

# COVID-19 Coronavirus update

## 27 March 2020



The most important message is to stay at home and avoid all gatherings of people. This minimises the chances of transmission, protects the health system and saves lives.

The Victorian Government has already ordered the closure of hotels, pubs and clubs (excluding bottle shops within those venues), casinos, cinema, nightclub, entertainment venues, gyms and indoor sporting centres.

There are now further closures of non-essential businesses, limitations on certain activities, and closure of a range of facilities.

New restrictions mean the following businesses and activities must stop:

- Open house inspections and real estate auctions
- Beauty therapy, spray tanning, waxing and nail salons
- Tattoo, piercing, spa, and massage parlours
- Gyms and fitness centres
- Social sporting activities
- Caravan and camping parks
- Galleries and museums
- Places of worship

For more information on what is closed and what is open, [www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus](http://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus)

### EFTPOS only at waste sites

There are no changes to our kerbside waste collection or the opening hours of our waste sites.

However, we have implemented a card-only payment system to support social distancing requirements.

If you are visiting one of our waste sites, payments can only be made by EFTPOS from Saturday 28 March onwards.

### Closures to services and facilities

Following restrictions and advice from government, council has taken measures to close some facilities and services.

All closures are in place until 30 April when the situation will be reviewed.

### Customer service centres

All of our customer service centres are closed in the interest of social distancing requirements.

We will be providing our services through telephone, email and website.

Our contact centre remains open on weekdays from 8.30 am – 5.00 pm.

You can complete many of our forms online at [www.eastgippsland.vic.gov.au/forms](http://www.eastgippsland.vic.gov.au/forms)

Payments and other transactions are encouraged via the telephone or through our website.

### Open by appointment

- Bushfire Recovery Centre
- Omeo: banking and Centrelink services only

### Other site closures

- All playgrounds and exercise stations
- A quarter of council's public toilets
- Bairnsdale Aquatic and Recreation Centre
- Lakes Entrance Aquadome
- Forge Theatre

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- Orbest Outdoor Pool
- Bairnsdale Library
- Mobile libraries
- Visitor Information Centres
- Council-operated caravan parks in Mallacoota, Eagle Point, Cann River and Swifts Creek.

Our library service has recorded virtual Rhyme Time and Storytime sessions, which we will share on our website and social media.

### Council-operated caravan parks

Patrons who have bookings for Mallacoota Foreshore Holiday Park and Eagle Point Caravan Park have been contacted and offered the choice of a refund or credit.

New bookings are not being taken.

### Public toilets

Council has closed toilets in playgrounds and areas where people gather to reinforce the mandatory behaviours on social distancing and non-essential travel.

In most of these areas, alternate open toilets are available nearby. Signs have been put up to direct people to the nearest facilities that are open.

### What is open?

The following facilities and services remain open. Best practise social distancing guidelines must be observed in all public spaces.

- Marinas
- Planning
- East Gippsland Livestock Exchange, only people essential for a sale to proceed are permitted
- Waste sites and kerbside waste collection
- Aerodromes

- Raymond Island Ferry - casual fees are suspended for all vehicles to allow social distancing.

We have introduced four hourly cleans of the ferry passenger deck from today. These cleans mean that the deck won't be available for foot traffic passengers from 9.30 – 10.30am; 1.30 – 2.30pm; and 5.30 – 6.30pm as the cleaner will be on deck at this time.

The ferry will operate during these times for vehicles only,

Those in vehicles are also reminded to keep their windows up at all times to respect social distancing requirements.

- Local Laws will continue animal collection and the operating of the pound
- Health officers will continue to work
- Immunisation sessions are an essential service and will go ahead. Due to social distancing requirements please expect longer wait times. If you are showing symptoms, please do not come to an immunisation session

### Council social distancing

Council is organising for its workforce to work from home where possible. This is inline with the Prime Minister's requirement for people to stay in their homes and avoid other people as much as possible.

### Registering for Centrelink

If you have been affected by the COVID-19 restrictions, Centrelink has now updated its processes so you can register your intention to claim a Centrelink payment on the Centrelink website. This means you do not need to call or visit a Centrelink office to start the process.

You don't need to complete a full claim right now. You can register your intention to claim at a time

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and place that works for you. Centrelink will backdate your payment.

Once you've registered your intention to make a claim, Centrelink will contact you to let you know what the next steps are.

### **If you have a myGov account linked to Medicare or Australian Taxation Office**

You can register your intention to claim. When you sign in to myGov, you will be prompted to register your intention to claim a Centrelink payment.

### **If you have a myGov account not linked to Medicare or Australian Taxation Office**

You need to link to either Medicare or Australian Taxation Office. Do this before registering your intention to claim.

Once you do this, Centrelink will prompt you to register your intention to claim.

### **If you have a myGov account linked to Centrelink**

You can sign in to myGov and choose to either:

- go to your Centrelink online account and start your claim now
- register your intention to claim on the myGov Welcome screen.

If you've lost your job or income has reduced due to COVID-19, and are:

- 21 or younger, you may be able to claim Youth Allowance for job seekers
- between 22 and Age Pension age you may be able to claim JobSeeker Payment
- a young child's main carer you may be able to claim Parenting Payment.

For more information visit

[www.servicesaustralia.gov.au](http://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au)

### **How is COVID-19 spread?**

It is spread through close contact with an infected person. Keeping a distance of 1.5 metres from other people is recommended.

Close contact means greater than 15 minutes face-to-face or the sharing of a closed space for more than two hours with a confirmed case.

A close contact could include any person meeting any of the following criteria:

- Living in the same household or similar setting (for example, a boarding school or hostel)
- Direct contact with the body fluids or laboratory specimens of a confirmed case
- A person who spent two hours or longer in the same room
- Face-to-face contact for more than 15 minutes with the case in any other setting not listed above.

### **What are the symptoms of COVID-19?**

Many people who contract COVID-19 will suffer only mild symptoms. However early indications are that the elderly and people with pre-existing medical conditions are more at risk of experiencing severe symptoms.

The most common coronavirus symptoms reported include:

- Fever
- Breathing difficulties such as breathlessness
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Fatigue or tiredness

### **If you feel unwell**

You need to call ahead **before** visiting your doctor or emergency department. This allows the medical centre to put infection control measures in place.

The Department of Health and Human Services also has a self-assessment chart to help you decide if you should be tested.

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### More information on COVID-19

Visit the Department of Health and Human Services website for the latest advice and updates on the response to COVID-19:

[www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus](http://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus)

If you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, please contact your GP or call the dedicated hotline on 1800 675 398.