

Statement

The Hon Dan Andrews MP
Premier



Thursday, 30 July 2020

STATEMENT FROM THE PREMIER

Today is not a good day.

And as the numbers show, this virus does not discriminate.

It rips through workplaces, sweeps through aged care settings, cuts through communities – and tragically, takes lives with it as it goes.

Most of today's cases are in metro areas. But we have seen a significant jump in regional communities. It's vital we stop this virus further seeping into regional Victoria.

Last week, and based on the latest in scientific study, we announced that face coverings would be mandatory in metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire.

Today, and in line with the advice of the Chief Health Officer, I can announce that same requirement will apply across regional Victoria.

That means from Sunday 2 August at 11:59pm, a face covering will be mandatory whenever you leave home – and wherever you live.

I understand this will be a big step for some. But by covering your face, you're protecting your community, and protecting those extra freedoms your community enjoys.

By covering your face, you're keeping local businesses open, and keeping local people in work.

There are, unfortunately, other changes we need to make.

To date, new cases in regional communities have largely been contained to workplaces. Increasingly though, in some locations, we're seeing a different kind of spread.

That's why, from 11:59pm tonight, and in the local government areas of Colac-Otway, Greater Geelong, Surf Coast, Moorabool, Golden Plains, and the Borough of Queenscliffe, you will no longer be able to visit people or have visitors at home.

Understandably, there'll be plenty of questions about why this and not that. Why you can have dinner together at a restaurant – but not at a mate's place.

And the simple truth is, the data. The data is telling us that outside work, this is the single greatest cause of transmission in these communities.

People are visiting friends and family – and taking the virus home with them.

It makes sense. These are the kind of places we let our guard down. We relax, we get comfortable and we forget all the rules about keeping safe.

As challenging as it is, these changes are fundamentally about protecting the people you love.

Reflecting today's numbers, we'll continue to look at workplaces – how and what and where more can be done to protect workers, their families and their communities.

I understand that many Victorians will be feeling equal parts frustrated, tired and sad. I am too.

We're clearly a long way from where we wanted to be.

For information about coronavirus, please visit www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au or phone 1800 675 398

As always, I do want to thank every single Victorian who is doing the right thing.

This is one of the biggest challenges our state has faced. And yet, really, we're all being asked to make the smallest of sacrifices.

By not seeing your mate, you might be saving their life.

By not hugging your mum, you might be keeping her alive.

And by covering your face, you're contributing to the safety of every single Victorian.

Day by day, decision by decision – we can get on top of this.

But we need your help.