

Office of Local Government



COVID-19 COUNCIL UPDATE

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Thursday 13 August 2020

Public Health Amendment for ACT residents

The Public Health Regulation has been amended effective today (August 13) and will allow an ACT resident who is currently at the Victorian border to enter NSW and travel to the ACT without having to fly into Sydney between August 13 and 17.



These people must:

- Have sufficient petrol for the complete journey through NSW to ACT to avoid refuelling
- Travel through NSW by the route designated by the Commissioner of Police and can only stop for specified reasons
- While in NSW, only travel between 9am-3pm, maintain physical distance from persons with whom they are not travelling, and carry their Entry Authorisation Certificate.

After transiting through NSW, these people must not re-enter NSW for at least 14 days after their initial entry into the ACT.

For more information on the Amendment click [here](#).



Achieving financial targets during the pandemic

As COVID-19 continues to impact communities throughout NSW, the Office of Local Government (OLG) understands that many councils are facing difficulties in balancing their budgets and achieving their financial targets.

These are unprecedented times for councils and OLG will work to ensure that the audit process acknowledges the challenges councils face and that financial performance will inevitably be affected.

OLG understands that councils are facing additional expenses, significant reductions in revenue, and challenges in ensuring the ongoing delivery of important community services.

Financial management strategies will need to be flexible and adaptable and OLG will take a pragmatic approach to council performance this year. No council should be considering reducing services or staffing just to demonstrate compliance with financial benchmarks.

In the coming months, as councils continue to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic they should continue to make sound financial decisions which includes continuing to meet ongoing financial obligations.

Any council that is concerned with its financial position should contact OLG.

COVID-19 information materials in community languages

A range of COVID-19 materials are now available in community languages and can be accessed [here](#).

The materials include advice on self-isolation, physical distancing, getting tested, symptoms, and lots more.

Factsheets, videos, information for children, and other educational materials in community languages can also be accessed [here](#).



Emergency Cleaning Stimulus Scheme

Councils are reminded that they are eligible to access the NSW Emergency Cleaning Stimulus Scheme to engage cleaning providers at lower cost than individual council procurement while helping to achieve better social outcomes.

Councils are encouraged to purchase from Australian Disability Enterprises, Aboriginal businesses, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), regional suppliers and social enterprises where possible when engaging cleaning providers to protect against the spread of COVID-19.

Engaging these providers will not only help councils to save money but also boost local economies and create jobs.

More information on how to access the scheme can be found [here](#), or by contacting the NSW Procurement Service Centre on nswbuy@treasury.nsw.gov.au or by calling 1800 679 289.

Alternatively, you can email the Scheme Management Team at cleaning@treasury.nsw.gov.au.



Information and resources

[Guidelines for COVID Safe workplaces](#)
Safety plans for a range of businesses and organisations can be found [here](#), and those in the sport and recreation sector [here](#).

[Local government toolkit](#)

The Department of Customer Service has prepared a toolkit for councils regarding the [Victoria-NSW border closure](#).

[Job Retention Allowance payment applications](#)

Councils can still apply for the Job Retention Allowance payment of \$1,500 per fortnight, per eligible employee. Find out how in this [circular](#).

[Detailed OLG guidance to councils](#)

Councils can access detailed guidance on:

- [Local government legislative amendments](#)
- [Local government economic stimulus package](#)
- [The latest Public Health Order](#)

[Quicklinks](#)

Councils can access the latest information and resources about COVID-19 on the [NSW Government](#), [NSW Health](#), [Commonwealth Government](#), [Commonwealth Department of Health](#), and [NSW Office of Local Government](#) websites.

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