

Coronavirus

COVID-19 and FoodShare

16 March 2020

FoodShare has received enquiries from our many organisations seeking further information and guidance about the current COVID-19 Health Alert.

As a result, this information has been sourced from the Australian Government and State Government websites.

Quick facts

- Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness caused by a new virus
- Symptoms range from a mild cough to pneumonia
- Some people recover easily, others may get very sick very quickly
- There is evidence that it spreads from person to person
- Good hygiene can prevent infection
- There is a dedicated hotline **1800 675 398** if you suspect you have been infected

Who should be restricted from attending FoodShare?

Anyone who meets the following criteria **should not** visit/volunteer at FoodShare during this time:

- **Arrived from anywhere overseas** in the last 14 days (they must self-isolate themselves for 14 days from date of arriving)
- **Been in close contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus** in the last 14 days (they must self-isolate themselves for 14 days after the date of last contact with the confirmed case).
- **Are showing any cold or flu-like symptoms.** If you have any symptoms, call the dedicated hotline on **1800 675 398**. Even if your symptoms are not related to coronavirus, please refrain from visiting FoodShare until you are fully recovered of your symptoms.

Should FoodShare remain open?

Whilst it is the decision of the FoodShare's management and board as to whether it decides to voluntarily close temporarily, there is no current directive from DHHS/Victorian State Government for FoodShare to close its doors.

However, FoodShare should:

- Be communicating and strictly enforcing the above restrictions in regards to who should not visit FoodShare during this time
- Ensure a high standard of personal hygiene is practiced by all who visit and that products such as tissues, hand sanitizer, hand wash and paper towels are readily available
- Practice a high standard of cleanliness of all facilities (using hospital grade disinfectant), especially of high risk areas such as bathrooms, toilets and food preparation areas, as well as equipment and materials which come into regular physical contact with visitors (e.g. computer mouse's, etc.).
- Apply common sense and discretion regarding the holding of events and activities. On Monday 16 March 2020, the State Government announced a [State of Emergency](#) which has put a ban on all non-essential events and gatherings of 500 plus people.

In the event that circumstances change and there is directive for FoodShare to temporarily close their operations, FoodShare will be in contact with its agencies, schools and volunteers.

Ten ways to reduce the risk of coronavirus

- **Wash** hands often with soap and running water, for at least 20 seconds. **Dry** with paper towel or hand dryer.
- **Try** not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth.
- **Cover** your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow.
- **Isolate** yourself at home if you feel sick. If you take medication ensure you have adequate supplies.
- **Phone** your GP first if you need medical attention. They will tell you what to do.
- **Continue** healthy habits: exercise, drink water, get plenty of sleep, and now is the time to quit smoking. Call the Quitline 137 848.
- **Don't** wear a face mask if you are well.
- **Buy** an alcohol-based hand sanitiser with over 60 per cent alcohol.
- **Get** the flu shot (available April).
- **Shaking hands** is optional!

Where should I look for the latest information?

The Victorian Government's Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS):
<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus>

Australian Government Department of Health: <https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov>

Follow DHHS on:

- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/VicGovDHHS>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/VicGovDHHS>

Other relevant links

DHHS emergency management policy is used as a guide for FoodShare:
<https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/health-and-human-services-sector-emergency-management-policy>

Beyond Blue – Looking after your mental health during the coronavirus outbreak:
<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>