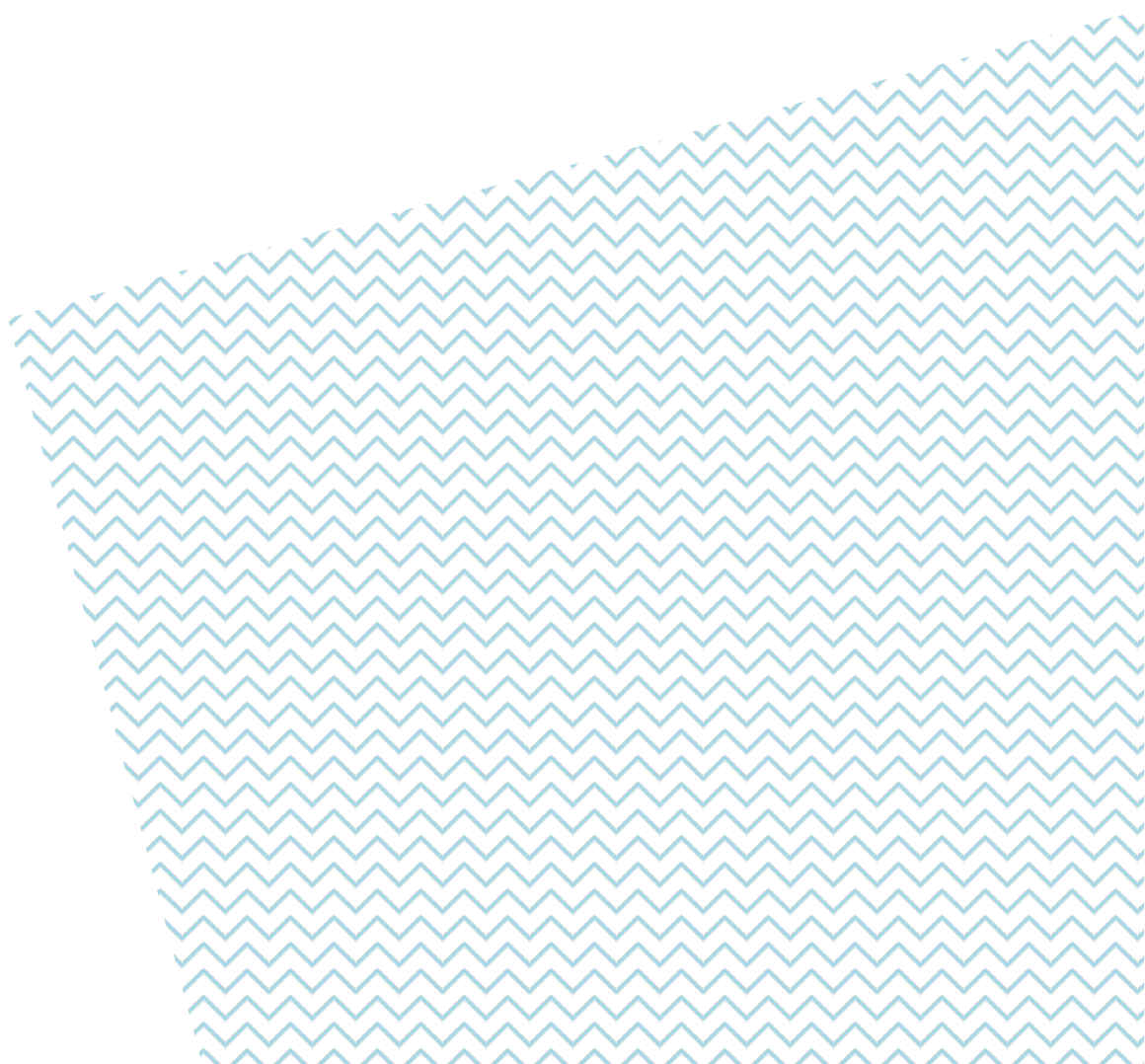




# **University of Melbourne Student Accommodation COVIDSafe Plan**

Student Copy



## Background & Purpose

The COVID-19 virus, especially the Delta variant, is highly transmissible. The risk of transmission is exacerbated in high-risk settings such as student accommodations where the configuration of buildings is high density, with many people living together and sharing facilities.

