

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Sunday, 12 April 2020

STATE OF EMERGENCY FOR CORONAVIRUS EXTENDED TO SAVE LIVES

The State of Emergency in Victoria is being extended for another four weeks to give the Victorian Government the powers it needs to keep slowing the spread of coronavirus and save lives.

Premier Daniel Andrews announced today that the State of Emergency declared last month would be extended until midnight 11 May 2020 to continue the measures designed to 'flatten the curve' of coronavirus and give our health system the best chance of managing the virus. The State of Emergency was originally due to expire on 13 April.

Under a State of Emergency, Authorised Officers, at the direction of the Chief Health Officer, can act to eliminate or reduce a serious risk to public health by detaining people, restricting movement, preventing entry to premises, or providing any other direction an AO considers reasonable to protect public health.

The month-long extension will ensure the Government can continue its strict enforcement of social distancing, isolation and other vital directions put in place by the Chief Health Officer to slow the spread of coronavirus.

While we are starting to see some improvement in the rate of transmission, now is not the time for complacency. We still have a long way to go. If we relax now, the virus will start spreading quickly and our health system will be overwhelmed.

We thank those Victorians who are doing the right thing by staying at home, but we must keep at it to save lives.

Our message to Victorians hasn't changed: Stay home. Protect our health system. Save lives.

There are only four reasons to leave your home: food and supplies, medical care and caregiving, exercise, and work or education.

Police have strong powers to enforce these directions and can issue on the spot fines, including up to \$1,652 for individuals and up to \$9,913 for businesses. Under the State of Emergency people who don't comply could also be taken to court and receive a fine of up to \$20,000. Companies face fines of up to \$100,000.

Since 28 March Victoria Police have conducted 19,303 spot checks at homes, businesses and non-essential services across the state and issued over 900 fines.

Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"There are positive signs our efforts are working – but if we relax now, our hard-won gains will evaporate and people will die."

"This is an unprecedented crisis – we need to extend the State of Emergency to help slow the spread of the virus, protect our health system and save lives."

Quote attributable to Minister for Health Jenny Mikakos

"This is the biggest public health challenge we've faced in our lifetimes, that's why it's so important that these measures remain in place – without them our health system will be overwhelmed."

For information about coronavirus, visit coronavirus.vic.gov.au or call 1800 675 398