

Directions from Chief Health Officer in accordance with emergency powers arising from declared state of emergency

Stay Safe Directions (Victoria) (No 17)

Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic)

Section 200

I, Adjunct Clinical Professor Brett Sutton, Chief Health Officer, consider it reasonably necessary to eliminate or reduce the serious risk to public health—and reasonably necessary to protect public health—to give the following directions pursuant to section 200(1)(b) and (d) of the **Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic) (PHW Act)**:

PART 1 — PRELIMINARY

1 Preamble

- (1) The purpose of these directions is to address the serious public health risk posed to the State of Victoria by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (**SARS-CoV-2**).
- (2) These directions must be read together with the **Directions currently in force**.
- (3) These directions replace the **Stay Safe Directions (Victoria) (No 16)**.
- (4) These directions require anyone who ordinarily resides in the State of Victoria to:
 - (a) limit interactions with others by restricting gatherings; and
 - (b) carry and wear **face coverings** in certain settings.

2 Citation

These directions may be referred to as the **Stay Safe Directions (Victoria) (No 17)**.

3 Revocation

The **Stay Safe Directions (Victoria) (No 16)** are revoked at 11:59:00pm on 15 March 2021.

4 Stay safe period

For the purposes of these directions, the **stay safe period** is the period beginning at 11:59:00pm on 15 March 2021 and ending at 11:59:00pm on 9 April 2021.

PART 2 — STAY SAFE

5 Direction — staying safe while leaving the home

Leaving the home

- (1) A person who ordinarily resides in the State of Victoria during the stay safe period may leave the premises where the person ordinarily resides for any reason, subject to subclause (2).
- (2) When leaving their premises, a person:
 - (a) must comply with the face covering requirements in subclauses (7), (8), (9), (10) and (11); and
 - (b) if leaving the premises where they ordinarily reside for work, must do so in accordance with clause 6 (**work**); and
 - (c) must comply with the restrictions on gatherings in clause 7 (**gatherings**); and
 - (d) must comply with the Directions currently in force, including (without limitation) by:
 - (i) not engaging in an activity that is prohibited under the **Restricted Activity Directions (Victoria)**; and
 - (ii) only engaging in an activity permitted under the **Restricted Activity Directions (Victoria)** in accordance with any requirements set out in those directions.

Note 1: a person should take reasonable steps to maintain a distance of 1.5 metres from all other persons (except those people with whom they ordinarily reside) when leaving their premises, and should practise hand hygiene in accordance with the Department of Health's guidelines as amended from time to time by the Victorian government, available at: www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/hygiene-physical-distancing.

*Note 2: if a person experiences a temperature higher than 37.5°C or symptoms of respiratory infection, they are strongly encouraged to get a test for SARS-CoV-2 and remain at their ordinary place of residence until they obtain their test result. If they are diagnosed with SARS-CoV-2, they must self-isolate in accordance with the **Diagnosed Persons and Close Contacts Directions**.*

Ordinary place of residence

- (3) Subject to subclause (4), subclause (1) does not apply to a person at any time during the stay safe period when the person:
 - (a) no longer has an ordinary place of residence in the State of Victoria; or
 - (b) has an ordinary place of residence in the State of Victoria, but that place is temporarily unavailable or is unavailable because of a risk of harm (including harm relating to family violence or violence of another person at the premises).
- (4) If a suitable premises is made available for a person identified in subclause (3) to reside at for the stay safe period (or part thereof), that

premises is taken to be the person's ordinary place of residence for the stay safe period (or part thereof).

- (5) If a person's ordinary place of residence is outside the State of Victoria, the premises where that person is temporarily residing in the State of Victoria during the stay safe period (or part thereof) is taken to be the person's ordinary place of residence for the period (or part thereof).

Note: a person who is visiting and staying in Victoria, whether from overseas or interstate, is taken to be temporarily residing in Victoria. Where that person is staying in Victoria, these directions apply to them.

- (6) If, during the stay safe period, a person moves from the premises at which they ordinarily reside to a new premises, the new premises is taken to be the premises at which the person ordinarily resides from midnight on the day that the person moves.

