

# BULLETIN

## Industry Divisions



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Dear Member

To say COVID-19 is impacting business would be understating the reality of the world we live in today and most notably well into the future. At some point we will start to see this crisis through the rear vision mirror however it's important now more than ever to start thinking and preparing for worst case scenario and what the recovery looks like for you and your business.

There are some simple steps you can take to reassure your customers that their health and safety is front of mind when their car is in for a service or repair. I am sure many of you have received emails from various sources including VACC outlining measures taken to minimise risk of infection to employees and customers. It's important you do the same, whether its via email text, phone or in person. Promote that you are taking the necessary precautions for your customers and staff and have the necessary policies and procedures in place to deal with COVID-19. Keep abreast of the information available from various Government Departments and VACC.

There is a wide range of useful information available from the [Department of Health](#), [WorkSafe](#), mental health service providers such as [Beyond Blue](#) and of course check out regular updates on the [VACC](#) website.

In addition, these simple measures will go a long way to ensure peace of mind and just maybe the new normal moving forward.

- Regular cleaning and sanitising of workplace including reception area, waiting rooms, bathrooms and lunchrooms.
- During an outbreak ensure your waiting rooms remain hygienic, remove magazines, and all other similar items that can be manually handled. You may need to think about closing waiting rooms during periods of outbreaks and offer pickup and drop off as an alternative.
- Coffee/tea making facilities are kept clean, use of disposable cups highly recommended.
- Disinfecting vehicles on pickup and delivery including wiping down of all contact points such as steering wheel, door handles, door switches, seats, infotainment, gear shift lever to name just a few.
- Attention to detail is key here, cleaning keys with disinfectant prior to handing back to the customer will provide reassurance that you are on top of it. Have hand sanitisers available for staff and customers.
- Where possible provide hand washing facilities for customers as well as employees.
- If available, use of seat, floor and steering wheel covers are used before work is undertaken.
- Display general hygiene policies and instructions throughout the workplace including reception and waiting rooms.
- Monitor the health and safety of employees and take remedial action where necessary.
- Have a contingency plan to ensure you can remain open during an outbreak, you may have to consider staggering shifts to limit risk of infection and to ensure the safety and wellbeing of your employees and customers.
- A mixture of 70% methylated spirits and 30% water is a good substitute where normal disinfectant agents are in short supply however this is not to be used on eating and drinking utensils, food contact surfaces and equipment.

Given the uncertainties in the current environment, if you are already experiencing financial difficulties and concerned about your obligations with meeting loan repayments it's important that you engage your bank or broker early so that alternative solutions can be found.

For many business owners, recognising that your company faces a crisis is the first thing you must do. The unfamiliarity and uncertainty of this pandemic requires you as leaders in your field to relinquish the belief that a top-down response will result in stability. No one could have envisaged the outbreak of COVID-19, it's important that you set clear priorities for the response and empowering others to discover and implement solutions that serve those priorities<sup>[1]</sup>.

It is certain, there will be change but now is not the time to panic, you are the professionals people rely on for the health and safety of their vehicles. You need to adapt and be agile in this environment. Let us band together and come out on the other side better and stronger than before. Start thinking about how your business will survive.

Announcements of Government assistance packages are becoming frequent during this time, rest assured VACC will continue to advocate for better conditions and protections of its members and the automotive industry.

As always, we are here to assist, so, please use your membership and call us if you have any queries or concerns.

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<sup>[1]</sup><https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/leadership-in-a-crisis-responding-to-the-coronavirus-outbreak-and-future-challenges>