

COVID-19 Student Newsflash #5

Changes to student clinical placements

The Victorian Department of Health (DH)'s [Student clinical placements - Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) guidance](#) has been updated to reflect the new [COVID-19 risk ratings](#) as of 4 June 2021:

- COVID Active (Red) risk rating (metro Melbourne)
- COVID Alert (Amber) risk rating (regional Victoria).

While student clinical placements are still permitted under both risk ratings, you're restricted to a single site/facility if you are placed in residential aged care.

There are no restrictions to travel within Victoria to undertake your placement, even if you need to travel between areas with different risk rating levels. You won't need a permit.

Students are not required to be routinely tested for COVID-19 prior to commencing a new clinical placement at a health service, unless required to do so under asymptomatic testing guidance, including if they have visited any named community [exposure sites](#).

For full changes to the guidance, download:

- [Student clinical placements - Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) guidance](#) [Word]
- [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\) \(4 June 2021\) - Student Clinical Placements Guidance - COVID-19](#) [Word]
- [Victorian health service guidance and response to COVID-19 risks](#)

What if there is a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case while on placement?

Students are restricted from providing care to any suspected (SCOVID) and confirmed COVID patients. If there is a suspected or confirmed case in the ward you are working on, you will be removed from placement.

Where a student has been on a ward with a confirmed positive case and has been potentially exposed, surveillance testing should continue for 14 days since potential exposure. The final test done in this 14-day period should be as close as possible to the end of the 14 days and should be a nasal/throat swab (not saliva) where possible.

In such cases, students should receive a negative test for coronavirus (COVID-19) in the four days prior to returning to their placement or commencing a new placement, and not have worked (in a paid or volunteer capacity) at another health or aged care facility since the test was conducted.

Clinical placement concerns

ANMF is working with the Department of Health to ensure that final year students have their required clinical placement hours to graduate in time to commence their 2022 graduate year.

The Branch understands at least two universities are having difficulty providing placements due to COVID-19 restrictions.

In order to assist us to inform the department about how many students are affected, please [complete our survey](#).

Experiencing hardship?

If you've lost your shifts due to the Victorian lockdown, the Commonwealth Government has announced a disaster package for people affected by COVID-19 restrictions. For more information see '[COVID-19 Disaster Payment for people affected by restrictions](#)'.

If you're unable to work due to COVID-19 testing or isolation, you may qualify for the Victorian Government's [\\$450 test isolation payment](#). If you have been directed by the Victorian DH to self-isolate or quarantine for 14 days and subsequently can't work, you may qualify for the [\\$1500 Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment](#).

Need assistance

All ANMF members, including student members, can seek ANMF advice and support for an issue via [Member Assistance](#). Issues may include your contract, pay or entitlements, personal protective equipment, rostering or working for more than one employer.

Students can access tailored, free counselling, support and referral

If you feel like you are not coping, need to talk or extra support, contact the [Nursing and Midwifery Health Program Victoria](#). It's free, confidential, and independent counselling and support service run by nurses and midwives. NMHPV encourages students to call sooner rather than later. Call 9415 7551 or email admin@nmhp.org.au.

Invite your fellow students to join ANMF (Vic Branch)

ANMF encourages all nursing and midwifery students to invite your classmates to [join the union](#). Undergraduate nursing and midwifery students and enrolled nursing students are all eligible to become members of the ANMF. Go to anmfvic.asn.au/join

Authorised by Lisa Fitzpatrick ANMF (Vic Branch) Secretary