The higher-risk nature of student accommodation means that, at times, the safety protocols in place will exceed those of general residential and suburban settings (for example, the general public may be able to have 15 visitors to their home, but if your apartment is 11sqm including furniture, it may only be safe to allow one visitor).

It is important to keep in mind that COVID-19 is a serious disease that can cause severe illness and even death in all age groups. Some people, such as those with weakened immune systems or chronic illnesses, are especially vulnerable.

It is everyone's responsibility to ensure protocols and laws are being followed to mitigate the risk to our community.

The measures in this document are intended to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 transmission in student accommodations and residential colleges. The protocols are in line with Victorian Department of Health guidelines, public health laws, and University COVIDSafe plans.

The aim is to:

1. Keep the residential community safe (staff and students)
2. Align with government recommendations, including:
  - Ensuring adequate risk mitigation strategies are in place.
  - Ensuring residents are adhering to enforceable public health laws and restrictions.

When this document is updated or revised, you will receive a copy of the new document via email. However, due to the speed at which risk levels and government restrictions can change, you may not receive an updated copy of this document *each time* a change to restrictions occurs. You will usually be notified of policy, procedure and rule changes at your nominated email address in the first instance.

## Expectations

All residents must read this COVIDSafe Plan and agree to adhere to the measures outlined to keep themselves and other members of the community (residents and staff) safe. The consequences of breaching COVIDSafe measures and/or public health laws are outlined in this document.

It is a condition of entering the residence and taking up accommodation that you:

- Have read and understood the enclosed COVID Safe Plan;
- Comply directions from our staff and observe all signage displayed throughout the premises relating to Covid-19, at all times
- Notify staff of any reason why you would not be able to comply with the COVID Safe Plan as soon as you become aware to agree on suitable alternatives.
- When relocating to the residence, communicate and coordinate your plans to travel to the residence with staff – especially where testing and isolation is required. You must do this as early as possible and before you travel.

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## Section A: COVIDSafe Measures

### General hygiene

#### a) Hand Hygiene

You are required to either wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds OR use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser:

- On arrival to a facility, building, room or common area
- Before leaving a facility, building, room or common area
- Before and after eating or handling food
- After blowing nose/coughing/sneezing
- After using the bathroom
- Before and after use of shared equipment/areas
- After handling rubbish

#### b) Physical distancing and room capacity limits

You are expected to maintain 1.5m distance from others whenever possible.

There are some areas and spaces – both indoors and outdoors - within the facilities that have density quotients in line with government regulations. There will be signage indicating the maximum number of people allowed in a space. You are expected to adhere to posted capacity limits where required.

#### c) Cleaning

You are required to wipe down shared areas and shared items between uses. Disinfectant wipes will be provided for you to use.

You are responsible for keeping your room/unit clean.

### Face coverings

Face coverings must be worn in line with current government restrictions. Regardless of restrictions, the Department of Health strongly recommends that face coverings be worn in **any situation** where physical distancing is difficult or impossible to maintain.

If you have a lawful exemption for not wearing a face covering, you must speak to a staff member immediately. We ask that you provide your reason for being unable to wear a mask and agree to other types of risk mitigation where possible to protect other residents as much as possible, particularly immunocompromised residents.

If you refuse to state a reason for being unable to wear a face covering when required, you will be given the option to state your reason to an Authorised Officer at the Department of Health who will be contacted by a staff member or the University's Public Health Network team.

Information on face coverings from the Department of Health can be [accessed here](#).

## QR Code Check-In

In some areas, you may be required to record your attendance using a Service Victoria QR code. Where this is required, signage will be posted.

## Reporting Requirements

You must notify a staff member immediately if you:

- have symptoms, even very mild ones, such as fever, cough, sore throat, runny nose, loss or change in sense of taste or smell or feeling generally unwell
- test positive for COVID-19
- are a primary or secondary close contact of a case of COVID-19
- have been to an exposure site
- are required by the Department of Health to isolate/quarantine for any reason
- are awaiting the results of a COVID-19 test

If you become aware that another resident or staff member is breaching COVIDSafe protocols and/or public health laws, please notify the accommodation manager immediately.

