VICTORIA
State
Government

Monday, 31 August 2020

WORKING TOGETHER TO RE-OPEN VICTORIA – SAFELY

The Victorian Government will release its reopening roadmap this Sunday, 6 September, providing certainty and clarity to communities and businesses alike.

Ahead of this release, the Government will commence an intensive, and extensive, round of discussions with industry, unions and community organisations to inform the final development of Victoria's roadmap to 'COVID Normal'.

This consultation will be based around six principles for industry on a COVIDSafe re-opening, based on the best advice from our public health experts – and imperative to keeping our community safe.

We need the voices of industry to inform how this re-opening can happen practically, safely and steadily. This will be vital to planning what a 'COVID Normal' will look like, industry by industry.

Many of the key principles are things Victorian businesses and workplaces continue to practice every day:

- ensuring **physical distancing**, including following density requirements, making sure staff work from home wherever possible, limiting the total number of staff and customers in an enclosed area, and stopping carpooling

- **wearing a face covering** at all times in the workplace and ensuring full PPE is worn in high-risk settings

- **requiring hygienic workplaces**, with high-touch points regularly cleaned, staff regularly washing their hands, and hand sanitisers available for all staff and customers

- continuing to **act quickly** if staff become unwell by having a strict policy that supports them to stay home and get tested, even if they have mild symptoms. All places of work need to have a plan to act immediately if there is a confirmed case and records must be kept of all staff, customers and visitors.

Recognising there is no one size fits all solution, the Government will commit to tailoring guidance to different industries as part of the roadmap.

Additionally, wherever possible, **workforce bubbles** should be created to limit the number of staff who have prolonged and close contact with each other. To achieve this, teams of staff could be rostered on the same shifts, with no overlap in shift changes and a reduction in staff working across multiple sites.

Under the proposed framework, meetings and lunchtimes could also look different, with **enclosed spaces avoided wherever possible**. Opening doors and windows for airflow rather than relying only on recirculated air and moving tearooms and lunch breaks outside – along with meetings and team catch-ups – all help to reduce risk.

As part of our work to finalise a roadmap, the Government will also consult with community support organisations on the impacts of social isolation on Victorians.

The Government will also seek feedback on the current worker permit system and childcare arrangements – and these insights will be vital as we transition to a 'COVID Normal.'

Engagement with industry, unions and community organisations will take place from today, with advice to then be provided to Victoria's public health team who will consider feedback as work on the roadmap continues.

Based on the outcomes of these consultations, the Government and our health experts will finalise the plan for re-opening by the end of the week.

For more information about consultations contact Business Victoria on 13 22 15.

Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"We know every Victorian wants certainty about the future – for them, for their family and for their work. By the end of the week, we will lay out a plan to re-open our state."

"Workplaces will need to look very different as we find our 'COVID Normal'. By working with business we'll make sure that can happen practically and safely."

Quotes attributable to Minister for Industry Support and Recovery Martin Pakula

"We've said from the start that supporting our businesses will be crucial as we rebuild – that's why we're bringing them to the table as work continues on our future roadmap."

"Over the next few days, we'll be talking through our COVIDSafe principles to ensure businesses can survive, adapt, and most importantly, open up safely."