

07 December 2020

Victorian Government COVID-19 Response: Preliminary COVID-Normal Restrictions

On Sunday, 06 December Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews and Health Minister Martin Foley announced a transition to the preliminary stages of the 'COVID-Normal' restrictions across Victoria.

Caseload

Victoria recorded its 37th straight day with zero new cases. Victoria has zero cases under investigation and zero cases with an unknown source over the last fortnight. There are no active cases in Victoria; and it is this caseload that makes it safe to further ease restrictions.

The Premier noted that the incoming restrictions will '*remain for a significant period of time*', subject to health advice and stable caseload numbers.

Preliminary COVID-Normal Restrictions

Preliminary COVID-Normal Restrictions – From Monday 07 December	
Category	Restrictions
Social	<p>Leave home: No restriction on reasons to leave home but stay safe.</p> <p>Public gatherings: Up to 100 people can gather outdoors from any number of households, infants under 12 months are not included in the cap.</p> <p>Visitors to the home: Up to 30 visitors can visit a home in a day (infants under 12 months are not counted in the cap). Visitors may be from any number of households and may visit either together or separately. Front and backyards are considered part of the home.</p>
Education and childcare	<p>Childcare and early education: Open.</p> <p>Schools: Onsite learning.</p> <p>Adult education: Open with no density quotient required in classroom settings.</p>
Work	<p>Offices: capped at no more than 25 per cent of a workforce on-site. Offices will be able to increase to 50 per cent from 11 January 2021 – or for workplaces with fewer than 40 staff, up to 20 staff onsite – subject to public health advice.</p> <p>The Victorian Public Service will commence a phased return to work at 25 per cent from 11 January and increase to 50 per cent from 8 February 2021, subject to public health advice.</p> <p>All workplaces with onsite workers require a COVIDSafe Plan.</p>
Hospitality	<p>Hospitality: No caps, however, density quotient of 1 per 2sqm for indoor and outdoor hospitality venues. Up to 25 patrons are permitted in a venue before the density quotient applies.</p> <p>No requirement for seated service. Density quotient of 1 per 4sqm on a dancefloor up to a maximum of 50 people.</p> <p>All venues are required to use electronic record keeping when applying the density quotient of 1 per 2 sqm. In venues not using electronic record a density quotient of 1 per 4 sqm applies.</p>

	<p>Food courts: Indoor and outdoor food courts open with a density quotient of 1 per 2 sqm. No patron cap for indoor food courts.</p>
<p>Shopping, hairdressing and personal care</p>	<p>Real estate: Inspections and auctions operating with a density quotient of 1 per 2sqm, subject to use of electronic record keeping. If not using electronic record keeping a density quotient of 1 per 4sqm applies.</p> <p>Retail: (e.g. supermarkets, other retail) Density quotient of 1 per 2sqm, with record keeping where practicable.</p> <p>Hairdressing, beauty and personal care services: Density quotient of 1 per 2sqm applies, when using electronic record keeping. In venues not using electronic record a density quotient of 1 per 4 sqm applies. Face masks no longer required.</p>
<p>Exercise and recreation</p>	<p>Indoor physical recreation and community sport: No patron caps with a density quotient of 1 per 4sqm for each space.</p> <p>Gym and exercise classes: limited to 50 people (excluding anyone necessary for running the class). COVID Marshals required when gyms are staffed. At times when gyms are unstaffed, a density quotient of 1 per 8 sqm applies.</p> <p>Signage must state the number of people permitted inside, wipes and disinfectant must be supplied for use by patrons, and record keeping is required and venues with capacity of greater than 500 patrons must publish a COVIDSafe Plan online.</p> <p>Outdoor physical recreation and community sport: Up to a maximum of 100 patrons for outdoor fitness classes with a density quotient of 1 per 2sqm. Record keeping is required and venues with capacity of greater than 500 patrons must publish a COVIDSafe Plan online.</p> <p>Pools, spas, saunas, steam rooms and springs: <i>Indoor venues</i> open with a density quotient of 1 per 4 sqm. <i>Outdoor pools</i> open with a density quotient of 1 per 2 sqm. Record keeping is required</p>
<p>Ceremonies and Occasions</p>	<p>Weddings: No maximum attendee caps indoors or outdoors, density quotient of 1 per 2 sqm applies when using electronic record keeping. In venues not using electronic record a density quotient of 1 per 4 sqm applies.</p> <p>If held in a private residence, up to 30 guests can attend. Density quotient of 1 per 4sqm on a dancefloor up to a maximum of 50 people.</p> <p>Funerals: No maximum attendee caps indoors or outdoors, density quotient of 1 per 2sqm applies when using electronic record keeping. In venues not using electronic record a density quotient of 1 per 4 sqm applies. If held in a private residence, up to 30 guests can attend.</p> <p>Ceremonies and religious gatherings: Density quotient of 1 per 2sqm applies. Venues using the density quotient of 1 per 2sqm must use electronic record keeping. In venues not using electronic record a density quotient of 1 per 4 sqm applies. Indoor and outdoor ceremonies can occur at the same time.</p>
<p>Entertainment and Leisure</p>	<p>Seated entertainment venues (indoors and outdoors): Open, up to 75 per cent of fixed seated capacity with maximum patron cap of 1000 people, density quotient of 1 per 2sqm in foyers, bars, bathrooms etc when using electronic record keeping.</p>

