

Thursday 16 July 2020

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) Update #15

ANMF seeking special leave for aged care nurses and carers; Federal Government directs all aged care workers to wear masks; ANMF raises roadblock delay issues

Members are encouraged to read our newsflashes and the COVID-19 information for health workers provided on the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Commonwealth Department of Health websites.

Information is updated regularly. ANMF has collated the important links all in one place, so you don't have to go looking. Please bookmark and check this page regularly – anmfvic.asn.au/COVID-19

Members with COVID-19-related employment questions can ask via the Member Assistance online inquiry form anmfvic.asn.au/covid-19. Please read the information on our website before submitting a question. Member Assistance is not taking phone inquiries as ANMF staff are working remotely. Members whom ANMF deems have complex inquiries will still have phone contact with staff.

The DHHS Coronavirus Guidance Note on Employment-Related Matters (bit.ly/2UhDSU2) was last updated 1 July. DHHS has advised a further update will be issued within the coming days.

Latest coronavirus statistics in Victoria

As of 16 July 2020, the Victorian Premier reported:

- the state's number of COVID-19 cases was 4,750 – there were 317 new cases since the day before.
- The total overall increase was 302, with 15 cases reclassified, largely due to duplication. Of the new cases, 28 are linked to known outbreaks and 289 remain under investigation.
- 109 people are in Victorian hospitals with COVID-19, including 29 in intensive care. 29 people have died, including two deaths since yesterday.
- 28,607 tests were undertaken yesterday bringing the total since 1 January to 1,225,999.

View the latest Victorian statistics via <https://bit.ly/34Et8Ug> and the latest national statistics via <https://bit.ly/2RyEXX1>

Authorised by Lisa Fitzpatrick ANMF (Vic Branch) Secretary

Advice for healthcare workers to minimise risk of transmission

DHHS has issued advice for all healthcare workers and health service employees about reducing the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Advice covers health services' and individual healthcare workers' responsibilities. This advice is particularly relevant for all nurses, midwives, students on clinical placement, Hospital in the Home and Residential in Reach.

Read *Movement of healthcare workers and health service employees during coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic* via <https://bit.ly/3feJXty>

Aged care staff must wear masks

Aged care staff who work in residential facilities or provide in-home care support across metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire must now wear surgical masks following recommendations from the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC).

There are 456 private and not-for-profit aged care facilities located within the areas under stage 3 restrictions. There are a further 157 Victorian facilities outside the metro Melbourne and Mitchell shire areas.

The new advice was announced on Monday 13 July by Minister for Health Greg Hunt and Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians, Richard Colbeck. The direction to wear masks is in addition to all other infection control and staff screening measures already in place across the sector to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Mr Hunt announced that five million masks would be released from the national stockpile for Victorians – one million for primary health and four million for aged care and home care.

ANMF has sought advice from the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services and confirms that delivery will be coordinated through the existing Victorian mechanism once approved for release by the Commonwealth Government. Ninety per cent of deliveries are occurring within 24 hours of being ordered.

Members with PPE concerns at your aged care facilities should:

- 1. continue to raise and submit OHS incident reports and speak directly with their employer**
- 2. involve your Health and Safety Rep if you have one**
- 3. contact ANMF via <https://www.anmfvic.asn.au/memberassistance> (include your report and response if applicable) for further support and advice if after you have raised your concerns, they are not addressed by your employer.**

Read the Federal Government media release <https://bit.ly/2ZsMaMK>

Read Department of Health 'providing aged care' information and resources <https://bit.ly/38XpDdk>

ANMF seeking special paid leave for aged care nurses and carers and reimbursement for those with dual employment

ANMF is calling on the Federal Government to urgently implement special paid leave for private and not-for-profit aged care nurses, carers and other staff in the event they need to isolate.

The leave should be consistent with the paid leave available for public sector nurses, midwives and public sector aged care nurses.

Authorised by Lisa Fitzpatrick ANMF (Vic Branch) Secretary

ANMF is also calling on the Federal Government to reimburse nurses and carers who must relinquish shifts if they work for more than one employer.

Read media release 'ANMF has urgent aged care pandemic to-do list for Federal Government'

<https://bit.ly/38U88uS>

Members travelling to and from work through road check points

ANMF has made representations on behalf of members who have advised us of the sometimes hours it is taking to travel to work by car through check points set up to leave and enter areas under stage 3 restrictions.

The complaints at this stage have focused on those travelling between Geelong and Melbourne.

Sadly, the road check points will remain a necessary feature as motorists continue to travel for reasons other than those provided for. ANMF will continue to update members as this serious issue continues to be worked through.

