

Office of Local Government



Message from Minister Hancock

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8 July 2020



State and local governments must work together to make businesses COVID Safe

As our communities continue to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, we must do all we can to protect residents and businesses from transmission of Coronavirus.

The closure of the NSW-Victorian border today is a stark reminder that we are far from overcoming the real threat of COVID-19 to our social and economic wellbeing.

The further easing of restrictions in NSW on July 1 was a big win for businesses with many reopening to the public, providing a much-needed shot in the arm for local jobs and economic recovery.

As part of our recovery efforts, we must support our local businesses to be COVID Safe.

That's why I am calling on all local councils to work closely with the NSW Government to ensure local businesses are complying with COVID-19 Public Health Orders.

It is vital that local councils partner with State agencies and continue to play a critical role in protecting local communities from transmission of COVID-19.

Businesses have a responsibility to protect staff and customers by ensuring their venues and premises are safe and our local councils are well placed to help them do their bit.

The Government is calling on all councils to build on their community safety role by working with local businesses that need assistance to comply with COVID-19 Public Health Orders.

The NSW Government's [COVID Safe website](#) allows customers to give feedback to businesses and regulators for action where necessary.

The Office of Local Government and the NSW Food Authority are also providing feedback to councils about which businesses may not be fully complying with the Public Health Orders.

Councils are asked to engage with identified non-compliant businesses through targeted site visits to guide and assist business operators towards compliance with the Public Health Orders.

Councils are also asked to distribute information to businesses generally to aid understanding and compliance with the rules.

We must do all we can to encourage businesses to download checklists on how to be COVID Safe and to register their business.

I cannot stress enough how important it is that we all work together to ensure businesses, especially hospitality venues such as cafes and restaurants, fully comply with Public Health Orders and COVID Safe practices.

Failure to comply is a risk to everybody and the Government is stepping up its efforts to deliver a very strong message of compliance.

We are also encouraging consumers not to frequent businesses that are not COVID Safe and to raise the alarm if a business is not compliant.

That's why it is crucial for local councils to play their part.

Nobody understands their local community better than local councils and this education and support role will assist local businesses and their customers to be COVID Safe, reducing the risk of transmission, and protecting jobs and economic recovery.

The Office of Local Government has provided [resources](#) to assist councils to guide local businesses on how to operate COVID Safe in line with Public Health Orders.

Enforcement action for breaches of the Public Health Orders remains a matter for the NSW Police Force and other relevant State agencies.

I would like to once again thank council staff and councillors across the State for their ongoing commitment and dedication to supporting their communities during this very challenging time.

Councils can continue to access support and advice by contacting their Office of Local Government Council Engagement Manager.

Stay safe.

Shelley Hancock
Minister for Local Government

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