

Public health advice for high-risk settings and health professionals regarding COVID-19 outbreak in Melbourne **(new information in red)**

Key Points

- COVID-19 cases in Melbourne have increased significantly as a result of large outbreaks and community transmission.
- **From 11:59pm on Monday 6 July, anyone entering the ACT who has been in the [greater Melbourne metropolitan area](#) must quarantine for 14 days after leaving Melbourne.**
- **From 12:01am on Wednesday 8 July, anyone (other than ACT residents) travelling into the ACT from Victoria will be denied entry unless they are granted an exemption. ACT residents will be able to return home, but they will be required to enter quarantine until 14 days after leaving Victoria.**
- **For people who have recently been in Victoria and who entered the ACT prior to the new Public Health Direction:**
 - Anyone who has been in **Victoria** should not visit or work in a high-risk setting for a period of 14 days after leaving the area.
 - Staff who provide home-based aged care or disability services who have recently been in **Victoria** should exclude themselves from providing in-home care for a period of 14 days, unless their role is deemed essential.
 - GPs and other community health practitioners who have recently travelled to **Victoria** should remain particularly vigilant for early symptoms, and immediately exclude themselves from work and get tested for COVID-19 if they develop symptoms.

What is the situation?

- COVID-19 case numbers are escalating in Victoria, reflecting a number of outbreaks and increasing community transmission in Melbourne.
- The Victorian government is implementing appropriate public health action to contain outbreaks and reduce transmission.
- ACT residents are strongly discouraged from travelling to **Victoria**.
- Public Health Directions are in place in the ACT to protect the ACT community. Exemptions to Public Health Directions can be requested by emailing covid.exemptions@act.gov.au

Public Health Directions

- From **7:00am on Friday 3 July**, anyone entering the ACT who has been in a [Melbourne hotspot](#) must quarantine for 14 days after leaving the hotspot.
- **From 11:59pm on Monday 6 July, anyone entering the ACT who has been in the [greater Melbourne metropolitan area](#) must quarantine for 14 days after leaving Melbourne.**
- **From 12:01am on Wednesday 8 July, anyone (other than ACT residents) entering the ACT from Victoria will be denied entry unless they are granted an exemption. ACT residents will be able to return home but are required to enter quarantine until 14 days after leaving Victoria.**

What are high-risk settings?

- A **high risk setting** is defined as a setting where there are a large number of people who are vulnerable to severe disease from COVID-19 (e.g. due to age or chronic medical conditions), and/or where there is a higher risk of COVID-19 transmission due to close proximity and difficulties maintaining physical distancing.
- These high-risk settings are:
 - Hospitals
 - Residential aged care facilities
 - Correctional facilities
 - Residential accommodation facilities that support people who require frequent, close personal care and who are vulnerable to severe disease

Advice for high-risk settings

- People who have been in **Victoria**, including ACT residents, should not visit or work in a high-risk setting for a period of 14 days after leaving Victoria.
- For people seeking to visit a high-risk setting on compassionate grounds, **or to work in a high-risk setting because they are deemed essential (e.g. someone with expertise that cannot be sourced elsewhere)**:
 - **If they have recently been in Victoria but are not in quarantine under a Public Health Direction (see above)**, this should be considered following a risk assessment, in consultation with ACT Health if required.
 - **If they have recently been in Victoria and are in quarantine under a Public Health Direction (see above)**, they will need to apply for an exemption by emailing COVID.exemptions@act.gov.au

Advice for staff providing home-based aged care, disability and other support services

- Staff returning from **Victoria**, who provide home-based aged care and disability services that involves close physical contact with clients, should exclude themselves from providing in-home care for a period of 14 days.
- If the service deems it is essential for the staff member to continue in their role:
 - **If they have recently been in Victoria but are not in quarantine under a Public Health Direction (see above)**, the staff member's manager should undertake a risk assessment to determine whether it is appropriate for the staff member to return to work. Considerations include the staff member's risk of exposure to COVID-19, duration of close physical contact with clients and client vulnerability to COVID-19. ACT Health can assist with the risk assessment.
 - **If they have recently been in Victoria and are in quarantine under a Public Health Direction (see above)**, they will need to apply for an exemption by emailing COVID.exemptions@act.gov.au



Advice for general practitioners and other community health practitioners

- GPs and other community health practitioners who have recently **travelled to Victoria, but are not in quarantine under a Public Health Direction (see above)**, should be particularly vigilant for symptoms of COVID-19. If symptoms develop, they should immediately self-isolate and arrange to get tested for COVID-19.
- Health practitioners should actively seek a patient's travel history and determine if they have been in **Victoria** in the past 14 days. If yes, the practitioner should be alert to even mild symptoms of COVID-19 and have a low threshold for testing, using appropriate PPE.

For more information

- Visit the Chief Health Officer alerts page: <https://www.health.act.gov.au/health-professionals/chief-health-officer-alerts>
- Visit the ACT COVID-19 webpage: <https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/>
- Contact ACT Health on (02) 5142 9213.

Dr Vanessa Johnston

For Dr Kerry Coleman
ACT Chief Health Officer

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