

Media Release

The Hon Jenny Mikakos MLC

Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Minister for the Coordination of Health and Human Services – COVID-19

Minister for Health

Minister for Ambulance Services



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STATE OF EMERGENCY EXTENDED TO KEEP SLOWING THE SPREAD

The State of Emergency in Victoria will be extended for another four weeks to continue the measures designed to slow the spread of coronavirus and keep Victorians safe.

The State of Emergency will be extended until 11.59pm on 19 July 2020, which allows the Victorian Government to continue to enforce physical distancing and isolation requirements, as well as other directions from the Chief Health Officer.

The substantial increase in the number of household contacts spreading the virus amongst extended family groups shows the battle against coronavirus is far from over. As we've seen across the world, this virus can turn a few cases into hundreds in a matter of days.

Our message is clear: stay safe. If you do need to see people keep your distance. No handshakes and no hugs. Maintain good hygiene. Don't share food or drinks. Avoid crowds. And if you're unwell – stay home.

In order to continue to limit the number of people moving around the state and to help protect those who must travel to work, people are being asked to continue to work from home if they can. The work from home rule will stay in place at least until the end of July.

The existing arrangements for enforcing the Chief Health Officer directions will remain in place, but Victoria Police will be out in force to ensure all Victorians are doing the right thing.

Victoria Police has strong powers to enforce these directions and can issue on the spot fines – with a squad of 500 officers conducting spot checks of venues and homes to ensure compliance with directions put in place to help slow the spread of coronavirus.

On the spot fines include 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.

Quote attributable to Minister for Health Jenny Mikakos

"Now is not the time to let our guard down, our coronavirus fight is far from over. Keeping the State of Emergency in place will ensure we have the tools we need to keep Victorians safe."

Quote attributable to Minister for Police Lisa Neville

"While many Victorians are doing the right thing – there are still some who are ignoring the restrictions. Victoria Police will continue to be out in force, using their powers to help slow the spread."

Quote attributable to Chief Health Officer Professor Brett Sutton

"We know these restrictions are frustrating, but we can't get complacent and let the virus get away from us. It's vital we follow these directions to keep our community transmission numbers low and protect more Victorians."