

# Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP  
Premier



Tuesday, 2 February 2021

## **MORE VICTORIANS SET TO RETURN TO WORK THIS FEBRUARY**

Victoria's staged return to work will be accelerated this month with new health advice allowing office-based workers to return to 75 per cent capacity.

With no evidence of community transmission in Victoria for 27 days now, both public sector and private sector office-based workplaces will be able to return to 75 per cent capacity from 8 February 2021.

Record keeping requirements for workplaces will remain unchanged, which means an employer must keep a record of all workers and all visitors who attend the premises for longer than 15 minutes.

Legislation will be introduced into the Victorian Parliament this week to ensure the public health directions protecting Victorians from coronavirus – including requiring workplaces to have a COVIDSafe Plan – can continue to be enforced.

A number of key health protections required to manage this pandemic are only available when a State of Emergency has been declared under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* – such as hotel quarantine, mandatory face coverings in certain settings, and other restrictions to help slow the spread of the virus.

A State of Emergency is only ever declared or extended on the advice of the Chief Health Officer and the Emergency Management Commissioner.

It allows the Government to run Victoria's traffic light permit system, which provides invaluable information about who has entered Victoria and from where and the ability to identify areas of risk in Australia and prevent travel from those areas when they are deemed a risk to public health.

It also ensures public health risk powers can be exercised – for example, by requiring positive cases of coronavirus to isolate.

The current State of Emergency declared in respect of the coronavirus pandemic has a maximum period of 12 months, which will expire at 11:59 pm on 15 March 2021. The new legislation will permit the Government to extend the State of Emergency for an additional nine months in four-week increments – expiring at 11.59pm on 15 December 2021.

Until we have the vaccine rolled out, we need to continue in our fight against coronavirus and work to keep the entire community safe – and the State of Emergency allows us to do exactly that.

### **Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews**

*"Victorians have worked so hard to fight this virus. We've built something precious, and we need to protect it."*

*"From our new permit system, to hotel quarantine and workplace COVIDSafe plans – these measures are fundamentally about keeping Victoria safe and open."*

### **Quote attributable to Minister for Health Martin Foley**

*"Victorians have achieved so much in the fight against this virus – and with 27 days free of community transmission, we're delighted to be able see workplaces returning to something closer to normal."*

For more information call the coronavirus hotline on 1800 675 398 or visit [coronavirus.vic.gov.au](https://coronavirus.vic.gov.au).