

# Media Release

**The Hon Jaclyn Symes MLC**

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Minister for Regional Development

Minister for Agriculture

Minister for Resources



Friday, 31 July 2020

## COLLABORATION BRINGS RESULTS FOR BORDER COMMUNITIES

Victorian seasonal workers will be able to cross the New South Wales border from agricultural hubs like Mildura to work in citrus and other key industries under concessions negotiated between the Victorian and NSW governments.

Victorian border communities will also continue to have access to critical medical treatment and essential supplies across the border despite the NSW Government's border zone rules, thanks to collaboration between the states.

Minister for Regional Development Jaclyn Symes has led the collaborative effort to advocate successfully for several changes to conditions since the NSW government began enforcing border rules last week, including:

- lifting the ban on seasonal workers crossing into NSW and lifting the ban for some seasonal visa workers.
- enabling Victorians who cannot access medical care locally to enter NSW to access health services
- ensuring health care workers no longer have to self-isolate when returning to NSW if they have been working outside the border zone in Victoria
- including thousands of students and teachers who reside outside of the border zone in the zone, so they can access work and education
- remapping the border zone to include the Sturt Highway – enabling faster, safer travel routes between Robinvale and Mildura.
- introducing a permit for certain smaller and remote communities to access essential goods and supplies, including food, fuel, hygiene products and disability services. This has enabled far east Gippsland communities to access shops across the border.

While there have been significant achievements, there are ongoing issues facing border communities across Victoria that are being addressed.

Under new rules imposed by the South Australian Government, Victorians living within 40 kilometres of the South Australian border can cross for work or education, to provide or receive care, and to obtain essential supplies.

However, the rules also stipulate that Victorians aged over 16 who are permitted to cross the border must be able to prove to South Australian authorities, upon request at any given time, that they have had a coronavirus test within the previous seven days.

This will have an impact on regional testing sites, where the priority is slowing the spread of symptomatic cases.

The Victorian Government will continue to advocate on behalf of border communities to manage specific impacts associated with the border closures put in place and enforced by the New South Wales and South Australian governments.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Regional Development Jaclyn Symes

*"We know this is a tough time for border communities and we're doing everything we can to support them."*

*"Thanks to our collaborative approach, many Victorian communities and businesses can get access to the services they need – but we will continue to advocate on behalf of Victorians who've built their lives across the border."*