



Advice for residential aged care staff and visitors in relation to new restricted postcodes

Coronavirus (COVID-19) update 1 July 2020

Who should read this?

This factsheet is for residential aged care providers, staff and visitors, including health practitioners and volunteers.

What should Residential Aged Care Facilities in restricted postcodes change about entry to the facility?

Residential aged care facilities (RACFs) in restricted postcodes should communicate that visiting is discouraged, unless necessary. Visitors are permitted when required for care giving, and for compassionate reasons in accordance with the [Care Facilities Directions](#). The number of visitors, and the duration of their stay, should be minimised.

Are there any restrictions on who can be admitted or transferred to a residential aged care facility?

No. There are no restrictions on residents from restricted postcodes being admitted or transferred to residential aged care facilities (RACFs).

Are there any restrictions on staff or essential workers who live in restricted postcodes?

No. There are no restrictions on staff or essential workers from restricted postcodes attending work where this is required in person. All workers must be screened, and any workers who are unwell must not work. Any worker who has coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, no matter how mild, must be tested, and cannot return to work until they have received a negative result. Those who can work from home, should work from home.

Should RACFs restrict visits from people from restricted postcodes?

Visitors from restricted postcodes should be discouraged except where the visits are for care giving and compassionate reasons. While all RACFs should discourage visitors from restricted postcodes, they should refer to the permissible reasons for visits outlined in the [Care Facilities Directions](#). The number of visitors, and the duration of their stay should be minimised.

The [Care Facilities Directions](#) and guidance provided in the [COVID-19 Residential Aged Care Facilities Plan for Victoria](#) should be followed, and if any change is required, that will become a requirement through the action of the Directions.

Visitors from restricted postcodes, even those who are well, are encouraged to be tested. However, they are not required to be tested, and are not required to show evidence that they have been tested as a condition of their visitation.

RACFs should not request evidence of a visitor's address in order to prevent entry. If there is concern about behaviour in breach of restrictions, RACFs should follow the suggested process in the [COVID-19 Residential Aged](#)

[Care Facilities Plan for Victoria](#), and explain that the consequences of non-compliance places the health and safety of residents, staff and the community at risk. As a last resort, the matter should be referred to Victoria Police.

What restrictions should be in place for RACFs situated within restricted postcodes

RACFs within restricted postcodes should communicate that visiting is discouraged, unless necessary. Visitors are permitted when required for care giving, and for compassionate reasons in accordance with the [Care Facilities Directions](#). The number of visitors, and the duration of their stay, should be minimised. This applies to visitors who reside both within and outside restricted postcodes.

Is testing for coronavirus (COVID-19) mandatory for staff or visitors from restricted postcodes to enter RACFs?

No. Staff and visitors from restricted postcodes, even those who are well, are encouraged to be tested. However, they are not required to be tested, and are not required to show evidence that they have been tested as a condition of their employment or visitation. Visitors entry to the facility is determined by the [Care Facilities Directions](#).

Workers and visitors who undergo asymptomatic testing are able to continue to work while they await their test results. Visitors and workers who are symptomatic who have a test must not work and must stay at home while they await the results of their test.

What screening should RACFs have in place?

Symptom and temperature screening should remain in place in all facilities, as detailed in the [Care Facilities Directions](#).

Staff and visitors from restricted postcodes who are well are encouraged to be tested. However, they are not required to be tested, and are not required to show evidence that they have been tested as a condition of their employment or visitation. Visitor entry is determined by the [Care Facilities Directions](#).

Unwell people should not enter the RACF and should immediately get tested.

Are there any changes to Person Protective Equipment (PPE) guidelines

No. There are no changes to PPE guidelines.

For more information see [Access to PPE for Residential Aged Care Facilities in Victoria](#) and [PPE Guidance for residential aged care](#).

Where can I get more information?

The Victorian and Commonwealth governments have developed coronavirus (COVID-19) aged care specific websites with resources and guidelines.

The situation and action required is changing rapidly. We recommend you regularly check these websites, and subscribe to updates:

Department of Health and Human Services (Victoria)

<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/aged-care-sector-coronavirus-disease-covid-19>

<https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au>

<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-covid-19-daily-update>

Department of Health (Commonwealth)

<https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-the-health-and-aged-care-sector>

<https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/advice-for-people-at-risk-of-coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-people-in-aged-care-facilities>