

Access to food relief, essential items and support to isolate from 1 July 2022

Information for local councils and service providers

Victoria's COVID-19 relief response is transitioning

Now that we are in the third year of the pandemic, public health policy is moving away from mandates and compliance, towards greater individual, employer and community responsibility for self-managing COVID-19.

The changes in COVID-19 isolation requirements have resulted in a greater individual preparedness to respond to COVID-19 and as such the dedicated COVID-19 food relief system experienced a reduction in demand.

The Department of Health continues to support the implementation of the public health orders, and this includes provision of a range of supports for people who are COVID-19 positive.

From 1 July 2022, there will be changes to how food relief is being delivered. The changes embed a sustainable approach by connecting people to food relief providers and local health services that can become a part of an individual or family's ongoing support network.

Reporting a positive result test result is the pathway to supports delivered through the COVID Positive Pathways program. A person will receive a text message from the Department of Health asking if supports are needed. When selecting 'yes' to the text message people will be linked to local services that respond to additional needs or poor health outcomes. Supports will be delivered in a person-centred, coordinated, and flexible way, responding to individual needs.

Where urgent or immediate support is required, people should contact the Coronavirus Hotline (1800 675 398). The Hotline continues to play a key role in connecting covid positive Victorians to the supports they need.

This fact sheet provides service providers the information to pass on to COVID-19 positive people from 1 July 2022 who contact their organisation seeking food relief, access to essential items or support to safely isolate.

Current isolation requirements

People who have tested positive to COVID-19 must isolate for seven days from the day they took their test but may now leave home to drive a household member directly to or from education or work without leaving their vehicle. They can also leave home to get medical care, a COVID-19 test, or in an emergency, including the risk of harm.

The Department of Health website has tips to help people prepare www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/prepare-covid-isolation

When someone tests positive on a rapid antigen test, they need to report the results online at www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/report. Completing this report links people to a range of health and social supports. Test results can also be reported by calling the Coronavirus Hotline on [1800 675 398](tel:1800675398) (press 0 for an interpreter).

How to access food relief, essential items and support to isolate safely

Options for accessing food, essential items and support to isolate safely:

1. People should be encouraged to plan ahead for a potential quarantine period, consider which food and other essential items they might need, including things like nappies, cleaning products and toys. The Department of Health website has tips to prepare to isolate at home: www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/prepare-covid-isolation
2. Use online shopping or delivery services.
3. Reach out to friends, family and community for support. Make sure they provide contactless assistance by leaving items at your door.
4. Use an internet search engine such as Ask Izzy, which is a website that connects people to support services. Search to [Ask Izzy](http://www.askizzy.org.au) to find food relief and other supports available in your area: www.askizzy.org.au
5. If a person requires help to find local food relief programs or has an urgent support need, call the Coronavirus Hotline on 1800 675 398 and select Option 3 to speak with one of the team. If an interpreter service is required, they should, select option zero (0).
6. If the individuals support needs are urgent and ongoing the Coronavirus Hotline (1800 675 398) can discuss a placement at the Victorian Quarantine Hub. Emergency accommodation at the Victorian Quarantine Hub is available for members of the Victorian community who need intensive supports to isolate safely.

Additional information

What if I don't have access to the internet?

Community members who do not have access to online services can call the Coronavirus Hotline on 1800 675 398 and select Option 3 for further information.

Are ready-made meals available through a food relief program in the local community?

Many programs offer ready-made meals. Refer to [Ask Izzy](http://www.askizzy.org.au) <www.askizzy.org.au> to check if any of the food relief programs in your area offer ready-made meals.

Is culturally appropriate food available through a food relief program in the local community?

Many programs offer culturally appropriate food. Go to [Ask Izzy](http://www.askizzy.org.au) <www.askizzy.org.au> to check if any of the food relief programs in your area offer culturally appropriate food. The community member can also call the Coronavirus Hotline on 1800 675 398 and select Option 3 for further information. If an interpreter service is required, they should, select option zero (0).

What if I believe this person's support needs are urgent and ongoing?

If you believe the individual requires considerable support over the full period of their isolation period, an assessment for the Victorian Quarantine Hub can be made. The Coronavirus Hotline (1800 675 398) can make a referral into the Victorian Quarantine Hub, where the individual will receive intensive supports including meals.

Where can I find more information?

To find out more information about coronavirus and how to stay safe, visit www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au.

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