

# Statement

The Hon Dan Andrews MP  
Premier



Friday, 12 February 2021

## STATEMENT FROM THE PREMIER

I won't waste words: today hurts. Victorians know, better than anyone, just how deeply.

But as we've seen – here in Australia and around the world – we are facing a new kind of enemy.

A virus that is smarter, and faster, and more infectious.

And until we have a vaccine, we need to do everything we can to keep this virus at bay.

In the past 24 hours, five new cases have been identified.

It shows just how incredibly infectious this virus is. And our public health team tell us it's only getting faster.

Right now, we are reaching close contacts well within the 48-hour benchmark. But the time between exposure, incubation, symptoms and testing positive is rapidly shortening. So much so, that even secondary close contacts are potentially infectious within that 48-hour window.

In short: this hyper-infectious variant is moving at hyper-speed.

It's why on the advice of our public health experts, the whole of Victoria will move to circuit-breaker action from 11:59pm tonight until 11:59pm on Wednesday, 17 February.

This is a short, sharp blast – the same as we've seen in Queensland and WA – that will give us the what we need to get ahead of this faster moving virus.

That means there will be four reasons to leave your home: shopping for the things you need, care and caregiving, exercise and work, if it is essential.

Exercise and shopping will be limited to five kilometres from your home. If there's no shops in your five-kilometre radius, you'll be able to travel to the ones closest to you.

Face masks will need to be worn indoors and outdoors – whenever you leave home.

You won't be able to have visitors to your home. And any public gatherings won't be able to go ahead.

For school students, that means learning from home, unless they need onsite supervision as the children of essential workers. Unis and TAFEs will close or move to remote learning. Childcare and kinders will remain open.

Gyms, pools, community centres, entertainment venues and libraries will all need to close.

And as with Stage 4 restrictions, all non-essential retail will close, but essential stores like supermarkets, bottle shops and pharmacies will remain open. Cafes and restaurants will only be able to offer take-away.

Hotel and accommodation providers will be able to stay open to support guests already staying onsite. No new bookings can be made.

Funerals will be able to go ahead with up to ten people. Weddings will need to be postponed.

A list of who is considered an essential worker will be made available online. But the short answer is – if you were a permitted worker during Stage 4 restrictions – you'll most likely be an essential worker now too. For everyone else, we need you to work from home.

I know there'll be plenty of questions about what people can and can't do. We'll do our best to answer these as quickly as possible.

But the most important thing you need to know is this: this is our opportunity – our brief window – to starve the virus of what it wants most. Movement.

By limiting our movement, we limit the potential spread of the virus.

And by going hard and going early – we're giving ourselves every opportunity to get in front of this.

My message to every single Victorian:

I know today will be hard. Likely, tomorrow will be even harder.

But remember, no one else in the world – anywhere – has achieved what we have.

And just as we had the courage and conviction to win this war before – we can do it again.