## Isolation/Quarantine Requirements

If you are required to isolate or quarantine for any reason, you must immediately alert a staff member. Reasons you may be required to isolate or quarantine include:

- having any symptoms, even very mild ones, such as fever, cough, sore throat, runny nose loss or change in sense of taste/smell or feeling generally unwell
- testing positive to COVID-19
- being a primary or secondary close contact
- attending an exposure site
- returning from an interstate 'Red' or 'Orange' Zone
- being directed by the Department of Health for any other reasons

In some cases, you may be directed by the University's Public Health Network (PHN) team to isolate or quarantine. The PHN conducts contact tracing for the University and, at times, may identify University members who have potentially been exposed to COVID-19 before the Department of Health.

If you are unwell, even with very mild symptoms, you must immediately alert a staff member, isolate and get a COVID-19 test as required by the Victorian Government.

### **What to expect in isolation/quarantine**

If you are required to isolate/quarantine and you share a room or space with others, you will be moved to a self-contained unit with an en suite.

In some instances, you may be required to relocate to another accommodation facility if there is not an appropriate room for isolating in your accommodations. For example, if you test positive for COVID-19 you may be moved to a state-run quarantine facility.

While in isolation/quarantine, you are **not permitted to leave your isolation room for any reason** other than to receive medical care that cannot be delivered via telehealth and/or to get required COVID-19 tests. Leaving quarantine is a breach of an enforceable public health law and can incur heavy fines.

Staff will arrange for your meals to be delivered or assist you in arranging meal/grocery delivery.

Staff will conduct daily wellbeing checks for the duration of your isolation/quarantine to ensure you are doing well and have everything you need.

You can [apply for Special Consideration](#) if you have to miss class or studies because you are isolating or are unwell due to COVID-19.

## **Visitors**

There may be times when external visitors are not permitted in the facilities in line with government directives. There may also be times when you are not permitted to visit other residents within the accommodations.

You will be updated when visitor policies change.

Please be aware that in some instances the University and accommodation managers may determine, based on a risk-assessment, that visitors are not permitted even if the government allows the community to have visitors in their homes.

## **Events and Social Gatherings**

Onsite events and social gatherings will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

If you want to host an event or social gathering, you must seek permission from the accommodation manager. Events/gatherings must be approved before they can proceed.

A COVIDSafe event checklist may need to be completed before some types of events can proceed.

Please be aware that in some instances the University and accommodation managers may determine, based on a risk-assessment, that events/gatherings are not permitted even if the government allows them in community or private settings.

## **Use of Communal Areas and Shared Facilities**

The use of communal areas and shared facilities are permitted in line with current government restrictions. Communal areas/shared facilities may include kitchens, bathrooms, lounge rooms, games rooms, study rooms, gyms, dining areas, and outdoor gathering areas.

The number of people allowed to gather in a space/area is determined based on government directives. If a room or space is at capacity, you may not use the space until others leave.

There may be times when communal areas and shared facilities are closed due to government restrictions. In this case, you are not permitted to use these spaces until they are re-opened by management.

Please be aware that in some instances the University and accommodation managers may determine, based on a risk-assessment, that events/gatherings are not permitted even if the government allows them in community or private settings.

You are expected to wipe down communal areas and shared facilities, including shared items/equipment, with provided disinfectant wipes between uses.

You are expected to sanitise your hands before using shared facilities.

## **Travel and Returning to the Accommodations from Interstate**

If you decide to travel to another state/territory from Victoria, please be aware that due to the rapidly evolving nature of the pandemic, and frequent border closures, you may not be permitted to re-enter Victoria (even if you are a resident).



If you are required to quarantine upon arrival from a Red or Extreme Red Zone, you may not be able to quarantine in your student accommodation.

It is strongly recommended that you reconsider non-essential travel when there is community transmission in Victoria or the place you intend to visit.

If you are in another state/territory and will be returning to your accommodation, you must follow current Victorian government regulations. In most cases, you will need to apply for a travel permit to re-enter Victoria.

**You must notify the accommodation manager before returning to the accommodations from another state/territory.** As a good practice, you should notify the accommodation manager as soon as you start making plans to return and continue to provide them with regular updates on your progress. This will allow the accommodation team to notify you of any residential requirements as early as possible.

