

Further advice in response to frequently asked question on Automotive Industry reopening

The Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce (VACC) on Tuesday welcomed the State Government's announcement that under the Third Step, and from 11:59pm on Tuesday, Melbourne will move from "stay home" to "stay safe", with no more restrictions on the reasons to leave home.

Under this announcement automotive retail will be permitted to reopen from Wednesday, 28 October.

Frequently asked questions (FAQ) from VACC members and the most up to date advice we have been provided in relation to the FAQ are listed below.

Important notice

It is important to note that the advice provided in these answers is subject to change by the Victorian Government in the release of their guidance. The government guidance is usually released by the Government at 11.59pm on each business day. VACC will provide updates as advice from Government changes, however, for surety please stay abreast of any changes on the Vic Gov and Vic Businesses Coronavirus websites.

All advice provided in the FAQs below is contingent upon each business / dealership having a COVID Safe Plan in place that strictly follow the COVID Safe principles, which remain applicable for all businesses. **No COVID Safe Plan means you cannot open.**

What automotive retail industry sectors can open?

All retail automotive can open. Automotive businesses are not limited by the sales, repair, service and component replacement work requested by consumers.

You must have a COVID Safe Plan in place that strictly follow the COVID Safe principles that mandate that you:

- must ensure physical distancing
- must wear a face mask
- must practice good hygiene
- must keep thorough records and act quickly if staff become unwell should avoid interactions in enclosed spaces
- should create workforce bubbles.

To limit the number of people who may gather at your business at any one time you must also implement the 'four square metre rule'. i.e. no more than one patron per four square meters of available floor space in your premises.

Do we have to wear masks?

Yes. Staff and consumers must wear a fully fitted facial mask.

What staff capacity can each business have?

VACC has been advised by the Victorian Government that all automotive retailers can open with 100 per cent staff capacity. VACC therefore awaits an update to the [Workplace \(Additional Industry Obligations\) Directions \(No 9\)](#) for confirmation of this advice, meaning that the 33% reduction in workforce capacity requirements for retail facilities no longer applies.

Can staff return to work on site?

Yes. This is your decision. Where you deem it not reasonably practicable for a staff member to fulfil their duties at home, you can direct them to return to work.

Can we open our customer waiting lounge?

Yes, you can open your customer waiting lounges and other consumer facing amenities.

To limit the number of people who may gather in a waiting area at one time, you must allow entry to no more than one patron per four square metres of available floor space in your premises.

Can we open our dealership showrooms?

Yes, you can open your dealership showrooms.

To limit the number of people who may gather in a waiting area at one time, you must allow entry to no more than one patron per four square metres of available floor space in your premises.

Can we do test drives?

Yes, you can do test drives.

VACC would urge you to allow consumers to conduct test drives without a staff member.

If this is not possible a 1.5 m physical distancing and wearing of face masks must be adhered to.

Are we still required to issue Permitted Worker Permits?

[Metro-Regional Work Travel Scheme Directions](#) were enacted at 11.59pm last night, replacing the Permitted Worker Permit Scheme Directions (No 8). VACC Industrial Relations will advise further details on this at some stage today.

What must my COVID Safe Plan set out?

- Your actions to help prevent the introduction of coronavirus (COVID-19) in your workplace
- The level of face-covering or personal protective equipment (PPE) required for your workforce
- How you will prepare for, and respond to, a suspected or confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) in your workplace
- The plan must demonstrate how you will meet all of the requirements set out by the Victorian Government.

It is important that your COVID Safe Plan is current and an accurate reflection of what measures your business has in place. Organisations with multiple worksites must complete a COVID Safe Plan for each worksite.

VACC members are encouraged to consider implementing further measures where appropriate, such as those stated in the [VACC COVID 19 Protective Plan & Implementation Automotive Retail Franchise Sector Guidance & best practice.](#)

VACC and its members must remain vigilant to all requirements and adopt a view of not being responsible for an 'outbreak' or be an epicenter for a COVID cluster. The last thing we need is for the Government to issue further close down direction.

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