

TUESDAY 4 August 2020

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) Update #17

ANMF welcomes new restrictions designed to ease pressure on hospitals and aged care

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 20 July.

Latest coronavirus statistics in Victoria

As of 4 August 2020, the Chief Health Officer reported:

- the state's number of COVID-19 cases was 12,335– there were 439 new cases since the day before.
- 456 people are in Victorian hospitals with COVID-19, including 38 in intensive care. 147 people have died, including 11 deaths since yesterday, all of which were linked to aged care.
- There were approximately 21,000 tests conducted yesterday, taking the total of tests conducted since 1 January 2020 to 1.7million.
- There are now 1186 active cases linked to aged care.

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

‘Hotels for Heroes’ program available

The Victorian Government’s Hotels for Heroes program is available to public and private hospital clinical or non-clinical healthcare workers, and public and private residential aged care workers, who are required to quarantine or self-isolate, should they be unable to do so in their home and if they meet the eligibility criteria for emergency accommodation.

The Hotels for Heroes program is also available to eligible workers who regularly work in an environment that involves consistent exposure to coronavirus (COVID-19) positive patients, who need accommodation on compassionate grounds, or those who cannot safely self-isolate or quarantine at home.

Nurses, midwives and carers who need to access this program must access it through their HR/People and culture department at their local health service or residential aged care employer, and it will be arranged.

If members have issues with their employer in accessing the program, contact ANMF (Vic Branch) via our Member Assistance inquiry form <https://www.anmfvic.asn.au/memberassistance>

Confirmed case at your workplace? Let ANMF know

Members are encouraged to advise ANMF if there is a confirmed COVID-19 case at your workplace excluding expected clinical areas such as ICU and COVID-19 wards. This will enable ANMF to support you and work with your employer in relation to steps to ensure staff safety including contact tracing and managing the situation as per the DHHS guidelines.

Advise ANMF of a COVID-19 case at your workplace via via our Member Assistance inquiry form <https://www.anmfvic.asn.au/memberassistance>

Additional ANMF support for members

To provide additional support to members with urgent issues during this time, ANMF staff are available on Saturdays and Sundays, between 8.45 and 5pm. To reach the on-call weekend contact, call the ANMF office number on 9275 9333.

Job Rep training moves online

There’s never been a more important time for Job Reps to learn more about their role and how they can work with ANMF and their colleagues to create a more engaged and safer workplace.

Due to restrictions affecting metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria all Job Rep training is now being delivered online. This includes Job Rep Foundations and a restructured Keeping it Organised program.

Find a program and register via <https://www.anmfvic.asn.au/JobRepschedule>

In the meantime, if you haven’t already, ANMF recommends you complete the online Job Rep Foundations module via <https://www.anmfvic.asn.au/JRfoundations>

We also recommend that you review the ANMF website’s Job Rep Resources page. This section offers useful tips and resources to assist you in your Job Rep role. Visit <https://www.anmfvic.asn.au/represources>

Authorised by Lisa Fitzpatrick ANMF (Vic Branch) Secretary

What if I am not coping or need some extra support?

If you are not coping or need support, the Nursing and Midwifery Health Program Victoria is there for you. The Andrews Government has provided the NMHPV, which is run by nurses, with additional funding during the pandemic. This means counselling, support and referral services are also available for aged care personal care workers during COVID-19. Find out more via <https://www.nmhp.org.au/> or call 9415 7551.

Stage 4 restrictions for metro Melbourne and stage 3 for regional Victoria

With increasing community transmission and the pressure increasing on nurses, midwives and personal care workers, ANMF has welcomed the tighter restrictions to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Stage 4 restrictions – metropolitan Melbourne

Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews declared a state of disaster from 6pm, 2 August until 13 September. At the same time stage 4 restrictions were introduced in metro Melbourne. This includes a curfew from 8pm to 5am. Mitchell Shire is not included in stage 4. You can only leave your home for four reasons:

1. **Necessary goods and services:** you can travel up to 5km from your home. If the nearest goods and services are further than 5km you may travel further. Only one person per household can leave home to get necessary goods and services and only once a day. Young children or at-risk people, who cannot be left unattended at home, may accompany you.
2. **Exercise:** you can leave home once a day to exercise for an hour. You must do this within 5km of your home. You can exercise with one other person if neither travel more than 5km from home. Young children or at-risk people, who cannot be left unattended at home, may accompany you.
3. **Care and health care:** you can leave home to receive health care or attend medical appointments. Do not put off getting medical care. You can take a pet to the vet.
4. **Work:** if you can work from home you must continue to work from home. Further announcements have been made – see business restrictions below.