School nurses and personal protective equipment

School nurse members contacted ANMF last week with concerns about the Victorian Government's decision that specialist schools would return to on-site learning in term 3.

ANMF and the Australian Education Union (AEU) wrote a joint letter the Deputy Premier and Education Minister James Merlino outlining a range of concerns and requesting a review of the policy. Both unions met with the Department of Education and Training and a Victorian Government representative on Sunday 12 July. As an outcome of this meeting:

1. ANMF and AEU will be provided material which underpins the existing policy settings for physical disability and special schools, and in particular, the use of PPE and the decision of the Chief Health Officer that it is safe for students within physical disability and special schools to return to face to face as opposed to returning to a reliance on remote learning.
2. DET will develop and distribute clear guidance for the use of PPE and will provide a draft of the same to ANMF and AEU for input.
3. DET will develop template documents for school principals to ensure consistent messaging to parents.

Personal protective equipment update

ANMF is advised by Safer Care Victoria's PPE Taskforce and the Victorian Government that PPE supplies are good and the state has access to the national stockpile if required.

ANMF (Vic Branch) Secretary Lisa Fitzpatrick attends a regular briefing for healthcare worker unions. At this week's meeting Victorian Health Minister Jenny Mikakos advised that 90 per cent of public health service PPE orders are being delivered within 24 hours. The Minister also advised health unions that stock levels, which are held centrally, this week include:

- 94 million pairs of gloves
- 1.6 million gowns
- 2.3 million face shields
- 1.3 million P2/N95 face masks
- 33 million surgical masks

Authorised by Lisa Fitzpatrick ANMF (Vic Branch) Secretary

The frequency of PPE taskforce union consultation meetings has increased and ANMF will continue to raise and resolve members' issues at this important meeting.

Members with concerns about PPE should:

1. **continue to raise and submit OHS incident reports with their employer as well as speaking directly with your manager**
2. **involve your Health and Safety Rep if you have one**
3. **contact ANMF via [anmfvic.asn.au/memberassistance](https://www.anmfvic.asn.au/memberassistance) (include your report and response if applicable) for further support and advice if after you have raised your concerns they are not addressed by your employer.**

Please see our 'Protocols for entering your home and minimising the risk of infection' poster at the end of this newsflash.

Important PPE guidance and information links

Members are encouraged to read and access the following PPE guidance:

1. Department of Health and Human Services PPE webpage via <https://bit.ly/DHHSppe>
2. DHHS *Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) Infection Prevention and Control guideline* (21 June) via <https://bit.ly/3deTBLE>
3. DHHS *COVID-19 – PPE and levels of protection* (20 May) via <https://bit.ly/2X7pBM7>
4. DHHS *COVID-19 – a guide to the conventional use of PPE* (updated 20 May) via <https://bit.ly/2yBnmaa>
5. DHHS *Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the provision of mental health care* (PDF) (4 June) via <https://bit.ly/2ALJgch>
6. DHHS *Personal protective equipment (PPE) for Maternity and Neonatal Services* (Word) <https://bit.ly/2yN9dqN>
7. DHHS *Respiratory support for children during the COVID-19 emergency* (updated 27 May) via <https://bit.ly/3dcA2DL>
8. *Access to personal protective equipment: information for residential aged care facilities in Victoria* <https://bit.ly/3fv1dLn>
9. *What personal protective equipment to use and when: residential aged care: Coronavirus (COVID-19) update* (17 June) <https://bit.ly/38VB0Da>
Information includes when PPE is required, options to secure PPE, and in which circumstances various PPE options should be used.
10. WorkSafe Victoria *Managing coronavirus (COVID-19) risks: Healthcare and social assistance industry – Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE)* via <https://bit.ly/3ddwqRT>

COVID-19 and WorkCover

If you believe that you have contracted COVID-19 through work, you can (and ANMF strongly encourages members to) make a WorkCover claim. The long-term health effects are not yet clear, and simply taking personal leave or special leave may not protect you against future health problems or loss of earnings.

For further advice contact Member Assistance <https://www.anmfvic.asn.au/memberassistance>

Authorised by Lisa Fitzpatrick ANMF (Vic Branch) Secretary

Chief Health Officer advises public to wear masks if they can't physically distance

Facemasks are now recommended for Victorians in metro Melbourne and Mitchell Shire when they leave their home and cannot physically distance.

Premier Daniel Andrews announced the new recommendations on 10 July following new evidence from global medical experts and increased community transmission in Victoria.

