

Media Release

Mr Tim Pallas MP

Treasurer

Minister for Economic Development

Minister for Industrial Relations



Friday, 1 October 2021

COVIDSAFE REOPENING FOR VICTORIAN CONSTRUCTION

Restrictions on the Victorian construction industry will ease from 11.59pm on Monday, 4 October, with a *Construction Sector Roadmap* setting a way forward for the sector to stay open and keep our community safe.

The Victorian Government has worked closely with the industry on a plan for reopening based on the recommendations of the public health team.

In order to work onsite, all workers will need to continue to carry an Authorised Worker Permit and have had at least one vaccine dose. Every construction site in Victoria must also have a designated fully trained COVID Marshal to ensure compliance with the Chief Health Officer's directions.

Prior to reopening, operators will be required to attest that they have implemented the CHO directions and every site will need to have an up to date vaccination register available for compliance checks at all times.

In order to make this process as easy as possible, an online portal will soon be available on the Service Victoria website so these documents are accessible for both the operator and compliance teams.

Crib facilities may be used for the consumption of food and drink with strict density requirements and additional ventilation.

Up to five workers and a supervisor will be able to work onsite for small scale construction projects, and large scale sites can have up to 25 per cent of workers onsite. If crib rooms meet best practice and the entire workforce is fully vaccinated, large scale construction sites can have up to 50 per cent of workers onsite.

Projects on the State Critical Infrastructure list will operate at 100 per cent as long as crib rooms follow best practice guidelines.

Subject to continued high levels of compliance by the industry, workforce caps will progressively increase. At our 70 per cent double dose milestone, large scale construction can return to 100 per cent of its workforce.

Caps will be removed when Victoria reaches its 80 per cent target, and in addition, all onsite workers must be fully vaccinated by 13 November.

Fully vaccinated workers can travel between metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria in order to work onsite.

Workers on state critical projects or large scale construction can also travel between metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria if they have had a single dose, take an initial test before their first travel, then test twice per week until fully vaccinated.

To allow all sites to remobilise, workers who have had at least one vaccination dose will be able to enter a site prior to 5 October in order to undertake crib facility improvements, participate in a reinduction or receive deliveries.

As part of the re-opening, we expect the construction industry to comply with directions in full.

Teams of Authorised Workers will conduct checks to enforce directions, and penalties will be in place for builders and site operators that do not comply – including site shutdowns for significant or repeated breaches.

For more information, please visit www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au

Quotes attributable to Treasurer and Minister for Industrial Relations Tim Pallas

“We’ve worked really hard with the industry to ensure they can reopen safely – but the message is clear: we won’t tolerate it operating in a way that puts the rest of our community at risk.”

“I want to thank the large number of men and women from the construction sector who have gone and got vaccinated, and if you haven’t booked your jab – get it done today.”

Quotes attributable to Minister for Transport Infrastructure Jacinta Allan

“A massive effort has gone into getting the 18,000 strong Big Build workforce vaccinated and project sites ready to return to work in compliance with new construction public health orders.”

“This is a challenging time for Victoria, and we are focused on keeping our sites safe – to slow the spread of coronavirus, and continuing to build big for Victoria.”

All construction workers required to be fully vaccinated by 13 November 2021

Roadmap easing thresholds: In addition to reaching the vaccination threshold at each point in the roadmap, easing restrictions will depend on public health advice as to the current epidemiology, and is also subject to continuing high levels of compliance within the construction sector.

From 11:59PM, 4 October 2021

All sectors - open, subject to the following:

- Operators must complete an attestation that the site complies with CHO Directions.
- All construction sites must have sighted evidence that each worker has received their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine or evidence of a medical exception.

Small scale construction:

- Maximum of five workers per site plus the supervisor.
- Construction sites that employ workers that travel between the Restricted Area and Regional Victoria must have sighted evidence that these workers are fully vaccinated or have a medical exception.

Large Scale Construction:

- 25% of the workforce; OR
- 50% of the workforce if all crib rooms meet best practice standard and evidence has been sighted that all workers have been fully vaccinated for COVID-19 or evidence of a medical exception.
- Construction sites that employ workers that travel between the Restricted Area and Regional Victoria must have sighted evidence that these workers have had one dose or COVID-19 vaccine or have a medical exception, and be tested for COVID-19 twice per week with at least 72 hours between each test. Fully vaccinated workers can travel between the areas without the testing requirement.

State Critical Infrastructure Projects:

- 100% of the workforce if all crib rooms meet best practice standard.
- Construction sites that employ workers that travel between the Restricted Area and Regional Victoria must have sighted evidence that these workers have had one dose or COVID-19 vaccine or have a medical exception, and be tested for COVID-19 twice per week with at least 72 hours between each test. Fully vaccinated workers can travel between the areas without the testing requirement.

Early Development Sites:

- 20 workers per hectare if all crib rooms meet best practice standard.
- Construction sites that employ workers that travel between the Restricted Area and Regional Victoria must have sighted evidence that these workers are fully vaccinated or have a medical exception.

Prior to 11.59pm 4 October 2021:

- Workers who have had one dose can enter a construction site prior to reopening to undertake crib facility improvement activities, receive deliveries to prepare for work recommencing, or to undertake re-induction.

70%

Indicative date: 26 October 2021

Subject to continuing high levels of compliance within the construction sector.

- Large scale construction will increase to 100%, subject to any additional industry obligation in *Victoria's Roadmap*.
- All other requirements from 5 October remain in place.
- All construction workers must have had their second dose by 13 November.

80%

Indicative date: 5 November 2021

Subject to continuing high levels of compliance within the construction sector.

Open with COVID Safe settings and additional obligations (from original Roadmap).

- All construction workers must have had their second dose by 13 November.