

Media Release

The Hon Martin Foley MP
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services
Minister for Equality



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NSW-VIC BORDER BUBBLE STRENGTHENED TO KEEP LOCALS SAFE

With Victoria emerging from its fourth COVID-19 incursion from NSW in six weeks, residents in the Victoria-NSW border bubble can only enter Victoria without a permit if they are travelling for essential reasons.

The Victorian Chief Health Officer has declared these changes will come into effect at 11:59pm Tuesday 3 August, allowing the border bubble arrangements to continue in a safe way for all Victorians. Under the changes, border bubble residents can only cross the border to enter Victoria without a permit for:

- Necessary goods and services, including medical care and getting a COVID-19 test
- Care and compassionate reasons
- Paid or voluntary work (including for charitable and religious purposes)
- Education (including childcare and early childhood services)
- Getting a COVID-19 vaccination
- Sport and exercise at a sporting club or at a sport or physical recreation facility (excluding alpine resorts)

People crossing the border to enter Victoria for one of the essential reasons must also not travel further than reasonably necessary to undertake that activity. In other words, if you're from Albury, you can't shop in Wangaratta or Melbourne if you can get the essentials you need in Wodonga.

These permitted reasons also apply to Victorian border bubble residents who plan to enter New South Wales. They will need to have observed the permitted essential reasons for travel while in New South Wales if they wish to return to Victoria without a permit under the border bubble system.

The changes mean that border bubble residents can cross the border without a permit to get the essentials they need, but not to visit a friend, go for a meal at a pub or to go on holiday.

Travel for sport and exercise will be limited to the minimum number of people required to participate and run it – with spectator travel not permitted. Parents can transport their children for community sport.

Existing exceptions to obtaining a permit will continue to apply. These exceptions to the permit system allow a person to enter Victoria for certain reasons, including in emergencies or if they are escaping family violence.

If a Victorian border bubble resident has travelled to NSW or a NSW border bubble resident enters Victoria for a non-essential reason, they aren't eligible for the border bubble permit exception and can be subject to a fine of up to \$5,452.

Victoria's border settings are always under review by the Chief Health Officer depending on COVID-19 risks at any given time, and are subject to change. The current list of New South Wales and Victorian local government areas in the NSW-Victoria cross border area remains unchanged.

These changes currently will not apply to the South Australian-Victoria cross-border area. All of New South Wales remains an Extreme Risk Zone under Victoria's travel permit system.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Martin Foley

"With the outbreak in New South Wales still growing, the public health advice is clear: we need to limit unessential movement across the border into Victoria where it is practical and possible."

"We know this will affect many border residents, but so will another outbreak of the Delta variant on our doorstep – we need to keep our border residents and all Victorians safe."

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