



Wednesday, 8 April 2020
Issue 13.0

Today we have been waiting on more specific detail from the Federal Government regarding their much publicised JobKeeper package.

As the Bill is still being debated in Parliament (which also links to FairWork legislation for improved flexibility in employee leave provisions), we've decided to release our Update - adding we will provide information on the new Act to members as soon as practicable.

I would also like to remind members to take advantage of additional services being provided VACC during this time of uncertainty.

These include:

- Three free counselling sessions with Psychology Melbourne
- Access to VACC's online learning platform
- VACC's OHSE corona virus checklist

More information on each service is included in Section 2 of this Update.

Please remember to reach out to the VACC team at any time with questions or concerns. We are here to help.

1. GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rent relief package for commercial tenants affected by coronavirus

Prime Minister Scott Morrison has announced new rental waivers and deferrals for commercial tenants affected by the impact of the coronavirus crisis. Under the scheme, which was announced after a meeting of the National Cabinet on yesterday (Tuesday, 7 April), landlords will have to reduce leases in proportion to the reduction in the tenant's business.

Key points:

- Commercial landlords are legally required to engage with tenants who meet the criteria about rental arrangements
- They cannot terminate leases or draw on a tenant's security, while tenants must honour leases
- Mr Morrison said residential tenancies were a matter for the states and territories

ABC News has published an informative article explaining the [new mandatory Code of Conduct](#).

Members can view the mandatory Code of Conduct [HERE](#).

2. MEMBER SERVICES

Coronavirus: Online learning platform available for members

VACC appreciates that members are all at different operational stages. Some businesses are still open, while others have slowed or decided to close their doors for the time being.

During this challenging time, VACC offers members the use of the Chamber's internal online learning platform. The simple-to-use system allows members and their staff to refresh current competencies to upskill with key short learning programs. Available modules cover core business skills including:

- Customer Service
- Communication & personal
- OHS
- Computer skills

Members interested in using the platform need to email an expression of interest to VACC People & Culture.

VACC can provide up to two user licenses (equates to two people at a time) per business for a two-week period.

After that time, the license(s) will be disabled, so the platform can be made available to another member.

For further details click [HERE](#).

Mental health check: Free counselling service available for VACC Members

Managing our mental health and being aware of how we are coping is important to all of us – because we all react differently to pressure points. Being able to come out the other side is critical, as is building resilience.

To help our members, VACC would like to offer our professional, confidential counselling service provided by Psychology Melbourne. This service can be accessed via phone or video link.

We would like to provide each member three (3) free sessions.

Simply call **03 9629 1001** for an appointment or book online at: <https://www.psychologymelbourne.com.au/appointments-opening-hours-fees-andrebates>. It is completely confidential.

Full reception is open at their main office in the Melbourne CBD for six days a week from

Monday – Thursday at 8:30am – 7pm;

Fridays from 8.30am – 6pm;

and Saturdays from 8:30am – 1:30pm

Members will simply need to state they are a VACC member. No further identifying information will be recorded or asked for.

For urgent situations please call Lifeline on 13 11 14.

VACC OHSE Checklist – Ensuring your workplace is safe during the coronavirus pandemic

VACC would like to remind members that it's crucial to avoid becoming complacent with safety in the workplace during this pandemic.

VACC OHSE Unit have put together a quick and easy checklist for automotive businesses to use to ensure the safety of their workers and customers, and to help minimise the risk of spreading the virus further. The checklist takes approx. 10-15mins to complete and is a simple 2-page tool designed to assist employers to consider the risks of coronavirus in their workplace. It will help identify any areas of concern that may need safety controls to be implemented to manage the risk.

Click [HERE](#) to access the checklist.

Workplace checklist – Coronavirus

1. Physical distancing in the workplace

- Display VACC posters around the business premises to remind staff and customers to maintain at least 1.5 metres distance between others at the workplace.
- Display signs at the entrance to meeting rooms to ensure the maximum safe capacity is not exceeded (no more than one person per four square metres of floor space).
- Re-arrange workstations, desks and tables in offices and lunchrooms further apart to comply with social distancing requirements.
- Move chairs and tables in customer waiting areas to comply with social distancing requirements.
- If possible, introduce shift arrangements so less staff are in the workplace at once.
- Instruct workers to conduct meetings by phone or online instead of in person. If not possible, mandate that meetings must be in a large space, minimum number of staff required should attend, and keep meetings short.
- Where possible, encourage workers to travel separately to/from work and to any off-site locations. ([VACC poster available.](#))
- Ensure a risk assessment is conducted for situations where workers need to be in a close vicinity for short periods of time (i.e. team lift situations). Controls must be put in place to reduce the risk of transmission in these rare situations.
- Inform customers prior to the delivering of services that some business activities have currently ceased due to Coronavirus risks (i.e. courtesy vehicles, etc).

- Review regular deliveries and request contactless delivery. Check to ensure systems for e-invoicing are in place.
- Provide social distancing markers on the floor in areas where customers line up or where workers perform tasks as a guide to comply with social distancing requirements.
- Nominate a staff member to be responsible for monitoring that staff and customers adhere to the required 1.5-metre social distancing. Regular enforcement is required by management to ensure effectiveness.

