

Minister for Health announces easing of restrictions from 11:59pm tonight under new pandemic orders

The Minister for Health, Martin Foley will today sign **pandemic orders** under the new *Public Health and Wellbeing Act*, which is due to commence 11:59pm on 15 December 2021.

Today's announcement is a modest easing of restrictions until the Victorian Government reviews information regarding the Omicron variant before further changes to protective measures (such as face masks) are considered.

As previously foreshadowed, the practical effect of today's announcement is that Victorian Government mandated requirements relating to COVID-19, including those relating to the vaccination status of workers and COVIDSafe Plans, will continue into 2022.

A summary of the key parts of the announcement for VACC members is provided below:

Vaccination Status Requirements

- Vaccination requirements for **workers remains unchanged.**
- Patrons will **no longer** need to **show their vaccination status** at **non-essential retail settings** e.g. **vehicle dealerships, auto parts retailers, car rentals.**
- People under 18 years of age will no longer be required to show proof of their vaccination status at all venues, such as hospitality (12 years of age currently).
- **All other vaccination mandates for workers and patrons remain.**

Face Masks

- Face masks must be carried at all times and worn by workers and customers **whilst in an indoor space that is a publicly accessible area of a retail premises** (except if an exemption applies). It is **recommended** that masks continue to be worn where you cannot physically distance, if you have any symptoms or if you are with people who may be particularly vulnerable to COVID-19. **This requirement remains unchanged.**

Deep cleaning requirements

- Workplaces exposed to a positive coronavirus case will **no longer need to be deep cleaned**, however, **COVIDSafe Plans will still need to be maintained.**

VACC will provide a further update tomorrow once the new pandemic orders giving effect to the announcement have been released and reviewed in detail.

In the interim, members seeking further advice or assistance are encouraged to contact VACC's Workplace Relations team on 03 9829 1123 or ir@vacc.com.au.

VACC Workplace Relations

VACC House, 464 St Kilda Road, Melbourne Vic 3004