



Tuesday, 25 August 2020
Issue 40.0

1. COVID-19 RELATED SAFETY UPDATES

Covid Safe Plans now required for businesses with less than 5 employees

Previously the Victorian Government allowed an exemption for businesses with less than 5 employees in having to develop a Covid Safe Plan. This has now been amended to make it mandatory for every workplace permitted to operate onsite under Stage 4 'Stay at Home' restrictions to have a COVID Safe Plan. For workplaces operating onsite under Stage 3 'Stay at Home' restrictions it is advised to have a COVID Safe Plan, however at this stage, it is still not a mandatory requirement.

For more information click [here](#).

2. INDUSTRY RELATIONS

Updates to Stage 4 Restrictions Permitted Workplace List

VACC members should be aware that Stage 4 Restrictions Permitted Workplace List is being updated on a regular basis and as such we will endeavor to keep you updated on these changes where it is likely to affect member businesses. For example, effective of 13 August 2020 from 11:59 an update relating to car rental businesses was made.

Transport, Postal and Warehousing

Car rentals limited to use by permitted workers or businesses that are able to operate under the Permitted Work Premises List, or for individuals who require a private vehicle for emergency or medical reasons.

For more information on Permitted Workplaces click [here](#).

3. GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pause on evictions extended and extra renter protections

The Victorian Government will extend a ban on evictions and rental increases until the end of the year, increase assistance and ensure tenant turnover is taken into account in rental negotiations – giving tenants certainty and security they won't lose their home or workplace during the pandemic. To ensure greater fairness – and support small local businesses – additional measures will also be introduced, with commercial landlords required to provide rent relief in proportion with the fall in turnover being experienced by eligible tenants going forward.

Members can read more on this announcement [here](#).

Victorian Government's plan to extend State of Emergency Powers

The state government is proposing legislation to extend the current state of emergency in Victoria in order to keep a number of current restrictions, such as wearing face coverings an enforceable rule. The current state of emergency is set to expire on Sept 13. Under Victoria's Public Health and Wellbeing Act, a state of emergency, which must be renewed every month, can only last for up to six months. The state of emergency is what allows the Chief Health Officer's directions to be legally enforceable. Read more [here](#).

Further land tax relief for landlords and business owners

The Victorian Government has [announced further land tax relief for landlords and business owners](#), in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, as part of its extension of the commercial and residential tenancy relief schemes until 31 December 2020. These updates include:

- An increased 50% waiver of the property's 2020 land tax, and deferral to 31 March 2021, for landlords of residential and commercial properties who provide eligible tenants with a 50% or more outright rent waiver for at least three months.
- Owner-occupiers of commercial properties can obtain a 25% waiver of the property's 2020 land tax, and payment of the remaining tax can be deferred to 31 March 2021, if they would be eligible under the commercial tenancy relief scheme as if they were a tenant.

For more information click [here](#).

Commercial Landlord Hardship Fund

The Victorian Government introduced the Commercial Tenancy Relief Scheme (CTRS) to support commercial tenants whose income has been affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The Commercial Landlord Hardship Fund has been created in recognition of small, private landlords who may not have the capacity to provide rent reductions to their tenants under the requirements of the Commercial Tenancy Relief Scheme.

The Victorian Government is offering grants of up to \$3,000 per tenancy to eligible small private, individual and joint-owner landlords, who are facing financial hardship after reducing rent for their tenants under CTRS requirements.

To apply click [here](#).

Revised service arrangements for vehicles that are in for urgent repairs

VACC has sought and received specific guidance from the Victorian Government with respect to unclear terms contained within the Stage 4 Restrictions that have been imposed on the automotive retail sector.

In response, VACC has been informed by the Victorian Government that:

Routine maintenance is not permitted, but where urgent vehicle repairs are being undertaken, other maintenance and servicing can also be completed at this time to keep the vehicle roadworthy. Product recalls or repairs are permitted as this relates to ensuring safety.

You can read the full bulletin by taking [this link](#).

4. VICTORIAN CASES

Positive fall in average new cases per day

Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews and Chief Health Officer, Brett Sutton, have declared they are "confident" the state's daily coronavirus figures will not exceed 300 cases a day again under their watch, but warned of "stubborn" transmission in certain settings that may be difficult to completely suppress as Victoria's numbers drop. The state's single day increase in cases peaked with 725 new cases and a seven-day daily average of 573 cases on August 5, as part of a second wave linked to a handful of cases in hotel quarantine. The number of new cases in the last 24 hours as of today, August 25 2020, is 148, with 8 deaths. Read more [here](#).

5. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT

COVID-19 Workplace Posters pack

The VACC OHS&E Unit has compiled all of VACC's COVID-19 posters in one place. The posters aim to help members remind customers and staff of workplace safety guidelines.

Members are encouraged to download, print and display the posters in prominent areas such as the lunchroom, reception and/or waiting area.

The posters cover topics such as good hygiene when servicing, payment tips, mental health, and face coverings in the workplace.

Members can view and download the posters [here](#).

6. PREVIOUS UPDATE ISSUES

You can read previous Updates of COVID-19 [HERE](#).

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.*