	<p>In venues not using electronic record a density quotient of 1 per 4 sqm applies. Venues with capacity of greater than 500 patrons must publish a COVIDSafe Plan online.</p> <p>Arrangements for large events determined on an individual basis under the Public Events Frameworks.</p> <p>Indoor non-seated venues (such as galleries): Open, up to 50 per cent total capacity with maximum patron cap of 1000 people. Density quotient of 1 per 2sqm when using electronic record keeping. In venues not using electronic record a density quotient of 1 per 4 sqm applies. Venues with capacity of greater than 500 patrons must publish a COVIDSafe Plan online.</p> <p>Arrangements for large events determined on an individual basis under the Public Events Framework.</p> <p>Outdoor non-seated entertainment venues (such as Zoos, live museums): Open, density quotient of 1 per 2sqm when using electronic record keeping. In venues not using electronic record a density quotient of 1 per 4sqm applies. Group limits removed. Indoor spaces at outdoor venues open, subject to restrictions relevant to the space (e.g. hospitality or retail). Venues with capacity of greater than 500 patrons must publish a COVIDSafe Plan online.</p> <p>Arcades, escape rooms, bingo centres: Open, no maximum patron caps and a density quotient of 1 per 2sqm applies when using electronic record keeping. In venues not using electronic record a density quotient of 1 per 4 sqm applies.</p> <p>Drive in cinemas: Open, in areas outside of vehicles density quotient of 1 per 2sqm applies when using electronic record keeping. In venues not using electronic record a density quotient of 1 per 4 sqm applies. Venues with capacity of greater than 500 patrons must publish a COVIDSafe Plan online.</p> <p>Amusement parks: Open, up to 75 per cent of venue capacity. Density quotient of 1 per 4sqm applies indoors. Density quotient of 1 per 2sqm applies outdoors, when using electronic record keeping. In venues not using electronic record a density quotient of 1 per 4 sqm applies. Venues with capacity of greater than 500 patrons must publish a COVIDSafe Plan online.</p> <p>Gaming: Open, with a density quotient of 1 per 4sqm, every second machine turned off, and no seated service requirement. Electronic record keeping required.</p> <p>Nightclubs: Open, standing service permitted. Density quotient of 1 per 4sqm on a dancefloor up to a maximum of 50 people. Density quotient of 1 per 2sqm elsewhere in the venue, with no maximum patron limit. Electronic record keeping required</p>
<p>Community and Arts Facilities</p>	<p>Community venues and facilities including libraries and toy libraries: No patron caps with a density quotient of 1 per 2sqm, subject to use of electronic record keeping. If not using electronic record keeping a density quotient of 1 per 4sqm applies.</p> <p>Creative arts facilities: No patron caps with a density quotient of 1 per 2sqm, subject to use of electronic record keeping.</p>
<p>Travel and Accommodation</p>	<p>Accommodation: Bookings restricted to the private gathering limit. The person or household booking the accommodation can have up to 30 visitors.</p>

	<p>Tourism spaces and groups: No patron cap on tour groups. Masks must be worn on tour transport.</p> <p>Intrastate travel: Allowed.</p> <p>Interstate travel: Continued international border controls. State border controls activated in case of outbreaks</p>
<p>Care facilities and hospitals</p>	<p>Visitors: No restrictions on purpose, number or time limits of visits. Symptomatic individuals (e.g. sore throat), close contacts and returned international travellers excluded from visiting</p>

For further details see the Victorian Government’s COVID-Normal [industrial](#) and [societal](#) framework.

Industry

The Retail Industry Restart Guidance can be found [here](#).

All businesses are required to have a COVIDSafe Plan demonstrating:

- Actions to help prevent the introduction of COVID-19 and responding to suspect or confirmed cases
- Mandated use of face masks (except where exemptions apply)
- How requirements set by the Victorian Government are being met.

Some useful links for the businesses:

- [Six principles for COVIDsafe workplaces](#)
- [Face masks at work](#) which includes examples of exceptions to use.

International Travel

Victoria will start accepting international flights from Monday, 7 December when the state’s quarantine program resumes.

The Premier indicated that there has been a number of changes made to the new Hotel Quarantine system including exclusive contracts with all staff, who will be required to only work for the hotel they are assigned to. In addition, no one who lives with anyone who works in aged care will be offered a contract.

The Andrews Labor Government will introduce legislation to enable charging for mandatory quarantine, with fees set at \$3,000 per adult, \$1,000 for each additional adult in a room and \$500 for children aged between three and 18 years and there will be no charge for children under three.

These costs are the same as in New South Wales and South Australia, and comparable to other jurisdictions’ fees.

Individuals and families experiencing financial or other hardship can apply for a fee reduction or waiver and payment plans will also be available for all residents.

Face Masks

Must be carried at all times. Mandatory when inside shopping centres, retail stores inside shopping centres, department stores, electronics stores, furniture stores, hardware stores or supermarkets, when travelling on public transport or when travelling in a commercial passenger vehicle (unless a lawful exemption applies).



Any person diagnosed or suspected of having COVID-19, or who is a close contact of someone diagnosed with COVID-19, must wear a face covering if leaving home/accommodation for a permitted reason, such as medical care.

Face coverings are recommended, but not mandatory, when leaving home and physical distancing cannot be maintained.

Further Information

For more information, please contact your Hawker Britton consultant, Victorian Director, JP Blandthorn on +61 407 366 304 or Policy and Business Analyst, Raphael Mengem at rmengem@hawkerbritton.com.

Further Hawker Britton Occasional Papers on the activities of the Victorian Government are available [here](#). For further coverage of Labor Government Responses to the COVID-19 Pandemic see Hawker Britton Briefs [here](#). For further coverage of Liberal Government Responses to the COVID-19 Pandemic see Barton Deakin Briefs [here](#).