

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Mildura members' frequently asked questions

The following information is for public sector members in the Mildura region.

1. When is special leave paid?

The following information is from the Victorian Department of Health' *Guidance on employment matters* document last updated on 18 June 2021 (<https://bit.ly/3hO4Yiz>)

- a) If you are required to self-isolate, as a result of a direction of the Chief Health Officer you are entitled to special paid leave for the period. Payment should include penalties for usual shifts worked. This applies also if you are a secondary close contact.
- b) If you are absent from work to care for a family or a household member who is required to self-isolate, it is expected that employees will use their personal/carer's leave or another type of paid leave for the period.
- c) If you are unable to attend work because you are required to care for children as a result of a school and/or childcare centre being closed on the advice or direction of Victoria's Chief Health Officer, special paid leave may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- d) Casual employees who are required to self-isolate should contact their employer to seek that special leave be applied.
- e) If you experience an expected adverse event following the COVID-19 vaccination that impacts your ability to work, you are eligible for up to two days special paid leave following each dose. You'll need to provide evidence as per your public sector EBA personal leave clause if you are unable to work due to an adverse event in the 48 hours following immunisation (AEFI) that does not require you to isolate.

More information about the overlap of COVID-19 symptoms and vaccine reactions is available via the department's document called 'Recommendations for testing and isolation after COVID-19 vaccination' (10 May 2021) via <https://bit.ly/3fa0dNI>

2. Where can I check exposure sites

New exposure sites have been added. Check this page regularly <https://bit.ly/35YOUnv>

3. I have been to an exposure site, what do the different tiers mean?

Tier 1 – get tested immediately and quarantine for 14 days from exposure. You should also contact the Department of Health on 1300 651 160.

Tier 2 – get tested urgently and isolate until you have a negative result. Continue to monitor for symptoms, get tested again if symptoms appear.

Tier 3 – monitor for symptoms, if symptoms develop, immediately get tested and isolate until you receive a negative result.

4. Where can I get tested for COVID-19?

Mildura testing sites are prioritising people who have been to Tier 1 and 2 exposure sites. Please also get tested even with the slightest of symptoms.

Mildura testing locations, listed on the Victorian Government's website, include:

- Barratt and Smith Pathology - 127 Langtree Avenue, Mildura
- Mildura Respiratory Clinic, 137 Thirteenth Street, Mildura
- Mildura Old Aerodrome Ovals, Eleventh Street, Mildura (**Tier 1 testing only**)
- Mildura Recreation Reserve, Twelfth Street, Mildura (new) (**Tier 2, symptomatic and general testing**)

Testing site times, drive through, walk in and appointment information <https://bit.ly/2TB9eZ9>

5. I live with someone who is a primary close contact, do I also have to isolate?

Yes, if you have a close contact living in your household you must quarantine until they are told they can leave quarantine. You cannot go to work and will be eligible for special paid leave from your employer. You can only leave the house for the following reasons:

1. for medical reasons (to get medical care or get tested for COVID-19)
2. in an emergency or if you are unsafe
3. as specified by the Chief Health Officer

The Victorian Department of Health's coronavirus website has more information via <https://bit.ly/2TqAQ3t>

6. As a health worker do I have access to the Pfizer vaccine regardless of age?

Yes. As of 9 July 2021, all Victorian health and aged care workers in the priority phase 1a and 1b, who have not had their first COVID-19 vaccine dose, are eligible for the Pfizer vaccine. This applies to anyone aged over 16 years.

ANMF has raised Job Reps' concerns about the availability of Pfizer vaccine appointments in the Mildura area with the Victorian Government. More appointments will become available subject to supply.

If you have already received your first AstraZeneca dose the advice is to receive the second dose of AstraZeneca.

How to book a priority Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine appointment – two steps (you must use the phone number or online appointment link below to access the priority appointments)

1. **Read the information** about the booking process and the vaccines on the Victorian Government website <https://bit.ly/3dZjuC6>

then

2. **Make an online booking** via the Victorian Government's website - the booking system allows you to access appointments as part of a priority group. <https://portal.cvms.vic.gov.au/>

or

3. **Call the Victorian Government Coronavirus Hotline** on 1800 675 398 and tell the hotline operator you are part of the health care worker or aged care worker priority group.

