

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Sunday, 26 September 2021

REGIONS TO SHOW THE WAY IN VACCINATED ECONOMY TRIALS

The Victorian Government will conduct trials in businesses and events across highly vaccinated parts of regional Victoria to help our state open progressively as a vaccinated economy when we meet the key double-dose thresholds in our Roadmap.

Up to 20 vaccinated economy trials will test systems and support in the fortnight before Victoria is aiming to reach the key 70 per cent full vaccination mark on 26 October, triggering greater freedoms for vaccinated people.

Scheduled to start from 11 October, it is anticipated the trials will cover hospitality, hairdressing, beauty services and tourism businesses, and events such as race meetings, community celebrations and concerts – allowing higher patron numbers with all attendees confirmed as being fully vaccinated.

As regional areas with high vaccination rates and low or no COVID-19 cases the Bass Coast, Greater Bendigo, Pyrenees, Warrnambool, Buloke and East Gippsland municipalities will be the first invited to participate in the trials.

The Government will work with local councils and industry bodies to help identify suitable businesses and events for the important fact-finding exercises.

The trials will confirm the best processes for establishing vaccination status, with work underway on how Commonwealth vaccination data can be best integrated with the Service Victoria app.

Pending the outcomes of the first phase, a second phase of trials using 80 per cent double dose settings will be held, prior to Victoria achieving that threshold. The progress of these trials will be subject to health advice and ensuring the safety of regional communities from any potential COVID-19 infections. These trials will be used to hold larger events in metropolitan Melbourne to test the systems and technologies with larger crowd sizes.

Training for staff, supports for business owners and public communication of vaccine requirements will also be part of the trials. Support officers will be deployed on the ground to ensure trials run smoothly and participating businesses receive the assistance they need.

As we reach the key vaccination thresholds of 70 per cent and 80 per cent double dose in Victoria's *Roadmap to Deliver the National Plan*, greater numbers of fully vaccinated people will be able to participate in many settings including outdoor gatherings, funerals, weddings, religious gatherings and entertainment and hospitality venues.

In regional cafes and restaurants, the patron cap increases to 30 people for indoor spaces and 100 people for outdoor spaces once we reach the 70 per cent double dose vaccination – on the basis that all patrons and staff are fully vaccinated. Without confirmation of vaccination status, there is no change to existing settings.

For more information on Victoria's roadmap to reopening, visit coronavirus.vic.gov.au

Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"Getting vaccinated has never been more important – it reduces the risks to you and your family of serious illness from COVID-19 and it allows greater freedoms for all Victorians as we re-open together."

"These trials are an important step as we move towards a vaccinated economy, supporting businesses to open safely and recover strongly and individuals to play their very important part."

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

Quotes attributable to Minister for Industry Support and Recovery Martin Pakula

“Businesses and events are on the front line of this vital campaign to keep Victorians safe and our economy recovering strongly.”

“We’ll do the work on these trials and provide businesses with the support they need to maintain and build on the gains that continue to be enabled by vaccination.”

Quotes attributable to Minister for Government Services Danny Pearson

“We’re working with the Commonwealth to make sure the technology and systems that will underpin the vaccinated economy are effective and easy to use.”

“The Service Victoria app will be the most convenient way for most people to prove their vaccination status and participate fully in the community.”