Face covering requirements

- (7) Subject to subclause (9), a person may only leave the premises under subclause (1) if they:

- (a) carry a face covering at all times, except where subclause (8)(a), (b), (c) or (d) applies; and
- (b) wear a face covering:
- (i) while on **public transport** or in a **commercial passenger vehicle**; or

*Note: the **Restricted Activity Directions (Victoria)** permit a tourism operator (or another person) to operate a **vehicle** for the purpose of tourism services if the tourism operator and each person wears a face covering for the duration of the tourism service. In accordance with this subclause (7)(b), the persons on such a tourism service vehicle must wear a face covering.*

- (ii) while at a **hospital** to visit a patient of the hospital; or
- (iii) while in an **indoor space** when visiting a **care facility**:

*Note: the obligation to wear a face covering in an indoor space when visiting a care facility does not apply to residents or workers. Care facility workers have specific face covering requirements under the **Workplace (Additional Industry Obligations) Directions**.*

- (iv) while in an indoor space (which is accessible to members of the public) at a:
- (A) **retail shopping centre**, including any **retail facility** within the retail shopping centre; or
- (B) retail facility where the total of all indoor spaces accessible to members of the public is 2,000 square metres or more; or

Examples: a department, electronics, furniture or hardware store, or a supermarket, where each of which is 2,000 square metres or more.

- (C) **market** or **market stall**; or
 - (v) if they are a **diagnosed person** or a **close contact** and are leaving the premises:
 - (A) where they are required to self-isolate or self-quarantine; and
 - (B) prior to being given clearance from self-isolation or the period of self-quarantine ending,in accordance with the **Diagnosed Persons and Close Contacts Directions**; or
 - (vi) if they have been tested for SARS-CoV-2 and are awaiting the results of that test (except where that test was part of a surveillance or other asymptomatic testing program); or
- Note: the **Workplace (Additional Industry Obligations) Directions** sets out surveillance testing requirements for relevant industries and workers.*
- (vii) if they are experiencing any symptoms of SARS-CoV-2; and
 - (c) wear a face covering where required to do so in accordance with any other Directions currently in force.

Note 1: face shields on their own do not meet the face covering requirements. For further information, please refer to the Department of Health's guidelines as amended from time to time by the Victorian government, available at www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/face-masks-vic-covid-19.

Examples: face coverings may be required when outdoors in situations including (but not limited to) outdoor concerts, gardens and markets; participants at a street festival; and while waiting at a bus stop or tram or train station.

Note 2: it is recommended that face coverings be worn in other situations when physical distancing is not possible.

- (8) Subclause (7)(b) and (c) do not apply if a person complies with any other requirements under any other Directions currently in force and:
 - (a) the person is an infant or a child under the age of 12 years; or
 - (b) the person is a student while onsite at a primary **school** or outside school hours care; or
 - (c) the person is a **prisoner** in a **prison** (either in their cell or common areas), subject to any policies of that prison; or
 - (d) the person is detained in a **remand centre**, **youth residential centre** or **youth justice centre** (either in their room or common areas), subject to any policies of that centre; or
 - (e) the person has a physical or mental health illness or condition, or disability, which makes wearing a face covering unsuitable; or

Examples: persons who have obstructed breathing, a serious skin condition on their face, an intellectual disability, a mental health illness, or who have experienced trauma.

- (f) the person is communicating with a person who is deaf or hard of hearing and visibility of the mouth is essential for communication; or
- (g) the nature of a person's work or education means that wearing a face covering creates a risk to their health and safety; or
- (h) the nature of a person's work or education means that clear enunciation or visibility of the mouth is essential; or

Examples: teaching, lecturing, broadcasting.

- (i) the person is working by themselves in an enclosed indoor space (unless and until another person enters that indoor space); or

Example: a person working by themselves in an office.

- (j) the person is one of two persons being married while in the process of being married; or
- (k) the person is a professional sportsperson when training or competing; or

- (l) the person is engaged in any strenuous physical exercise; or

Examples: jogging, running, swimming, cycling.