Read the DHHS 2 August announcement <https://bit.ly/2DpVV5N>

Stage 3 restrictions – regional Victoria

From 11.59 on Sunday 2 August all Victorians are required to wear a face covering when leaving their home, unless a lawful exception applies.

From 11.59pm on Wednesday 5 August stage 3 stay-at-home restrictions will apply in Victoria, except if you live in metropolitan Melbourne where stage 4 restrictions apply. If you live in regional Victoria, including Mitchell Shire, there are only four reasons that you can leave home:

1. to shop for food and essential goods or services
2. to provide care, for compassionate reasons or to seek medical treatment
3. to exercise
4. for work or study, if you can't do it from home.

You may no longer have visitors to your home or visit other people in their home.

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Read the DHHS 2 August updated restrictions announcement, including a list of local government areas affected: <https://bit.ly/2DpVV5N>

Return to learning from home for all students

From Wednesday 5 August, Year 11 and 12 provision for VCE and VCAL will move to remote and flexible learning. Prep to Year 10 students will continue with remote and flexible learning in metropolitan Melbourne and these year level students in regional areas will commence remote and flexible learning. Tuesday 4 August will be a pupil-free day.

These requirements apply to all schools across all sectors in metropolitan Melbourne and rural and regional Victoria.

Onsite supervision will be available for children whose parents are 'permitted workers' and vulnerable kids who can't learn from home. **The definition of a 'permitted worker' is still to be announced, but will include nurses, midwives and personal care workers.**

Specialist schools in rural and regional Victoria will remain open.

From Thursday 6 August the same rules will apply to Melbourne's kinder and early childhood education services.

Stage 4 business restrictions

On 3 August Premier Daniel Andrews announced stage 4 business restrictions designed to slow the spread of the virus by stopping around one million Victorians moving around the state for work.

Supermarkets, grocery stores, bottle shops, chemists, petrol stations, banks, newsagencies, post offices – plus everyone involved in the frontline response - will continue to operate.

Read the Victorian Premier's announcement <https://bit.ly/3k2M5Ye>

Read a detailed list of affected businesses and industries <https://bit.ly/3fp9iA8>

Personal protective equipment update

The Victorian Department of Health and Human Services has updated its personal protective equipment guidance that **applies to all healthcare workers** (<https://bit.ly/3g5d96m>) The advice will be reviewed on 14 August.

Importantly, healthcare workers **MUST** wear a P2/N95 respirator:

- in settings with high numbers of suspected or confirmed COVID-19 positive patients
- in uncontrolled settings where persons with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 are treated, where there is a need for frequent PPE changes or there is risk of unplanned aerosol generating procedures (AGPs) or aerosol generating behaviours
- when undertaking an AGP on a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 positive patient.

Respirators with valves should **NOT** be worn. The air you exhale may expose other healthcare workers and patients.

Eye protection is now mandatory for Tier 1, and Tier 2 and 3 have been redefined. This means any staff directly involved in treating patients must wear eye protection.

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All staff must wear a level 1 surgical mask whilst at work. This has been extended from just public facing staff to all staff. The updated guidance clarifies that cloth masks are **NOT** to be used at work.

All items should be removed and disposed prior to going on a break and replaced after your break.

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> includes contacts for health services to source PPE. Page has been updated – see detail above.
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 31 July) 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 *Respiratory support for children during the COVID-19 emergency* (updated 27 May) via <https://bit.ly/3dcA2DL>
7. *What personal protective equipment to use and when: residential aged care: Coronavirus (COVID-19) update* (31 July) <https://bit.ly/38VB0Da>
Information includes when PPE is required, options to secure PPE, and in which circumstances various PPE options should be used.
8. WorkSafe Victoria *Managing coronavirus (COVID-19) risks: Healthcare and social assistance industry – Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE)* via <https://bit.ly/3ddwqRT>

Do you have a personal protective equipment concern?

ANMF continues to raise and resolve members' issues at the PPE taskforce union consultation meetings. **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 (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.

