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| Care Facility Directions |
| Disability Accommodation  8 April 2020 |

## Care Facilities Directions

The [Care Facilities Directions](https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/state-emergency) have been issued under the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic) and make provision for restricting access to facilities where vulnerable Victorians live and receive care. These restrictions come into effect from midnight on 7 April 2020.

This will help protect elderly people, those with disability, people experiencing homelessness, and children and young people in secure welfare services from the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). People who live in these care facilities are especially vulnerable to the transmission of coronavirus and may be critically at-risk if exposed.

## What disability accommodation is covered

The direction covers disability residential services under the Disability Act 2006, including group homes, forensic disability justice accommodation services and the Disability Forensic Assessment and Treatment Service. The direction also covers Short Term Accommodation and Assistance dwellings and SDA enrolled properties where there is a residency agreement under Part 12A of the Residential Tenancies Act 1997.

The disability service provider or NDIS registered provider who provides services at the facility is responsible for ensuring the direction is implemented.

To minimise the potential exposure of residents to coronavirus (COVID-19), only essential care service providers and visitors providing care and support to a resident (including family members, friends, professional services and advocacy) should be given access to the home with additional requirements. Please note this direction does not limit statutory bodies such as Community Visitors and Disability Services Commissioner from visiting the property.

Please ensure residents, family members and staff informed of the actions you are taking to implement these directions.

## What this means for disability accommodation

Only residents, workers and some visitors can enter the disability accommodation.  Residents will still receive the necessary supports and services they require to support them.

## Workforce

Staff who can enter disability accommodation to provide support include; direct employees or contractors (such as labour hire) of a disability service provider or registered NDIS provider, a person providing necessary goods or services or where a person is providing medical or pharmaceutical goods or services. Medical services include allied health services such as speech pathology or physiotherapy that are necessary for the person’s health and wellbeing.

Staff can also enter disability accommodation to provide behaviour support services and support services. Behaviour support services include services to assess, plan or implement a person’s behaviour support plan where these services cannot be provided remotely. Support services are additional services or supports provided to the person through the person’s support plan that are provided in the disability accommodation. This may include additional support provided by another service provider. A worker also includes a person who attends the disability accommodation to provide treatment under a treatment plan.

Ensure staff have completed the coronavirus (COVID-19) [Infection Control Training](https://www.health.gov.au/resources/apps-and-tools/covid-19-infection-control-training), that trains staff on recognising the early signs and symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) in themselves, colleagues, residents and visitors.

## Visitors

Visitors may only enter to provide:

* care and support
* for providing end of life support
* as a prospective resident or to accompany a prospective resident.

A resident may have only one care and support visit each day, including no more than two people and the visit must be for no longer than two hours.

Most disability accommodation facilities have limited space for ensuring appropriate social distancing between residents, house staff, other workers and visitors.  Providers must balance the need for social distancing and delivery of essential supports with requests for care and support visits necessary for the person’s well-being.  On this basis visits should be scheduled and adhere to [social distancing guidance](https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-covid-19-transmission-reduction-measures). Visitors are required to practice social distancing, including maintaining a distance of 1.5 metres at all times.

All Victorians are subject to the [Stay at Home Directions](https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/state-emergency). Where visits are not possible phone or video calls should be made available to all residents to enable more regular communication with family members and encourage family and friends to maintain contact with residents by phone and social media as appropriate.

## Visitor screening

Screening of all visitors to disability accommodation services must occur to identify people who may pose an infection risk to residents and who are excluded from entry. **Excluded persons** include:

* a person who has arrived in Australia from overseas in the preceding 14 days
* a person who has been contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the last 14 days
* a person with a temperature or symptoms of coronavirus

**Assess if the individual attending the disability accommodation service is an excluded person. Ask the following questions of all visitors:**

1. Have you travelled overseas in the last 14 days?
2. Have you had contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the last 14 days?
3. Do you have a new illness, especially a fever, sore throat, cough, shortness of breath or other respiratory symptoms?

If the person answers **YES** to question 1 and/or question 2, the person should be in quarantine (self-isolation) and must not enter the home under any circumstances.

If a person answers **YES** to question 3 they are to be advised that they cannot enter the home and should seek medical assessment if they have not already done so.

Note: Registered NDIS providers should be aware of requirements to notify the Commissioner of certain changes and events: [https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/providers/notice-changes-events/notification-covid-19](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__www.ndiscommission.gov.au_providers_notice-2Dchanges-2Devents_notification-2Dcovid-2D19&d=DwMFAg&c=JnBkUqWXzx2bz-3a05d47Q&r=KLIQDs1XkY6eYQHQUInfogV8ZeDvaxzZYaIFoZLutao&m=Ay0vWWB4vkErf3MS1F2IM27v1nKjyWBjiCAY0b_A_nc&s=ULgc1Je2Vb82YpCaBqfwMx3TCYKHq6zXGKufB8-jDM4&e=)

Registered NDIS providers should also be aware of Commission’s COVID-19 webpage which includes links to other information and updates for NDIS providers: [https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/resources/coronavirus-covid-19-information](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__www.ndiscommission.gov.au_resources_coronavirus-2Dcovid-2D19-2Dinformation&d=DwMFAg&c=JnBkUqWXzx2bz-3a05d47Q&r=KLIQDs1XkY6eYQHQUInfogV8ZeDvaxzZYaIFoZLutao&m=Ay0vWWB4vkErf3MS1F2IM27v1nKjyWBjiCAY0b_A_nc&s=Cf6gfjasxJsJ_GMFN6PDEGpFaS8ArQuKibPpYQW2JyA&e=)

*Note: This advice is current as at 8 April 2020. Advice will continue to be amended to reflected update State and Commonwealth directions and health advice.*