- (m) the person is travelling in a vehicle by themselves or where each other person in the vehicle ordinarily resides at the same premises; or

- (n) the person is consuming food, drink or medicine; or

- (o) the person is undergoing dental or medical care or treatment to the extent that such care or treatment requires that no face covering be worn; or

- (p) the person is receiving a service from a facility which is permitted to operate under, and is operating in accordance with, the **Restricted Activity Directions (Victoria)**, to the extent that it is not reasonably practicable to receive that service wearing a face covering; or

- (q) the person is providing a service from a facility which is permitted to operate under, and is operating in accordance with, the **Restricted Activity Directions (Victoria)**, to the extent that it is not reasonably practicable to provide that service wearing a face covering; or

- (r) the person is asked to remove the face covering to ascertain identity; or

Examples: a person may be asked by police, security, bank or post office staff to remove a face covering to ascertain identity or when purchasing alcohol or cigarettes.

- (s) for emergency purposes; or
- (t) required or authorised by law; or
- (u) doing so is not safe in all the circumstances.

Face covering requirements in airports and on aircraft

- (9) Without limiting subclause (7)(b), during the stay safe period, a person in the State of Victoria at an **airport** or travelling in an **aircraft** must:
- (a) carry a face covering at all times, except where subclause (10)(a) or (b) applies; and
 - (b) wear a face covering while in an indoor space at an airport (and at all times while inside an aircraft); and
 - (c) wear a face covering where required to do so in accordance with any other Directions currently in force.

Note: face shields on their own do not meet the face covering requirements. For further information, please refer to the Department of Health's guidelines as amended from time to time by the Victorian government, available at: www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/face-masks-vic-covid-19.

- (10) Subclause (9)(b) and (c) do not apply if a person complies with any other requirements under any other Directions currently in force and:

- (a) the person is an infant or a child under the age of 12 years; or
- (b) the person has a physical or mental health illness or condition, or disability, which makes wearing a face covering unsuitable; or

Examples: persons who have obstructed breathing, a serious skin condition on their face, an intellectual disability, a mental health illness, or who have experienced trauma.

- (c) the person is communicating with a person who is deaf or hard of hearing and visibility of the mouth is essential for communication; or
- (d) the nature of a person's work or education means that wearing a face covering creates a risk to their health and safety; or
- (e) the nature of a person's work or education means that clear enunciation or visibility of the mouth is essential; or

Examples: teaching, lecturing, broadcasting.

- (f) the person is consuming food, drink or medicine; or
- (g) the person is undergoing dental or medical care or treatment to the extent that such care or treatment requires that no face covering be worn; or
- (h) the person is receiving a service from a facility which is permitted to operate under, and is operating in accordance with, the **Restricted Activity Directions (Victoria)**, to the extent that it is not reasonably practicable to receive that service wearing a face covering; or
- (i) the person is providing a service from a facility which is permitted to operate under, and is operating in accordance with, the **Restricted Activity Directions (Victoria)**, to the extent that it is not reasonably practicable to provide that service wearing a face covering; or

- (j) the person is asked to remove the face covering to ascertain identity; or

Examples: a person may be asked by police, security, or airport staff to remove a face covering to ascertain identity or when purchasing alcohol or cigarettes.

- (k) for emergency purposes; or
 - (l) required or authorised by law; or
 - (m) doing so is not safe in all the circumstances.
- (11) An **Authorised Officer** may require a person to attest in writing that they have complied with the requirements of subclause (9) to wear a face covering on an aircraft (subject to clause (10)).

PART 3 — WORK

6 Leaving premises to attend work

A person who ordinarily resides in the State of Victoria may attend work (whether paid or voluntary, including for charitable or religious purposes) at a work premises if:

- (1) the person who has employed or engaged the person to work has advised that it is permissible for them to do so in accordance with the Directions currently in force; or

*Note: the **Workplace Directions** address how certain workplaces may facilitate the return of persons to onsite work.*

- (2) it is not reasonably practicable for the person to do so from the premises where they ordinarily reside.

