

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Monday, 9 August 2021

LOCKDOWN TO LIFT IN REGIONAL VICTORIA

Victorians continue to do an incredible job keeping each other safe from coronavirus and our contact tracers are continuing to chase down every case in this outbreak. Following advice from Victoria's Chief Health Officer, the lockdown in regional Victoria will lift from 11:59pm tonight.

One of the most important things regional Victorians can do as we ease restrictions is to get themselves vaccinated to protect their family, friends, and their community. Eligible Victorians can book in at one of 50 open access sites across the state, through a Commonwealth clinic or their trusted GP.

There have been no new coronavirus cases in regional Victoria and thousands of primary close contacts have been cleared from the regions over the last few weeks.

The Chief Health Officer has advised that from 11:59pm tonight the five reasons to leave the home can be removed in regional Victoria and there will be no limit on the distance regional Victorians can travel from home. However, people will only be able to travel to Melbourne for a permitted reason and you must follow the Melbourne restrictions once there.

Importantly, private gatherings in the home are still not permitted, however, outdoor gatherings in public spaces can occur with up to 10 people. Face masks will also still be mandatory indoors and outdoors.

Food and hospitality will open for seated service only, a density requirement of 1 person per 4sqm will apply, with a maximum of 100 people per venue. Venues smaller than 100sqm can have up to 25 people before density requirements apply.

Retail can also open and personal services such as beauty and tattooing can resume. Face masks can be removed where required for the service to be performed.

Religious gatherings and ceremonies are allowed, with density requirements of 1 person per 4sqm, and no more than 100 people total indoors and 300 people outdoors per venue.

Weddings and funerals are also able to have up to 50 people at a venue. This limit doesn't include infants under 12 months of age, or the people required to conduct the service.

Community sport is open for all ages, including training and competition. Only the minimum number of participants (players, coaches, referees, officials, and carers or parents) needed to train or compete are permitted to attend, subject to a density quotient of 1 person per 4 sqm. Spectators are not permitted.

Entertainment venues can have up to 300 people per outdoor space with a density requirement of 1 person per 4 sqm and a cap of 100 people per space indoors. All entertainment facilities are required to have a COVID Check-in Marshal to monitor patrons checking-in with the Service Victoria app.

While stay at home orders remain in metropolitan Melbourne, we need to ensure the virus does not travel into regional Victoria. Businesses that are open in regional Victoria but closed in Melbourne – restaurants for dine-in service or beauty for example – must check the IDs of everyone they serve.

All regional Victorians need to continue with their COVIDSafe behaviours – most importantly to get tested immediately if they have any symptoms at all and get vaccinated if it's their turn.

For more information call the coronavirus hotline on 1800 675 398 or visit coronavirus.vic.gov.au.

To book a vaccination at one of Victoria's state-run clinics visit coronavirus.vic.gov.au/book-your-vaccine-appointment.

Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"We've always said the moment it's safe to lift restrictions we will. While we continue to get on top of this outbreak in Melbourne, minimal primary close contacts and no new cases means we can ease setting in regional Victoria"

"This outbreak is an important reminder that until more Australians are vaccinated, we cannot afford complacency to creep in – we must stay safe to stay open."

Quote attributable to Minister for Health Martin Foley

"Victoria's open access system is vaccinating more people than any other state or territory and we're continuing to ask Victorians – if you're eligible please get vaccinated – it's our only pathway out of the pandemic."