

Media Release

The Hon Danny Pearson MP

Assistant Treasurer

Minister for Regulatory Reform

Minister for Government Services

Minister for Creative Industries

Acting Minister for Police and Emergency Services



Saturday, 22 May 2021

COMPLIANCE CRACKDOWN TO KEEP VICTORIAN BUSINESSES SAFE

More than 2,200 businesses have been targeted for COVIDSafe compliance checks so far this month with seven businesses receiving fines of between \$1,652 and \$9,913.

Inspections have found around one-third of those businesses, largely in hospitality, have been non-compliant with Chief Health Officer Directions including not having COVID safety signage up, density quotients not being adhered to, customer tables too close together or QR code check-in systems not in place.

Authorised Officers have issued fines for non-compliance to hospitality businesses – with more businesses expected to be hit over coming weeks as COVID compliance and enforcement efforts are ramped up across hospitality, retail, ride share and other businesses.

In St Kilda, South Melbourne, Brunswick and Geelong, four hospitality venues were fined \$9,913 for non-compliance issues including having no QR code check-in systems in place.

Since the introduction of the new \$1,652 on-the-spot fine, a hospitality venue in Sunshine in Melbourne's west was fined \$1,652 for having no QR code system in place and no density quotient signage in place.

In the CBD and Docklands, another two hospitality venues were also fined for not having a government approved QR code check-in system in place.

In addition to fines since 1 May, over 200 enforcement notices have been issued including 59 written warnings, eight verbal warnings and 136 improvement notices issued for COVID non-compliance.

Businesses repeatedly breaking the rules can be issued with an additional fine of \$9,913 or a prohibition notice shutting them down. They can also face prosecution in court for continued, blatant or wilful non-compliance with the rules.

Victorian Government-approved electronic record-keeping systems are mandatory for commercial passenger vehicles, hospitality and entertainment venues and personal care services. Maintaining an electronic record-keeping system for all visitors is critical for ensuring quick contact tracing in the event of a new coronavirus case.

More than 115,000 Victorian organisations and businesses have signed up for the free Victorian Government QR Code Service across 170,000 different locations – with almost 32 million check-ins – an average of 615,000 a day.

COVID safety breaches can be reported to the coronavirus hotline on 1800 675 398, WorkSafe's advisory line on 1800 136 089 or the Police Assistance Line on 131 444.

Quotes attributable to Acting Minister for Police and Emergency Services Danny Pearson

"All businesses have a responsibility to provide a COVIDSafe environment for their workers and customers – and we'll be checking up on them to make sure they know their obligations and are doing the right thing."

"If a business is not following the rules, then they can expect a visit from our Authorised Officers and enforcement action including on-the-spot fines or temporary closures."

"Every workplace must be making every effort to have a government approved QR Code system working, COVID safety signage up and stick to their density limits – to help us all stay safe and stay open."

Media contact: Nikki Mott 0416 311 214 | nikki.mott@minstaff.vic.gov.au