2. Handwashing and personal hygiene

- Have hand sanitiser stations at entry and exit points and around the workplace.
- Ensure bathrooms are well stocked with hand wash and paper towel.
- Display posters with instructions on how to hand wash/hand rub correctly.
- Instruct workers on other ways to limit the spread of germs, such as by not touching their face, sneezing/coughing into their elbow, and staying home when they are sick.
- Instruct your staff to limit contact with co-workers and customers – no shaking hands or touching objects unless necessary ([VACC poster provided](#)).
- If possible, accept only cashless transactions ([VACC poster provided](#)).
- Increase the number of rubbish receptacles in the workplace and ensure they are emptied regularly.

VACC OHSE Unit: 1300 585 136

Version 1, 7 April 2020

VACC
You're in good hands

3. HEAVY VEHICLES/SERVICE STATIONS

Update: Roadhouse Exemption

VACC can confirm the Victorian Chief Health Officer has now varied his directions (effective as of midnight Tuesday, 7 April), which includes allowing the use of food and drink facilities for use for fatigue related heavy vehicle drivers. The varied instruction can be found [HERE](#).

This follows reports to VACC that Victoria Police officers were threatening fines to roadhouses who had set up dine-in operations in light of the exemption.

VACC has engaged with the state Police Minister's office and subsequently been advised that this exemption is now well understood by the relevant authorities.

Should members encounter further issues, please email Imogen Reid ireid@vacc.com.au.

4. NEWS

The ABS releases 2nd Survey on Business impacts of COVID-19

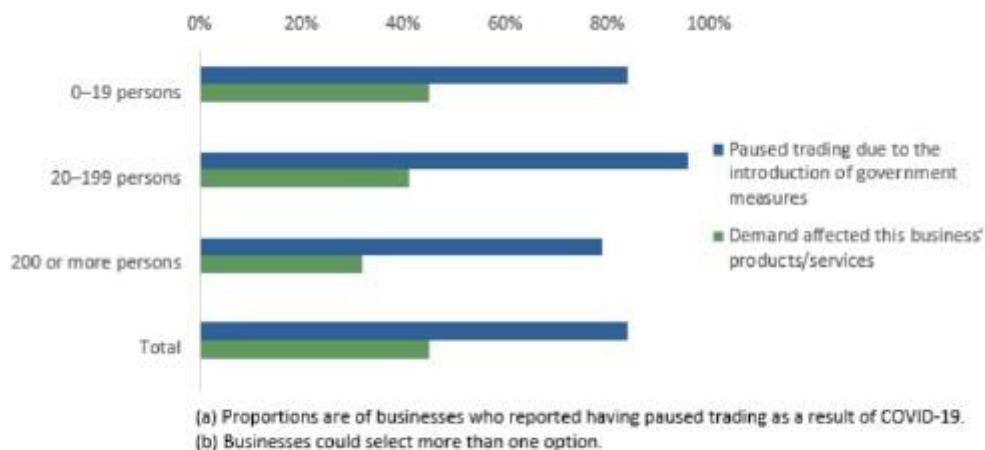
The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has released results from its second survey on the impacts of COVID-19 on business.

Topics covered in this survey are:

- Trading status of businesses;
- Impacts on the workforce of businesses;
- Operational impacts;
- Management responses and strategies.

Key findings:

- Two thirds (66%) of Australian businesses reported that their turnover or cash flow had reduced as a result of COVID-19.
- Nearly half (47%) of businesses made changes to their workforce arrangements as a result of COVID-19. For some businesses this included temporarily reducing or increasing staff working hours, changing the location where staff worked (including working from home) or staff being placed on leave.
- Two in five businesses (38%) have changed how they deliver their products or services, including shifting to online services.
- Over a third of businesses have renegotiated their lease and rental arrangements and a quarter have deferred loan repayments.
- 88% of businesses in the Other Services category which is predominantly automotive service and repair, are still currently operating.



PM plans manufacturing resurgence post coronavirus

The Australian Financial Review has reported Scott Morrison plans a resurgence in manufacturing once the coronavirus has been beaten, saying economic sovereignty needs to be safeguarded.

Australia's economic recovery will be a series of "trials", with some states moving faster than others in lifting COVID-19 shutdown restrictions and potentially gaining a competitive edge, Scott Morrison says.

5. TASMANIA

Round Two of the Small Business Emergency Grant

Round 2 of the Small Business Emergency Grants (SBEG) have been announced, with grants of \$2,500 available to those businesses under severe hardship and who have not yet received funding under the first round.

For the purpose of this Round:

- the definition of small business has been lifted to having less than 25 FTE employees,
- the eligibility is no longer limited to targeted areas but is available to any business experiencing severe hardship that meets the criteria of a loss in revenue of greater than 30 per cent.

To apply, please read the guidelines and eligibility criteria [here](#).

Release of the Small Business Hardship Grant

The State Government has committed \$20 million, for one-off grants of \$15,000 to those businesses who have been highly impacted by the COVID 19 restrictions and are experiencing significant hardship.

Applications for the grants will be competitively assessed, with payments to be made to approved applications within two weeks.

To be eligible for the Hardship Grant, businesses must:

- demonstrate severe hardship,
- show they are able to operate in the current environment
- provide necessary products and services to the community,
- or are in strong positions to continue to support local jobs and economic growth into the recovery phase.

To apply, please read the guidelines and eligibility criteria [here](#).

6. 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](#)
- [Wednesday, 1 April 2020 - Issue 8](#)
- [Thursday, 2 April 2020 - Issue 9](#)
- [Friday, 3 April 2020 - Issue 10](#)

- [Monday, 6 April 2020 - Issue 11](#)
- [Tuesday, 7 April 2020 - Issue 12](#)

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.*