

Reference No: Lockdown extended/dh-6-21

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7-day 'Circuit Breaker' Lockdown Extended for Metropolitan Melbourne 11:59pm Thursday, 3 June 2021 – 11:59pm Thursday, 10 June 2021

The Acting Victorian Premier has today released a [Statement](#) announcing that the 7-day 'circuit breaker' lockdown will be extended in **Metropolitan Melbourne** from 11:59pm Thursday, 3 June until 11:59pm Thursday, 10 June 2021.

Under the extended 'circuit breaker' lockdown in **Metropolitan Melbourne**, there remain five reasons for people to leave their home:

- shopping for things that are needed (once per day);
- care and caregiving;
- exercise (up to 2 hours per day);
- authorised work and permitted education; and
- to get vaccinated.

The limitation on exercise and shopping will be increased to **ten kilometres from home** – or the closest shop (if not within the ten-kilometre radius). Members will note that this is broadly in line with restrictions that applied last year in Melbourne.

Under the [Table of Restrictions](#) released with the Acting Premier's Statement, the following automotive industry businesses can continue to operate through this lockdown in **Metropolitan Melbourne** as **authorised providers and workers**:

- Petrol stations, including a petrol station that sells groceries
- Vehicle and mechanical repair services, including 'logbook' servicing
- 'Click and collect/deliver' services
- Emergency repair workers
- Roadside assistance services
- Ancillary and support businesses, where necessary for the operations of an authorised provider
- Administrative services provided by an employer to enable its employees to work from home – e.g., payroll and IT services
- Truck stops and roadhouses, but not the provision of seated dining or shower facilities to persons who are not transport, freight or logistics drivers.

For **Regional Victoria**, current restrictions will be reduced from 11:59pm Thursday, 3 June to enable people to leave home for any reason. All automotive workplaces will be able to open. Those operating those operating food and drink facilities (e.g. roadhouses), will be able to provide seated dining service with a maximum patron cap of 50 people per venue.

COVIDSafe Requirements

For **Metropolitan Melbourne**, **face covering** requirements for both **indoors and outdoors** will continue to apply. With the exception of record keeping, current COVIDSafe Workplace Requirements will also continue to apply, including in relation to cleaning requirements and applicable density requirements of **1 person per 4 square metres**. With regard to record keeping, **all Retail Facilities** (e.g. food and drink facilities) will now require the [Victorian Government QR Code Service app](#) – with the current **15-minute threshold removed for such businesses**.

For **Regional Victoria**, COVIDSafe Workplace Requirements are as above, except that the requirement to wear a face covering outdoors has been removed where 1.5 metres physical distancing can be maintained. In addition, a number of businesses that operate in industries that remain closed in

Metropolitan Melbourne (e.g. cafes and restaurants) will be required to check the IDs of everyone they serve (in an attempt to prevent people living in Metropolitan Melbourne from travelling to Regional Victoria).

Members are encouraged to contact the VACC OHSE Unit for any further information or assistance, including in relation to their [CovidSafe Plan obligations](#) on 9829 1265.

What entitlements apply for employees required to self-isolate/quarantine?

Employees who have visited a location at the date and time where a COVID-19 case has visited – may be required by the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to get tested and quarantine, despite not feeling unwell or not having any symptoms.

An employee is entitled to paid **personal/carer's** leave **only** in circumstances where they are unfit for work due to personal illness or injury – or in relation to carer's leave, where they are required to provide care or support to a member of the employee's immediate family or household – because of a personal illness or injury affecting the member, or an unexpected emergency affecting the member. Therefore, an employee who is required to quarantine is **not entitled** to paid personal/carer's leave **unless** they meet these requirements.

Where the employee has sufficient **annual leave (or long service leave)** accrued, an employer may approve this request. In certain circumstances an employer might also consider agreeing to a request for annual leave in advance (i.e., prior to the leave having been accrued). Such an agreement must be in writing and meet a number of requirements. It is therefore recommended that members considering granting leave in advance contact the IR Department for further information.

Where neither paid personal/carer's leave nor annual leave is appropriate, the employer may approve a period of **unpaid leave** for the employee. In such circumstances it is important to note that employees required to self-isolate or quarantine by DHHS may be eligible for the **Australian Government's \$1,500 Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment and/or the Victorian Government's \$450 Coronavirus (COVID-19) Test Isolation Payment**. Employees seeking further information on eligibility requirements can be directed to [Services Australia](#) and the [DHHS](#).

Can I stand down employees?

Members who are unable to operate as a result of the 'circuit breaker' lockdown, are advised to consult with affected employees about taking **paid annual leave, long service leave, or unpaid leave** during this period. VACC advises a similar approach may be taken by businesses who are unable to provide employees with their usual ordinary hours of work, as a result of the temporary lockdown.

Where agreement is reached, a written record of the employee's request to take leave must be kept.

If agreement is unable to be reached and the business is unable to operate as a result of the closedown, the employer is entitled to **stand down** the employee without pay.

Members considering standing down an employee should contact our Industrial Relations experts on 9829 1123 or ir@vacc.com.au for further advice and assistance.

Will the State Government provide financial support to affected businesses?

The Victorian Government has [announced](#) that the Business Costs Assistance Program is scheduled to open for applications tomorrow, providing up to \$5,000 for eligible employing and non-employing businesses in sectors that cannot operate under the circuit breaker restrictions and which cannot work remotely. The program will remain open for applications until 24 June. Businesses can register their interest in the program at business.vic.gov.au.

Can I be fined?

On-the-spot fines of up to \$1,652 (for individuals) and up to \$9,913 (for businesses) still apply for anyone who breaches COVID-19 restrictions.

Members needing further advice or assistance, **including regional members who may be less familiar with operating under this level of restriction**, are encouraged to contact VACC's Workplace Relations team on 03 9829 1123 or ir@vacc.com.au.

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