More information about the Victorian Travel Permit System can be found here:

<https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/victorian-travel-permit-system>

## Red Zone and Extreme Red Zone Returnees

If you are returning to Victoria from a Red Zone or Extreme Red Zone, you will be required to obtain a travel permit, quarantine for 14 days and get tested per government regulations.

**You must notify the accommodation manager of your intent to return from a Red Zone or Extreme Red Zone before coming to the facility. Please note that if you arrive without warning, you will not be permitted to stay in the accommodations.**

Student accommodations with shared facilities are not appropriate for quarantining residents from high-risk Red and Extreme Red Zones. As such, you will be required to arrange a suitable place to quarantine upon arriving in Victoria.

When you arrive in Victoria, you must make it known to an authorised officer that you live in a high risk setting.

If you are unable to find a private dwelling (such as friends or family) to quarantine, you may request emergency accommodations via the Victorian Government. You can self-refer by:

- calling the Integrated Intake Assessment and Triage Service (IIATS) on [1800 365 100](tel:1800365100)
- emailing [IIATS@justice.vic.gov.au](mailto:IIATS@justice.vic.gov.au)

## Orange Zone Returnees

If you are returning to Victoria from an Orange Zone, you will be required to quarantine until you receive a negative test result. A travel permit is required, and you must show proof of your permit to the accommodation manager.

**You must notify the accommodation manager of your intent to return from an Orange Zone before coming to the facility. Please note that if you arrive without warning, you may not be permitted to stay in the accommodations.**

If there is an appropriate isolation room for you at your accommodation, then you will be permitted to quarantine onsite. If you cannot safely quarantine onsite, then an alternative location will be arranged within the University or a state-run quarantine facility.

## Green Zone Returnees

If you are returning to Victoria from a Green Zone, you will need to obtain a travel permit. You must show proof of your permit to the accommodation manager.

**You must notify the accommodation manager of your intent to return from a Green Zone before coming to the facility.**

## Returning to Victoria after quarantining in another state/territory

If you returned from overseas and completed mandated 14-day quarantine in a government-run facility **outside of Victoria**, then you must show proof of your permit to travel into Victoria.

**You must notify the accommodation manager of your intent to return from government quarantine before coming to the facility. Please note that if you arrive without warning, you may not be permitted to stay in the accommodations.**

## Specified Worker Permits

In some cases, the government may allow essential workers to obtain a 'Specified Worker' travel permit to enter Victoria from Red and Extreme Red zones. You must follow the instructions outlined [Red Zone and Extreme Red Zone Returnees](#).

**You must notify the accommodation manager of your intent to return on a Specified Worker Permit. Please note that if you arrive without warning, you will not be permitted to stay in the accommodations.**

Before applying for a specified worker permit, please ensure you meet the criteria outlined by the government that qualifies you as an essential worker. To qualify, the work you do must meet all these criteria:

- The work you do must be urgent
- The work you do must be critical to the operations of your employer (meaning that the business or service cannot operate without you)
- The work you do cannot be performed by anyone already in Victoria or someone returning from a green zone

If your work meets all these criteria, then you can apply for a specified worker permit. You must also obtain a letter from your employer stating the reasons you are an essential worker. The letter must address the three criteria noted above.

You will be required to show proof of your Specified Worker travel permit and the letter from your employer.

More information at the Specified Worker Permit system can be found here:

<https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/travellers-eligible-to-apply-for-specified-worker-permit>

Please note, you must comply with your residence's self-isolation procedures *in addition* to those of your entry permit. Where there is a difference between the self-isolation requirements on your permit and those of our accommodation facility, you will be required to follow those with the lowest risk.

## **Staying updated on exposure sites**

When there is community transmission in Victoria, you are required to notify the accommodation manager and the University's Public Health Network team ([public-health-network@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:public-health-network@unimelb.edu.au)) if you have attended an exposure site.

Exposure sites are listed here: <https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/exposure-sites>

Please check the list of exposure sites regularly as they are updated daily when there are cases in Victoria.

