stay home.

The Victorian State Government's Department of Health and Human Services has updated their website to address [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

3. Previous Update Issues

- [Monday, 23 March 2020 - Issue 1](#)
- [Tuesday, 24 March 2020 - Issue 2](#)
- [Wednesday, 25 March 2020 - Issue 3](#)
- [Thursday, 26 March 2020 - Issue 4](#)
- [Friday, 27 March 2020 - Issue 5](#)
- [Monday, 30 March 2020 - Issue 6](#)
- [Tuesday, 31 March 2020 - Issue 7](#)

Geoff Gwilym
Chief Executive Officer

Disclaimer: *The information gathered has been drawn from a number of sources and VACC strongly recommends that members revert to the primary source of information for any clarification.*