Studies have recently shown that, even when factoring in imperfections and human error, wearing face masks can reduce transmission of coronavirus by around 60 per cent. Before this study, advice around the effectiveness of face masks in reducing transmission has been contradictory and lacking in evidence.

Victoria's Chief Health Officer has now updated his advice to recommend anyone living in metro Melbourne or Mitchell Shire to wear a face covering or cloth mask when leaving home for one of the four permitted reasons – where it is not possible to maintain a distance of at least 1.5 metres from other people.

The Victorian Government is ordering more than two million reusable masks and an additional million single-use masks.

Read the Victorian Government media release <https://bit.ly/2OdQGbr>

Victorian Government hardship payment

The Department of Health and Human Services is providing a one-off \$1,500 payment to support Victorian workers who, as of 20 June, are instructed by the department to self-isolate or quarantine at home because they are either diagnosed with coronavirus (COVID-19) or are a close contact of a confirmed case.

The COVID-19 worker support payment recognises that the requirement to self-isolate or quarantine at home can cause a financial burden for some individuals and families who are without incomes during this period.

The payment covers permanent, casual, part-time, fixed term employees and self-employed.

You are eligible if you are:

- in continuing employment, would usually have worked during the period of self-isolation or quarantine at home and unable to work as a result of the requirement to self-isolate or quarantine at home
- not receiving any income, earnings or salary maintenance from their work as a result of not being able to work during the period of self-isolation or quarantine at home
- you have exhausted sick leave entitlements including any special pandemic leave

How do you apply?

The DHHS case and contact tracing team directly contacts all confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) cases and their close contacts. A needs assessment for the payment will be done over the phone. This is the only way to access this payment.

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ANMF website COVID-19 information www.anmfvic.asn.au/covid19

ANMF is continually updating its COVID-19 website pages where you can find links to information from state and federal governments and health departments as well as other relevant organisations.

New guidance added recently includes:

1. Federal ANMF evidence brief *Modes of transmission and infection* (7 July) via <https://bit.ly/2O8zfZK>
2. COVID 19 Mental health response & recovery -clinical mental health system communique 12 (8 July) <https://bit.ly/2W5jKpJ>
3. Maternal and child health service providers in local government areas in metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire COVID-19 update (9 July) <https://bit.ly/2CEomMY>
4. Maternal and child health service providers in regional and rural local government areas COVID-19 update (9 July) <https://bit.ly/3j3NOHs>
5. Maternal and child health services COVID-19 frequently asked questions (9 July) <https://bit.ly/32iCQN1>
6. Coronavirus (COVID-19) update Victorian immunisation services (13 July) <https://bit.ly/38ZaY24>
7. *Maternity and neonatal care during COVID-19* (26 May) <https://bit.ly/3j13b8o>
8. *COVID-19 Pregnancy triage, assessment and care* (PowerPoint) (26 May) <https://bit.ly/3eoFJ19>
9. *COVID-19 Labour and birth care* (26 May) <https://bit.ly/2CtVt62>
10. *COVID-19 Attendance at birth and NICU/SCN care* (26 May) <https://bit.ly/2ZnBPkW>
11. *COVID-19 Postnatal care* (PowerPoint) (26 May) <https://bit.ly/32e4ACT>

Aged care retention bonus – employer application deadline extended

Federal ANMF has sought clarification from the Department of Health after aged care members reported confusion about the status of their employer's application for the COVID-19 workforce retention bonus.

In response the Department of Health said it had extended the deadline for the applications from 20 July to 31 July.

It will also contact all aged care providers over the next fortnight which have not applied for the workforce retention bonus on behalf of their nurses, carers or other eligible staff.

Applications must be completed at approved provider level meaning some facility managers may not be aware of where the process is at for their organisation.

The first payments are scheduled to commence this week to providers who must pass the payments on to eligible staff. Payments will continue in batches.

You will only receive the payments if your employer makes an application. Use our template letter to write to your employer asking for written confirmation that they have made an application for the bonus on your behalf.

