

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Sunday, 11 October 2020

EXTRA TESTING REQUIREMENTS AS WE MOVE TO COVID NORMAL

Close contacts of people with coronavirus will be asked to get tested on day 11 of quarantine to help reduce the spread of the virus, as we step up protections for regional Victoria.

From 11:59pm tonight, those identified as close contacts by the Department of Health and Human Services must get tested on day 11 or thereafter of their quarantine period, or they will have their quarantine extended.

Getting tested on day 11 of quarantine helps accurately identify whether it is safe for the close contact to be released from quarantine, without the risk of infecting other people.

If the test is negative, the person will receive a notice of clearance from the Department, likely on or after day 14. If the test is positive, the Department will contact the person with further advice.

In the limited circumstances where a close contact does not agree to take the coronavirus test, they will remain in quarantine for a total of 24 days from their last exposure to the virus to ensure public health is maintained.

Often people have coronavirus without any symptoms, and close contacts are one of the highest risk groups for infection.

Close contacts are identified by the Department's contact tracing teams, after they determine who a positive case has been in contact with while they were infectious.

All close contacts are contacted by the Department and are required to quarantine at a designated address, undertake the day 11 test, and await formal clearance before being released from quarantine.

People working in targeted industries who undertake surveillance testing are not required to isolate, unless they are feeling unwell or have been directed to quarantine or isolate by the Department.

As we've seen throughout this pandemic, businesses in regional Victoria are doing incredible work – keeping detailed records, implementing COVIDSafe Plans and encouraging symptomatic staff to get tested straightaway.

All of these efforts are helping to keep their staff, customers and communities safe.

But as we continue to drive down case numbers, and as we begin to consider our next steps, it's more important than ever that we're doing everything we can to protect the hard work of regional Victorians.

To date, businesses that are currently closed in Melbourne but are open in regional Victoria have been asked to check the addresses of their customers when taking bookings.

From midnight tonight, this requirement will be made even stronger, with businesses who consciously fail to check their customers are not from metropolitan Melbourne facing fines of up to \$9,913.

This check could be achieved by asking customers to show their drivers' license or Keypass ID.

Regional businesses who do the right thing but are misled by someone intent on breaking the rules will not be fined under the changes. Instead, individuals found deliberately ignoring the restrictions will risk a fine of \$1,652. Melbournians who are found in regional Victoria without a valid reason face fines of up to \$4,957.

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

With these changes, we're giving regional businesses the confidence that they are doing everything they can to keep their staff and customers safe

To ensure current directions can remain in place to protect Victorians, the state of emergency and the state of disaster will also be extended from 11:59pm on 11 October 2020 until 11:59pm on 8 November.

Victoria Police continues to enforce the Chief Health Officer's directions and can issue on the spot fines for breaches of stay at home directions. This includes up to \$1,652 for individuals and up to \$9,913 for businesses.

Under the directions, 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.

Further details on 11-day testing can be found at dhhs.vic.gov.au/self-quarantine-coronavirus-covid-19

Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"Testing close contacts on day 11 of quarantine is one of a number of important measures we're taking to limit the spread of coronavirus in Victoria and reduce the risk of further outbreaks."

"We know regional businesses are doing everything they can to keep their community safe – and now we're giving them the confidence to check that their customers are not breaking Chief Health Officer directions."

Quote attributable to Minister for Health Martin Foley

"We know this has been a challenging time for Victorians but we're so close to beating this thing. Extra testing and Victorians continuing to follow the rules will get us to the other side."