

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Sunday, 13 September 2020

ON THE ROAD TOWARDS COVID NORMAL

Thanks to the enormous efforts of Victorians in following the rules and driving down case numbers, we will take the first of our cautious and careful steps towards a COVID Normal tonight.

The numbers are falling but we need to keep it that way – ensuring we can continue to open up safely and sustainably – based on the data, the science and expert public health advice.

From 11.59pm Melbourne moves from Stage Four to the First Step of the roadmap for reopening, with modest changes including more social interaction and more time outside.

Social bubbles begin, allowing those living alone or single parents to have one other person in their home. Exercise is extended to two hours split over a maximum of two sessions, and you will be able to use that time outside for social interaction with one other person or the members of your household.

Playgrounds and outdoor fitness equipment reopen, libraries will be able to open for contactless click and collect and the curfew will begin at 9pm as Melbourne moves into warmer months.

Tonight, regional Victoria moves from Stage Three restrictions to the Second Step of the roadmap, with up to five people able to gather together in outdoor public places from a maximum of two households.

Outdoor pools and playgrounds in regional Victoria will also open. And religious services can be conducted outside with a maximum of five people, plus a faith leader.

Given the incredible effort of regional Victorians, the Government will continue to closely monitor the 14-day rolling average, which currently sits at 4.1 for regional communities. If this effort continues, regional Victorians could move to the Third Step in a matter of days.

Also from today, Victoria's State of Emergency and State of Disaster declarations have been renewed for another four weeks, ending at 11.59pm on 11 October 2020.

While the vast majority of Victorians are doing the right thing and following the directions, these measures give the Chief Health Officer and Victoria Police the powers they need to continue to respond rapidly to the pandemic – in line with the latest data and public health advice.

This includes ensuring Victoria Police has the ability to enforce the directions that are keeping us safe and slowing the spread of the virus. Without these efforts, we risk losing all of Victorians' hard-won gains.

Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"I'm so proud of Victorians for the way we are all working together to beat this virus – it means we can take our first safe and steady steps towards a COVID Normal tonight."

"What we've seen in regional Victoria should give hope to all Victorians. If we all play our part, we can drive numbers down and get through this together."

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Jenny Mikakos

"Victorians are doing an incredible job – following the rules, getting tested and staying at home when we're sick – getting us that much closer to COVID Normal."

"The State of Emergency ensures we have all the tools we need to fight this virus – keeping all of us safe."

For more information call the coronavirus hotline on 1800 675 398 or visit www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au

Quotes attributable to Minister for Police and Emergency Services Lisa Neville

“Extending a State of Disaster is never a decision we make lightly – and it won’t be in place a moment longer than it needs to be.”

“We are at a critical point right now. And we have to do everything we can to hold onto the gains we’ve made, which means giving Victoria Police everything they need to enforce the Chief Health Officer’s directions as we keep driving down cases.”