Template letter

Download ANMF's template letter to write to your employer via <https://bit.ly/agedcareletter>

Further information

- The Department of Health *Workforce retention bonus grant – residential care and home care* fact sheet (5 June 2020) includes pro-rate information and eligibility information <https://bit.ly/2zjXSPj>
- *Federal ANMF information sheet: retention bonus* via <https://bit.ly/anmfinfo-aged-care-support>

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ANMF (Vic Branch) Education Centre virtual classroom courses

The ANMF (Vic Branch) Education Centre continues to adapt courses and seminars to a virtual classroom platform via Zoom. You can find these courses and registration links via anmfvic.asn.au/virtualclassroom

Upcoming courses include:

July

- [Wound management: the what, when and why](https://bit.ly/3fh8vle) – 22 July
bit.ly/3fh8vle
- [Palliative care for older people: when to begin?](https://bit.ly/3cWhpmP) – 29 July
bit.ly/3cWhpmP
- [Safe medication administration](https://bit.ly/37JGFvx) – 29 July & 5 August
bit.ly/37JGFvx

August

- [Law and ethics for midwives, registered and enrolled nurses](https://bit.ly/2MRo3jv) – 5 & 6 August
bit.ly/2MRo3jv
- [ECG – cardiac rhythm recognition and 12-lead ECG](https://bit.ly/2UD6tUH) – 14 August
bit.ly/2UD6tUH
- [Advanced skills for dementia: different responses for different types](https://bit.ly/2MShpcY) – 26 August
bit.ly/2MShpcY
- [Certificate IV in Training and Assessment](https://anmfvic.asn.au/tae)
anmfvic.asn.au/tae

September

- [Documentation, the principles of best practice](https://bit.ly/3dWr2mC) – 9 September
bit.ly/3dWr2mC
- [Older people have families too: how to care for them](https://bit.ly/2zngiyC) – 30 September
bit.ly/2zngiyC

October

- [Certificate IV in Training and Assessment](https://anmfvic.asn.au/tae)
anmfvic.asn.au/tae

ANMF (Vic Branch) CPD Portal - clinical assessment modules

The ANMF (Vic Branch) Education Centre's series of clinical assessment online modules support nurses wanting to develop their clinical skills in recognising and responding to acute clinical deterioration, including the COVID-19 patient. The 12 one-hour modules on the CPD Portal are:

ANMF Clinical Assessment Module 1 - Introduction to acute care / recognising and responding to clinical deterioration

anmfvic.asn.au/cam-1

ANMF Clinical Assessment Module 2 - Airway management and unconsciousness

anmfvic.asn.au/cam-2

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ANMF Clinical Assessment Module 3 - Respiratory failure

anmfvic.asn.au/cam-3

ANMF Clinical Assessment Module 4 – Oxygen therapy

anmfvic.asn.au/cam-4

ANMF Clinical Assessment Module 5 – Hypotension

anmfvic.asn.au/cam-5

ANMF Clinical Assessment Module 6 - Sepsis

anmfvic.asn.au/cam-6

ANMF Clinical Assessment Module 7 – Non-invasive ventilation

anmfvic.asn.au/cam-7

ANMF Clinical Assessment Module 8 – Mechanical ventilation

anmfvic.asn.au/cam-8

ANMF Clinical Assessment Module 9 – Arterial blood gasses

anmfvic.asn.au/cam-9

ANMF Clinical Assessment Module 10 – Advanced ventilation

anmfvic.asn.au/cam-10

ANMF Clinical Assessment Module 11 – Advanced ventilation (prone)

anmfvic.asn.au/cam-11

ANMF Clinical Assessment Module 12 – CXR interpretation

anmfvic.asn.au/cam-12

All members receive annual credit to use on the ANMF (Vic Branch) CPD Portal. Full and part-time members receive a \$400 annual credit* (or \$120 for members on parental leave and \$80 for student members). Credit is renewed every July.

ANMF has halved the module price to make it easier for any non-members to complete these important modules. Non-members should click 'non-member login' to log in or create an account.

To access the online clinical assessment modules and others, visit cpd.anmfvic.asn.au

Don't bring it home: guide to minimise the risk of infection

A reminder that ANMF (Vic Branch) has developed a guide to assist you in relation to returning home from work after a shift.

Job Reps and HSRs are encouraged to print the poster which is part of the PDF newsflash. You can also download the 'Protocols for entering your home and minimising the risk of infection' A4 poster via bit.ly/COVID19-DBIH

Authorised by Lisa Fitzpatrick ANMF (Vic Branch) Secretary



Protocols for entering your home and minimising the risk of infection.

-  **1** On entry, remove your shoes and place in a plastic box.
-  **2** Leave your bag, wallet, mobile, keys, etc in a box near the entry.
-  **3** Change out of your clothes immediately and wash them. Use the hottest possible machine wash setting and dryer if you can.
-  **4** Have a shower.
-  **5** Clean items you've brought in and surfaces you've touched.

Remember to wash your hands regularly.

Cleaning tips

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- Hot soapy wash, wipe or disinfectant spray (depending on surface) phone cases, keys, ID, lanyard, glasses, etc.**

Consider changing in and out of your uniform/scrubs at work.