PART 4 — GATHERINGS

7 Restrictions on gatherings

Private gatherings

- (1) During the stay safe period, a person who ordinarily resides in the State of Victoria must not permit another person to enter the premises at which they ordinarily reside (whether or not entering any building on the premises).
- (2) Subclause (1) does not prevent any person entering the premises:
 - (a) if the other person also ordinarily resides at the premises; or
 - (b) if permitted under, and provided they comply with the requirements of, the Directions currently in force; or
 - (c) to attend or undertake work or provide or receive educational services;

Examples: a tradesperson for the purpose of carrying out repairs; a disability support worker; a vet; a person for end of life faith reasons.

Note: this includes a person who provides professional respite care for carers of people with complex needs, where that professional is permitted to work in accordance with the Directions currently in force.

- (d) to provide childcare, child-minding, early childhood education, schooling or education services (whether paid or on a voluntary basis); or
- (e) if that person is a parent or guardian of a child who ordinarily resides at the premises, to visit that child; or
- (f) to provide care and support to a relative or other person who ordinarily resides at the premises:
 - (i) who has particular needs because of age, infirmity, disability, illness or a chronic health condition; or
 - (ii) because of matters relating to the relative or other person's health (including mental health or pregnancy); or
- (g) to visit someone who ordinarily resides at those premises and with whom they are in an intimate personal relationship; or
- (h) if the person is visiting for a social gathering (**visiting person**), provided that there is no one else at the premises except for:
 - (i) the person (or people) who ordinarily reside at those premises and any other person with whom those people are in an intimate personal relationship; and
 - (ii) no more than 29 other persons who are visiting for a social gathering; and
 - (iii) any infant under one year of age of a visiting person; and
 - (iv) provided that the premises does not have more than 30 visiting persons for a social gathering each day; or

Note: under subclause (2)(h), up to 30 people may visit for a social gathering each day, with any infant under one year of age not counting towards this limit. The 30 people do not need to be from the same household and do not have to visit at the same time.

- (i) to attend an inspection of real estate for the purposes of a prospective sale or rental of the property, organised in accordance with any requirements in the **Restricted Activity Directions (Victoria)**; or
- (j) for the purpose of moving to the premises as the place where they will ordinarily reside; or
- (k) to escape harm or the risk of harm, including harm relating to family violence or violence of another person; or
- (l) for medical or emergency purposes; or
- (m) for purposes relating to the administration of justice; or
- (n) as required or authorised by law; or
- (o) for the purposes of national security.

*Note: subclause (1) does not apply to a care facility. Any regulation of access and visits to care facilities is contained in the **Care Facilities Directions**.*

Public gatherings

- (3) During the stay safe period, a person in the State of Victoria must not arrange to meet, or organise or intentionally attend a gathering of, more than 99 other persons (with any infant under one year of age not counting towards this limit) for a common purpose at a public place, except:

Note 1: under subclause (3), the limit on the number of people who may meet at any one time in a public place is 100.

Note 2: two or more groups of 100 people cannot meet for a common purpose at a public place. In addition, a group in a public place must take reasonable steps to maintain a safe distance from any other groups in that public place.

Note 3: subclause (3) does not prevent a person attending a public place (for example, a shopping centre) for a purpose (for example, shopping), where other people are also likely to be attending that public place for a similar purpose. It prevents people from attending a public place intending to gather with other people for a common purpose (for example, meeting family or friends at the shopping centre).

- (a) for the purpose of a religious gathering (including ceremonies) provided it complies with any requirements of the **Restricted Activity Directions (Victoria)**; or
- (b) for the purpose of attending a wedding in the State of Victoria that complies with the requirements in subclause (4); or
- (c) for the purpose of attending a funeral in the State of Victoria that complies with the requirements in subclause (5); or
- (d) if it is necessary to arrange a meeting or organise or attend a gathering for one or more of the following purposes:
 - (i) engaging in an activity permitted under, and provided they comply with any requirements of, the **Restricted Activity Directions (Victoria)**; or
 - (ii) to attend or undertake work in accordance with clause 6; or
 - (iii) medical or emergency purposes; or
 - (iv) purposes as required or authorised by law; or
 - (v) purposes relating to the administration of justice.