Worksafe guidance for new, returning and redeployed nurses and midwives

There has been a great response from nurses, midwives and undergraduate students registering to assist as part of Victoria's surge workforce. Many nurses are also working in less familiar healthcare settings such as COVID-19 testing, contact tracing and acute nurses assisting in aged care.

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WorkSafe Victoria has published guidance for employers to help manage the risks associated with people re-entering the workforce on the pandemic response register, student nurses and those redeployed to unfamiliar settings. ANMF participated in the development of the guidelines with the aim of ensuring employers implement appropriate induction and supervision systems and understand their occupational health and safety obligations continue – even in a pandemic. Read the guidance (updated 31 July) via <https://bit.ly/39PesEB>

Mental health workforce telehealth survey

The Department of Health and Human Services is undertaking a rapid evaluation into mental health service practice change during COVID-19 restrictions.

DHHS is keen to hear about mental health nurses' experience using telehealth and teleconferenced mental health tribunal hearings from mental health nurses. The survey will close on Friday 12 August.

Mental health nurses can take part in the survey via <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9PZW953>

Mental health communique #15

Mental Health Reform Victoria and the Mental Health and Drugs Branch of the Department of Health and Human Services have released [a new communique relevant for nurses and nurse managers working in mental health](#).

The Mental Health COVID-19 Communique (#15) Clinical Sector includes information about:

- Key principles to guide the response of Victoria's mental health system to COVID-19
- Movement of healthcare workers and health service employees during coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic
- Furloughing of staff
- Guidance on short term leave for hospital patients
- Occupational health and safety (COVID-19 notification) regulations 2020
- COVID-19 workforce wellbeing initiatives
- Online surveys.

The communique is at: <https://bit.ly/2Xqiqi2>

New supports to address outbreaks in private and not-for-profit aged care

The past two weeks have been difficult for many members working in private and not-for-profit aged care facilities affected by COVID-19 outbreaks. ANMF is sending more detailed newsflashes to aged care members.

ANMF staff have phoned Job Reps and members across 456 facilities in metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire to discuss their concerns. Members' key issues are access to appropriate personal protective equipment; infection control training; a workplace culture that discourages nurses and carers from taking sick leave; and high workloads, understaffing and resident care.

ANMF is working with the Commonwealth and state health departments to ensure nurses and carers are supported and your critical issues are addressed urgently.

State and federal government agencies are now working through the new Victorian Aged Care Response Centre to coordinate additional support for the sector. This includes deploying Australia Medical Assistance Teams of doctors, nurses, paramedics and logisticians as well as teams of public health experts and nurses from Victorian public and private hospitals into residential aged care facilities where outbreaks have occurred.

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Where clinically appropriate, residents who test positive to COVID-19 will be transferred to hospitals to receive care. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis, taking into account what is clinically best for the patient.

To facilitate this increase in patients, on 3 August Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews announced that from Wednesday 6 August in metropolitan Melbourne all non-urgent elective surgery across public and private hospitals will be paused.

In regional Victoria from 6 August all non-urgent elective surgery will be paused but bookings remain.

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

Read ANMF (Vic Branch) Secretary Lisa Fitzpatrick's message to aged care nurses and carers <https://bit.ly/2BR3gL0>

Public and private acute nurses working in aged care

ANMF members are advised that working as part of a public or private acute nursing team assisting in one of the private aged care facilities experiencing a COVID-19 outbreak must be voluntary.

It is a powerful opportunity for acute nurses to assist their aged care colleagues and gain a better understanding of their rewarding and critical work that has been hidden and undervalued for far too long.

ANMF is working to ensure nurses who assist in aged care facilities are fully supported and there is sufficient staff rostered each shift.

Reminder: support payment if you need to wait for COVID-19 test results

There are two Victorian Government payments available if you cannot access paid leave and you have COVID-19 symptoms, must wait for a test, test positive or must isolate. These are:

- \$300 worker support payment in the event they have COVID-19 symptoms or are a close contact and must isolate while waiting for test results
- \$1500 if you test positive and need to isolate for 14 days or are a close contact and need to isolate.

To apply you will need to provide a pay slip or statutory declaration. Payments will be made quickly.

To apply for the payment call 1800 675 398.

Find a testing location via <https://bit.ly/3f6u6xF>

Funding for private and not-for-profit aged care providers to provide support payments

The Commonwealth Government has announced it will fund private and not-for-profit aged care providers to provide income support to residential and home care workers for employees unable to work due to a positive test for COVID-19, symptoms, self-isolation or quarantine.

