

Tuesday, 5 July 2022

STATEMENT ON THE PANDEMIC DECLARATION

As part of Victoria's continued response to the coronavirus pandemic and as we continue to manage the challenges winter presents, I have extended the pandemic declaration to apply to the State of Victoria from 11.59pm Tuesday 12 July for three months.

The pandemic declaration gives the Minister for Health the authority to make pandemic orders she considers reasonably necessary to protect public health after considering the Chief Health Officer's advice and other relevant factors, including social and economic factors.

Recently, a number of modest and sensible changes to pandemic orders were made to allow Victorians to live safely with COVID-19 while reducing transmission and hospitalisations.

This extended declaration will enable those key settings to remain in place over winter, protecting Victorians and our health system.

The declaration was made under section 165AE of the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* after consultation with, and consideration of advice from, the Minister for Health and Acting Chief Health Officer.

In making the declaration, I am satisfied on reasonable grounds that there continues to be a serious risk to public health throughout Victoria due to the coronavirus disease which requires continued public health and other protective measures to reduce the risk of transmission and hospitalisation.

There are 94.6 per cent of Victorians over 12 years who have received two vaccine doses against coronavirus and over 68.4 per cent of Victorians over 16 years who have received a third dose.

This most recent extension will expire at 11.59pm, 12 October 2022 and subsequent extensions can last for up to three months.

I have also requested that the Minister for Health and the Chief Health Officer provide further advice by the end of winter as to whether there continues to be, at that time, a serious risk to public health arising from COVID-19.

The extended declaration underpins the continuation of the Independent Pandemic Management Advisory Committee of experts and community representatives who advise on pandemic response and management.

The Statement of Reasons, and the advice of the Acting CHO and the Minister for Health, will be tabled in Parliament.