Note: a person may leave the premises at which they ordinarily reside using transport (public or private) regardless of how many people are on the tram, train, or bus or in the vehicle.

Weddings and funerals

- (4) The requirements for a wedding held in the State of Victoria are that:
- (a) it complies with any applicable requirements of the **Restricted Activity Directions (Victoria)**; and

- (b) if held at a person's ordinary place of residence, it must comply with the gathering restrictions in subclauses (1) and (2)(a), (c), (g) and (h).

*Note: the **authorised celebrant** and a wedding photographer can enter the premises under subclause (2)(c) (work) and are not subject to the gathering restrictions.*

*Note: record-keeping requirements apply to weddings as set out in the **Workplace Directions**.*

- (5) The requirements for a funeral held in the State of Victoria are that:
- (a) it complies with any applicable requirements of the **Restricted Activity Directions (Victoria)**; and
- (b) if held at a person's ordinary place of residence, it must comply with the gathering restrictions in subclauses (1) and (2)(a), (c), (g) and (h).

Note: the persons reasonably necessary for the conduct of the funeral can enter the premises under subclause (2)(c) (work) and are not subject to the gathering restrictions.

*Note: record-keeping requirements apply to funerals as set out in the **Workplace Directions**.*

PART 5 — OTHER PROVISIONS

8 Relationship with other Directions

- (1) If there is any inconsistency between Parts 2, 3 and 4 of these directions and the **Diagnosed Persons and Close Contacts Directions**, Parts 2, 3 and 4 of these directions are inoperative to the extent of any inconsistency.
- (2) If there is any inconsistency between these directions and a direction or other requirement contained in a **Direction and Detention Notice**, these directions are inoperative to the extent of the inconsistency.
- (3) If there is any inconsistency between these directions and a direction or other requirement contained in the **Care Facilities Directions**, these directions are inoperative to the extent of the inconsistency.
- (4) Unless the context otherwise requires, a reference in any Directions currently in force, in any Direction and Detention Notice, or in any approved form under a Direction currently in force or a Direction and Detention Notice to:
- (a) a Direction currently in force or these directions, or a defined term in a Direction currently in force or these directions, will be taken to mean that direction (and hence that defined term) as amended or replaced from time to time; or
- (b) an earlier version of a particular Direction currently in force or these directions will be taken to be a reference to the current version of that particular direction.

9 Definitions

For the purposes of these directions:

- (1) **aircraft** means aircraft that is mainly used for the purpose of, or is engaged, or is intended or likely to be engaged, in a flight wholly within Australia;
- (2) **airport** means an aerodrome at which facilities are available for the arrival or departure of **aircraft** into or from the State of Victoria;
- (3) **authorised celebrant** has the same meaning as in the **Marriage Act 1961** of the Commonwealth;
- (4) **Authorised Officer** has the same meaning as in the **PHW Act**;
- (5) **Care Facilities Directions** means **Care Facilities Directions (No 24)** as amended or replaced from time to time;
- (6) **care facility** has the same meaning as in the **Care Facilities Directions**;
- (7) **commercial passenger vehicle** has the same meaning as in the **Commercial Passenger Vehicle Industry Act 2017**;
- (8) **close contact** has the same meaning as in the Diagnosed Persons and Close Contacts Directions;
- (9) **diagnosed person** has the same meaning as in the Diagnosed Persons and Close Contacts Directions;
- (10) **Diagnosed Persons and Close Contacts Directions** means the **Diagnosed Persons and Close Contacts Directions (No 18)** as amended or replaced from time to time;
- (11) **Direction and Detention Notice** means a notice given to a person requiring the person to be detained for a specified period;
- (12) **Directions currently in force** means the **Restricted Activity Directions (Victoria)**, the **Stay Safe Directions (Victoria)**, the **Diagnosed Persons and Close Contacts Directions**, the **Hospital Visitor Directions**, the **Care Facilities Directions**, the **Workplace Directions**, the **Victorian Border Crossing Permit Directions** and the **Workplace (Additional Industry Obligations) Directions**, each as amended or replaced from time to time;
- (13) **face covering** means a fitted face mask that covers the nose and mouth to provide the wearer protection against infection (but does not include a face shield);
- (14) **hospital** has the same meaning as in the **Hospital Visitor Directions**;
- (15) **Hospital Visitor Directions** means the **Hospital Visitor Directions (No 22)** as amended or replaced from time to time;
- (16) **indoor space** means an area, room or **premises** that is or are substantially enclosed by a roof and walls that are permanent structures rising either from floor to ceiling or are at least 2.1 metres high, regardless of whether the roof or walls or any part of them are open or closed;
- (17) **market** means a public market, including a food market;
- (18) **market stall** means a stall within a market;