## **COVID-19 Tests**

You can book a COVID-19 test at the University Health Service by calling (03)

Alternatively, you can use this link to find your nearest testing centre:

<https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/where-get-tested-covid-19>

## **COVID-19 Vaccinations**

The University strongly encourages everyone to get their COVID-19 vaccines.

More information about the vaccines and how to book an appointment is here:

<https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/about-covid-19-vaccines>

## **Section B: Breach of COVIDSafe protocols and/or public health laws**

Disregarding COVIDSafe protocols or public health laws puts you and others at risk of contracting COVID-19, especially in a high-risk setting such as student accommodations. Breaching the measures in this document and/or public health laws can incur serious consequences, including termination of your tenancy.

### **Breach of Accommodation Protocols**

Staff will monitor compliance with the measures outlined in this document. In some cases, the accommodations may have COVIDSafe protocols in place that are not public health law but are, nonetheless, enforceable by the University via your occupancy agreement.

If you are found to be in breach of a University and/or accommodation-specific COVIDSafe protocol, a staff member may, depending on the nature of the breach, proceed as follows:

- give you a written warning and impose conditions as per the discipline procedures; and/or,
- report the incident to the University's Academic Registrar who will investigate the claim

Repeated breaches may result in termination of your occupancy at the accommodation or college.

### **Breach of Public Health Laws**

The Victorian Government, under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*, have enacted enforceable laws related to COVID-19.

If you are found to be in breach of public health laws, a staff member may, depending on the nature of the breach, proceed as follows:

- give you a written warning
- report the incident to the University's Academic Registrar who will investigate the claim
- report the incident to the appropriate authorities (e.g. Victoria Police or the Department of Health)

Repeated breaches may result in termination of your tenancy at the accommodations/college.

Please note, Victoria Police, WorkSafe, and Authorised Officers can undertake enforcement of public health laws as needed. Public health directives are monitored and enforced through spot checks by Victoria Police and use of emergency powers by the Department of Health Authorised Officers to ensure compliance.

On-the-spot fines can be issued for individuals and businesses. Fines of up to \$21,808 are possible through the court system.

## Section C: Your Wellbeing

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented extraordinary challenges for everyone. The University and your accommodation providers are here to support you in taking care of your physical, mental and emotional wellbeing.

If you need help, please don't hesitate to reach out to a staff member or resident advisor. If you are required to isolate/quarantine, you will be fully supported during this time, including daily wellbeing checks.

Your health, safety and wellbeing are our priority. The University has a range of [wellbeing and support services](#) available to you.

There is also a Public Health Network team [public-health-network@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:public-health-network@unimelb.edu.au) that you can contact if you have questions related to COVID-19 or you are required to isolate/quarantine for any reason. This team will ensure you have the support you need.

The University's special consideration policy for COVID-19 affected students is [here](#). You are eligible to apply if you need to miss class or studies due to COVID-19. Please get in touch with your course coordinator if you have any concerns around your studies.

## Section D: Privacy Notice

In some instances, the University may share your personal information with relevant Government Departments or agencies to meet mandatory reporting obligations relating to public health.

The personal information you provide may also be used in **non-identifiable** form to assist with the University's internal contact tracing and strategic planning, for example to provide support and health and wellbeing programs, and infrastructure and resources.

The University of Melbourne is governed by the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic) and the *Health Records Act 2001* (Vic) when collecting and managing personal information. To the extent that they apply to our activities, the University is also subject to the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) and the EU General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 (together, '**Privacy Laws**').

The information you provide will be collected lawfully and fairly and in a non-intrusive way. We will collect your personal information directly from you wherever possible. However, where this is not practicable, we may collect information you have provided through other avenues: for example, if you are a staff member, your Supervisor may request your consent to pass certain information about you to the University Health Services on your behalf; or, where you have previously provided personal information to the University as a staff member, student, contract or other person, this information may be accessed from University systems to confirm your identity and ensure your details are accurate and accord with any new information you provide.

Personal information that may be requested from you includes:

- name, date of birth and contact details
- student number
- your faculty, department or employer
- your recent travel and movements around the community and campus
- your recent contacts and interactions with others

You can read the COVID-19 privacy notice in its entirety here: [COVID-19 privacy collection notice](#)