



Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

General Communication

Dear Residents, representatives & staff,

From 11.59pm 12 February 2021 until 11.59pm 17 February 2021 across all of Victoria we have entered a state wide lockdown. New Directions from Chief Health Officer in accordance with emergency powers arising from declared state of emergency in the Care Facilities Directions (No 21) have now been issued

This information is a summary of the enhanced restrictions that are now in place in all Residential Aged Care Facilities within Victoria. This action taken by the Victorian Government is a 'circuit breaker' with the aim of rapidly reducing movement to minimise the transmission risk following recent locally acquired COVID-19 cases. These restrictions will be reviewed.

Enhanced PPE requirements

- All workers are to wear surgical masks AND eye protection (face-shields preferred, goggles where face-shields are not practical) at all times. Tier 3 PPE (including N95 masks) is required for staff when they are entering the rooms of or providing care to symptomatic, suspected or confirmed COVID residents.
- Visitors must wear a fitted face mask at all times.

Enhanced visitor restrictions

Enhanced restrictions are in place from 11:59pm 12 February until 11:59pm 17 February 2021 across all of Victoria. Visitors are not allowed to enter a residential aged care facility during this time period except in the circumstances below:

All pre-approved visitors for compassionate reasons will be required to book in via our reception phone – 51323500 and must be scheduled within our normal visiting hours, End of Life Care is exempt.

Exceptions to the care facilities visitor restriction are:

- End of life – 2 visitors at any one time, but no daily limit or time limits
- Support visitors: Where the visitor is the parent, guardian, partner, carer or support person of the resident, and the person's visit is for the purpose of providing emotional, cultural, spiritual or social support to the resident that cannot reasonably be provided by that person via electronic or other non-contact means (1 visitor per day for max 1 hr)
- Essential care persons: Visitor's presence at the facility is for the purposes of providing essential care and support necessary for the resident's physical wellbeing that optimises the care and support delivered by workers at the facility and cannot reasonably be provided by that person via electronic means (1 visitor at any one time, no time limits for the duration of the visit)

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- In the case of a resident of the facility who has a mental illness – the person is the resident's nominated person and the person's presence at the facility is for the purposes of matters relating to their role as nominated person (1 visitor per day for max 1 hr)
- Essential behaviour assistance person: Visitor's presence at the facility is necessary to support individual behaviours of concern, such as for people living with dementia, cognitive impairment or cognitive disability, or who have a known or emerging serious mental illness (no time limits)
- Interpreters or informal language support (1 visitor at any one time, no time limits)
- Visitor is being assisted to handover care for discharge (1 visitor, once per day, for 1 hr)

Excluded Persons

Staff and visitors should be prohibited from entering the aged care facility where the visitor has:

- worked in or volunteered at a hotel quarantine site and/or other port of entry in the last 14 days
- been released from hotel quarantine in the last 14 days

Any person who has visited the exposure sites as listed should be considered an excluded person as they would be required to quarantine. Excluded persons cannot enter the facility for any reason. This includes any persons visiting for any purpose (including end of life) unless they have a specific exemption granted by the Chief Health Officer pursuant to Clause 5(5) of the *Care Facilities Directions*.

Please refer to the coronavirus website for an up to date list of [exposure sites](#) and follow the instructions (for example, get tested and self-quarantine).

- ****Note: this applies to any person who has been to an exposure site**
<<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/case-locations-and-outbreaks-covid-19>>******
- have been tested for coronavirus (COVID-19) due to symptoms and not yet received a result
- have arrived in Australia from overseas in the last 14 days.

In order to ensure excluded persons are prevented from entering the facility, the screening and declaration process is required.

Declarations for staff and visitors

Staff, workers and visitors to RACFs are required to declare in writing at the start of each shift or before entering a facility that they:

- do not have any coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms
- are not a close contact of someone who has coronavirus (COVID-19) case
- are not currently required to isolate or quarantine, as directed by the Department of Health and Human Services. This includes that they have not visited an [exposure site](#).



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In addition to the written declaration, all staff and visitors must be checked for symptoms, including checking for a temperature over 37.5 degrees Celsius.

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Declarations can be on paper, an app or equivalent providing it is in writing.

Asymptomatic (surveillance) testing of workers

RACFs are required to carry out asymptomatic testing for coronavirus (COVID-19) on employees and contractors (clinical and non-clinical) where directed by the Chief Health Officer (or their delegate), and in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Health and Human Services.

This asymptomatic testing continues to assist the epidemiological analysis and act as an early warning system in helping to keep vulnerable Victorians and staff in aged care safe.

Margery Cole Residential Aged Care Service staff members undertook asymptomatic testing onsite on Friday 12 February 2021.

Enhanced Restrictions for residents leaving RACFs

Enhanced restrictions are in place from 11:59pm 12 February until 11:59pm 17 February 2021 across all of Victoria.

The circuit breaker lockdown means people cannot leave their home unless it is for the reasons below. This applies to residents of RACFs in the same way it applies to other people in the community for:

- Exercise (if essential to resident wellbeing)
- Necessary medical appointments

Residents should consider whether leaving the facility is necessary or can be deferred to after the enhanced period.

If you have any questions regarding our COVID-19 response or the State Government Directions please contact Jackie Northe via jackie.northe@yallambee.com.au or rec@yallambee.com.au

Thank you for your support

Outbreak Management Team

13 February 2021