- (19) **member of the public** means a person but does not include:
- (a) a person who is an employee of an operator of the facility or venue; or
 - (b) any other person who attends the facility or venue that is reasonably necessary for providing a service at the facility or venue;
- (20) **national security** has the meaning that security has in the **Australian Security Intelligence Organisation Act 1979** of the Commonwealth;
- (21) **premises** means:
- (a) a building, or part of a building; and
 - (b) any land on which the building is located, other than land that is available for communal use;
- (22) **prison** has the same meaning as in the **Corrections Act 1986**;
- (23) **prisoner** has the same meaning as in the **Corrections Act 1986**;
- (24) **public transport** means a vehicle operated by a passenger transport company or by a **bus company** in the provision of a public transport service;
- (25) **remand centre** has the same meaning as in the **Children, Youth and Families Act 2005**;
- (26) **Restricted Activity Directions (Victoria)** means the **Restricted Activity Directions (Victoria) (No 10)** as amended or replaced from time to time;
- (27) **retail facility** includes any facility that is used wholly or predominantly for the:
- (a) sale or hire of goods by retail; or
 - (b) retail provision of services;
- (28) **retail shopping centre** has the same meaning as in the **Retail Leases Act 2003**;
- (29) **school** means a registered school as defined in the **Education and Training Reform Act 2006**;
- (30) **Stay Safe Directions (Victoria)** means the **Stay Safe Directions (Victoria) (No 17)** as amended or replaced from time to time;
- (31) **stay safe period** has the meaning in clause 4;
- (32) **vehicle** has the same meaning as in the PHW Act;
- (33) **Victorian Border Crossing Permit Directions** means the **Victorian Border Crossing Permit Directions (No 7)** as amended or replaced from time to time;
- (34) **visiting person** has the meaning in clause 7(2)(h);
- (35) **Workplace (Additional Industry Obligations) Directions** means the **Workplace (Additional Industry Obligations) Directions (No 19)** as amended or replaced from time to time;
- (36) **Workplace Directions** means the **Workplace Directions (No 22)** as amended or replaced from time to time;

- (37) **youth justice centre** has the same meaning as in the **Children, Youth and Families Act 2005**;
- (38) **youth residential centre** has the same meaning as in the **Children, Youth and Families Act 2005**;
- (39) the following expressions have the same meaning as in the **Transport (Compliance and Miscellaneous) Act 1983**:
- (a) bus company;
 - (b) passenger transport company;
 - (c) public transport service.

10 Penalties

Section 203 of the PHW Act provides:

Compliance with direction or other requirement

- (1) A person must not refuse or fail to comply with a direction given to the person, or a requirement made of the person, in the exercise of a power under an authorisation given under section 199.

Penalty: In the case of a natural person, 120 penalty units;
 In the case of a body corporate, 600 penalty units.

- (2) A person is not guilty of an offence against subsection (1) if the person had a reasonable excuse for refusing or failing to comply with the direction or requirement.



Adjunct Clinical Professor Brett Sutton

Chief Health Officer, as authorised to exercise emergency powers under sections 20A and 199(2)(a) of the PHW Act.

15 March 2021