What to bring to your appointment: you will need an eligibility declaration form (<https://bit.ly/2SOShKe>) or provide proof of occupation (ID card, letter from employer) or the signed proof of eligibility letter issued by the Victorian Department of Health COVID-19 Vaccination Program. You will also need your Medicare card (if you have one) or a valid form of identification (e.g. drivers licence, proof of age card or passport).

7. Can I have my second AstraZeneca dose prior to the recommended 12-week timeframe?

The expert group advising the Federal Government on COVID-19 vaccines, the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI,) has revised its advice on the period between AstraZeneca doses.

The increased community transmission of the COVID-19 Delta strain means anyone who received an AstraZeneca dose more than four weeks ago should contact their vaccine provider to discuss their second dose. ATAGI says an interval of between four and eight weeks is preferred during a COVID-19 outbreak.

Read the advice via <https://bit.ly/3kBNIPw>

Authorised by Lisa Fitzpatrick ANMF (Vic Branch) Secretary

8. What is fit testing and checking?

A fit test ensures you are wearing the correct P2/N95 respirator mask for your face shape and size.

Each P2/N95 mask fit test takes between 45 and 90 minutes to complete and requires specialist equipment and an appropriately skilled person to conduct the fit test.

ANMF encourages all nurses and midwives to participate in their workplace fit testing program as a matter of urgency to ensure you, your family and your patients, clients and residents are protected.

Healthcare services should prioritise healthcare workers for fit testing based on their clinical area of work.

Irrespective of fit testing, fit checking should be undertaken every time someone puts a P2/N95 respirator on. If the appropriate fit is not achieved, the respirator is not providing adequate protection. In these circumstances someone who can achieve an appropriate fit should undertake the procedure or delay the procedure until an appropriate fit can be achieved.

Read the WorkSafe Victoria advice via <https://bit.ly/3ddwqRT>

9. Does Victoria have enough supply of personal protective equipment?

Yes. Victoria's PPE supplies are plentiful and tracking systems are in place. As of 15 July 2021, stocks include 10 million N95 respirators, 60 million surgical facemasks, three million visors, eight million safety glasses, 12 million isolation gowns, 280 million gloves and six million units of sanitiser. A weekly PPE supply report is available on the Victorian Health Department's website <https://bit.ly/3g5d96m>

10. I am worried about the PPE at my workplace, what can I do?

Members with PPE concerns should:

1. **raise and submit OHS incident reports with your 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 (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.

11. What are the current restrictions and when do they end?

On 19 July, the Victorian Government data showed more than 5000 of the state's 18,000 plus primary contacts were in regional Victoria.

On 20 July 2021, Premier Daniel Andrews announced the current restrictions and lock down would be extended for a further seven days until 11.59pm Tuesday 27 July 2021. Read current metropolitan and regional restrictions via <http://bit.ly/CVrestrictions>

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12. How do I access ANMF support?

Members are encouraged complete an online Member Assistance inquiry form via <https://anmfvic.asn.au/memberassistance> (scroll to the bottom of the page).

The Branch triages member inquiries meaning Member Assistance can respond to urgent matters, such as a formal AHPRA notification, a disciplinary letter or a violent incident, and escalate to the relevant ANMF Organiser or other appropriate staff without members waiting on the phone for extended periods.

We respond to urgent queries within one business day, and non-urgent queries within three business days.

13. I'm really stressed, what specialist support is there for nurses and midwives?

This is an uncertain time. All nurses, midwives, personal care workers and nursing and midwifery students are encouraged to reflect on their current circumstances and wellbeing and fill out the Nursing and Midwifery Health Program Victoria's self-care plan questionnaire via <https://bit.ly/343qHLf>. You will be emailed a self-care plan.

To contact NMHPV call 9415 7551 or email admin@nmhp.org.au Find out more <https://www.nmhp.org.au>

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

The ANMF (Vic Branch) 'Don't bring it home' guide is designed to assist members returning home from work after a shift.

Job Reps and HSRs are encouraged to print the poster which is part of this 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



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.