

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



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KEEPING BUSINESSES IN CHECK SO VICTORIA CAN STAY OPEN

Seven Victorian businesses have been shut down for blatant violations of the Chief Health Officer's directions, as part of a crackdown on COVIDSafe compliance.

Over the past three months Authorised Officers have visited 22,000 businesses across the state to make sure they are doing the right thing – handing out 17 infringements totalling \$52,867 and issued a further 275 written warnings, 598 improvement notices and 40 COVID-19 notices for non-compliance with CHO directions.

In the past week alone, there were 168 instances of QR code non-compliance observed by Surveillance and Authorised Officers.

As part of this activity a retail store in St Albans was shut down for unauthorised trading during lockdown and a health and beauty business in South Melbourne was also closed for exceeding density quotients and having no density quotient signage, no COVIDSafe plan and no QR code check-in system in place.

Fines of \$1652 were also handed to a hospitality venue in Essendon and a retail venue in Campbellfield for not having the Victorian Government's QR code check-in system in place.

All businesses are responsible for providing workers and customers with a COVIDSafe environment that includes COVID safety signage, compliance with density quotients and for most businesses a QR code check-in system.

The Government's on-the-ground engagement team will continue to visit businesses to ensure they understand their obligations and help them to become compliant.

More than 178,000 Victorian organisations have signed up for the free Victorian Government QR Code Service across 304,000 different locations with almost 79 million check-ins – an average of 3.6 million 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.

Community complaints made to the PAL about businesses failing to comply with CHO directions will be followed up by the Operation and those businesses can expect a visit from Surveillance or Authorised Officers.

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

"The Chief Health Officer's directions are in place to keep us all safe and we expect businesses to be doing their part to follow the rules and help keep Victoria open."

"QR Code check in data is so important for our contact tracers to get on top of outbreaks quickly and there is no excuse for failing to keep these details if you are required to do so."

"This is a warning to all businesses – if you flagrantly breach the rules, we will not hesitate to issue fines or even shut you down to protect public safety."