This applies to all permanent and casual employees including non-care workers.

Employers will receive funding to be able to pay for leave where the employee does not have sufficient sick or personal leave provisions or where leave is exhausted.

Where a worker is eligible for the Worker Support Payment (see above) through the Victorian Government, the amount paid by the Commonwealth will reduce commensurately.

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These arrangements took effect from Monday 27 July and will be in place while the 'Guiding Principles' are in effect (currently 8 weeks). Members are encouraged to read all ANMF newsflashes when they are sent – as these arrangements can change as new announcements are made – sometimes on a daily basis.

Aged care nurses, carers and other workers advised to wear face shields

All aged care workers across Victoria are now required to wear face masks and, as an additional precautionary measure, will be advised to wear face shields.

On 28 July Federal Health Minister Greg Hunt announced protection from COVID-19 for aged care staff and residents in Victoria will be increased, with reusable face shields and additional face masks being supplied from the national medical stockpile to help prevent the spread of the virus.

The Federal Government will:

- supply 500,000 reusable face shields to all residential aged care services across Victoria for use by staff
- release a further five million face masks from the national medical stockpile for Victorian aged care providers.

Minister Hunt said the use of personal protective equipment, such as masks and face shields, was vital in preventing the spread of COVID-19. He said both workers and residents were at risk of contracting the virus, with elderly and frail residents highly vulnerable to the disease.

The new release of face masks from the national stockpile is in addition to the four million surgical masks made available to aged care services on July 13. Read the Federal Government media release <https://bit.ly/3fesDE4>

Infection control training for residential aged care

The Victorian government has taken over providing infection control training for the aged care workforce.

As a priority, all workers in residential aged care are encouraged to complete online training about coronavirus (COVID-19) infection control and personal protective equipment:

- Monash Health online training: <http://training.monashhealth.org/> - this training has been designed for the Victorian workforce
- Commonwealth Department of Health course: <https://bit.ly/3e1o8gR>

Other resources to support the aged care sector are available on the Department of Health and Human Services website:

- Factsheets including *PPE guidance for residential aged care* and the *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Residential Aged Care Facilities Plan for Victoria* via <https://bit.ly/3eCdkWJ>
- A poster about 'How to put on and take off your PPE' (PDF) <https://bit.ly/3k2Ypb3>
- A video demonstrating the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for contact and droplet precautions via <https://bit.ly/3i2N8Wi>

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Influenza vaccinations in residential aged care

On 22 July 2020, Victoria's Chief Health Officer removed the restriction on persons entering, or remaining on, the premises of a care facility where the person could not demonstrate that they have an up to date vaccination against influenza, if such a vaccination is available to the person.

Employees who had not been vaccinated against influenza and who were required to work in other areas, or take leave, may now return to duty in care facilities. However, residential aged care facilities are encouraged to continue to recommend that staff and visitors have a flu vaccination given the vulnerability of residents in the event of infection.

Staff and volunteers of aged care facilities are still required to be offered the vaccination program in accordance with Commonwealth Government requirements.

Revised maternity services restrictions clarified

On 24 July Health Minister Jenny Mikakos clarified a woman's partner or support person is able to attend during labour and birth of a baby and can visit for as long as they wish after the birth. The partner can visit during the post-natal period.

ANMF welcomed the clarification which will ensure a consistent approach across maternity services, particularly those that were planning a no partner and no visitor approach in the post-natal period.

Supports for alcohol and other drugs nurses

The department of Health and Human Services is providing a range of initiatives specifically for Victoria's mental health and alcohol and other drugs workers. This support includes workforce wellbeing grants totalling \$338,000. Read details about successful applications <https://bit.ly/2BQ5r1o>

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

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ANMF Clinical Assessment Module 2 - Airway management and unconsciousness

anmfvic.asn.au/cam-2

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

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:

August

- [Law and ethics for midwives, registered and enrolled nurses](#) – 5 & 6 August
bit.ly/2MRo3jv

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- [ECG – cardiac rhythm recognition and 12-lead ECG](#) – 14 August
bit.ly/2UD6tUH
- [Advanced skills for dementia: different responses for different types](#) – 26 August
bit.ly/2MShpcY
- [Certificate IV in Training and Assessment](#)
anmfvic.asn.au/tae

September

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

October

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

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



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.



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