Office of Local Government

COVID-19 COUNCIL UPDATE

6 May 2021

Temporary tighter restrictions for Greater Sydney

COVID-19 restrictions will be temporarily tightened across Greater Sydney following the latest cases of community transmission and updated health advice from Chief Health Officer Dr Kerry Chant.

The following measures are effective from today (May 6) until at least May 10 for the Greater Sydney region, including Wollongong, Central Coast and Blue Mountains:

- Visitors to households will be limited to 20 guests – including children
- Masks will be compulsory on public transport and in all public indoor venues, such as retail, theatres, hospitals, aged care facilities and for front-of-house hospitality staff (except in a hospitality venue when eating or drinking)
- Drinking while standing up at indoor venues will not be allowed
- Singing by audiences at indoor shows or by congregants at indoor places of worship will not be allowed

- Dancing will not be allowed at indoor hospitality venues or nightclubs, however, dancing is allowed at weddings with a strong recommendation that no more than 20 people should be on the dancefloor at any one time, and
- Visitors to aged care facilities will be limited to two people.

It is also strongly recommended that the community avoids mingling in large groups over the coming days and is careful not to put our most vulnerable at risk.

There are more than 300 COVID-19 testing locations across NSW including new pop up sites in the Eastern Suburbs.

Anyone experiencing any cold or flu-like symptoms, even if they are mild, should isolate immediately, get tested and continue to isolate until a negative result is received.

For the latest information and COVID-19 testing sites, click here.

Council meetings must comply with Public Health Order

Councils can continue to meet in person despite the new temporary restrictions.

However, councils should ensure they comply with the Public Health Order and ensure that appropriate social distancing is practiced at meetings.

Councillors are permitted to attend meetings remotely, as per the regulation amendment.

Councils are reminded that they are required under the Local Government Act to permit members of the public to attend their meetings, subject to compliance with the Public Health Order and social distancing requirements.

Further guidance on council meetings and the current regulations is available here.

NSW Government urges use of QR codes

The NSW Government is urging everyone to continue to check-in at venues using QR codes after data revealed a 25 per cent drop in their use.

Scanning a NSW Government QR code captures the business name, address and the customer's contact details. The information is securely stored for 28 days for the sole purpose of contact tracing and can be instantly accessed by NSW Health if needed. After this time, it will be destroyed.

For customers who do not have access to a smartphone, venues should record their contact details and time of entry using an electronic device. If there is an internet outage, venues can record the necessary contact details manually and then enter them electronically, for example into a spreadsheet such as Excel.

Customers can use the Service NSW app to check-in and check-out at a venue using a QR code.

For more information on QR codes, click here.

COVID safety plans simplified

The NSW Government has simplified COVID-19 safety plans to make it easier to understand what is required under current Public Health Orders and minimise the risk of transmission.

The plans are now completed by category, and existing COVID-19 safety plans have been automatically transferred to the new categories.

All businesses are asked to review their plan to ensure it is up to date.

It's particularly important to continue to keep a record of all staff, patrons and contractors visiting premises, such as through QR codes, as required for businesses under Public Health Orders.

This makes it easier for contact tracers to reach people as quickly as possible if there is a new COVID-19 case detected, to help stop or slow the spread of the virus.

New rebate to help small businesses reduce costs

The NSW Government's new $1,500 Small Business Fees and Charges Rebate is now available to help small businesses, sole traders and not-for-profit organisations with the cost of government fees and charges, supporting their recovery from the impact of COVID-19.

Qualifying businesses can use the rebate to claim back the cost of eligible NSW and local government fees and charges due and paid from 1 March 2021.

Businesses only need to apply for the rebate once but can submit multiple claims until the full value of $1,500 is reached. The rebate is available until June 2022.

For more information, click here.