

Whole of Government talking points – COVID-19 response

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strong

- Beryl is not doing any face-to-face contact unless in cases of an emergency.

Child and Youth Protection Services

Reporting child abuse and neglect

- Keeping our children safe and connected during this time remains a critical priority for our community.
- Child and Youth Protection Services as an essential service, continues *to respond* to community concerns regarding child abuse and neglect through the lockdown.
- If you have concerns a child is being abused or neglected, a report can be made by going to the Access Canberra website 'report child abuse' or call 1300 556 729. If a child or young person is in immediate danger call 000.

Operations

- CYPS continue to provide a service through the lockdown to help children, young people, families and carers involved with child protection and youth justice matters.
- COVID-safe practices have been in place since the start of the pandemic, and these have been stepped up further with the new lockdown restrictions to ensure everyone remains safe.
- We are actively working with our community service partners and providers to ensure support services for children in care continue with minimal disruptions during this time.
- Essential face-to-face services are continuing with strict safety measures. Other services are being provided virtually, over the phone and/or via email.
- CYPS continue to be in contact with all children and families they are working with, recognising this is an exceptionally difficult time for some.
- CYPS continue to be in regular contact with its partner and community agencies to stay updated on how current services are being delivered during the lockdown across the sector.
- Melaleuca Place is closed for face-to-face services and has commenced online delivery of services.
- The delivery of services to young people in residential care to ensure their safety, is being undertaken by increased cleaning, personal hygiene and social distancing measures. Meetings continue to be held regularly with service providers and staff to ensure compliance with ACT Health directions.

Bimberi Youth Justice Centre

- Young people in Bimberi remain safe and supported. COVID-safe practices have been in place since the start of the pandemic and staff are well equipped to work through the lockdown.
- All essential staff will continue to work on site, with some modifications made to who is onsite at specific times and their access within the Centre.
- Primary Health Services and Forensic Mental Health Services continue to be provided to young people. Education staff who work full-time at Bimberi continue to attend Murrumbidgee School and deliver education programs.
- The Programs and Services team will continue to attend Bimberi to facilitate programs and services for young people.

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- Programs facilitated by external providers have been suspended for the period of the lockdown.
- Court is continuing via AVL, as directed by the Courts.
- Visits at Bimberi have been suspended for the period of the lockdown, we are working on AVL options to maintain visual contact between young people and their immediate family members, as well as professionals such as case managers and legal services.
- Contact visits between young people, their families and professionals such as case managers and legal services are occurring via AVL.

Young people's phone accounts have been updated to provide all young people with 20 phone calls each week.

- The main contact phone line for Bimberi Youth Justice Centre is (02) 6205 9051.

Child and Family Centres and Child Development Service

- All CFC and CDS sites are closed during lockdown until further notice. Families with appointments have been contacted to reschedule and offer other remote supports.
- The CFCs and CDS are well placed to implement their online and remote services used previously in the pandemic. Individual contact sessions with families have been occurring since lockdown began.

Services such as drop-in clinics and groups began online on 20 August 2021. A schedule of online groups and activities has been developed for both CDS and CFCs.

- Intake services continue to operate via phone:
 - Child Development Service: (02) 6207 8884
 - Gungahlin Child and Family Centre: (02) 6207 0120
 - Tuggeranong Child and Family Centre: (02) 6207 8228
 - West Belconnen Child and Family Centre: (02) 6205 2904
 - The CFCs and CDS are well-placed to reimplement their online and remote services used previously in the pandemic should this be required and planning is underway. Individual contact with families is already underway and groups and services such as Drop In Clinics will begin recommencing on line from Friday 20 August 2021.
- The CDS has recorded strong attendance numbers over the last week at many of their remote groups/clinics.
- The CFCs have recorded varying attendance due to the lockdown. In response, the CFCs have ramped up their focus on conducting individual welfare checks with clients through phone calls and emails.

Other (whole of CYF)

- During the week commencing 30 August 2021, several staff from across CYF provided urgent assistance to ACT Health and Housing ACT by conducting wellbeing checks for residents at Ainslie Village, following positive COVID-19 cases in the complex.

Translated Resources and CALD communities

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- A range of COVID-19 translated resources are available via the ACT Government's COVID-19 website.
- CSD is facilitating translation of vital information, including a raft of new materials during the past 24 hours.
- The ACT's distribution plan for multicultural communities has been activated including provision of health approved messaging to the Ministerial Advisory Council for ongoing distribution and communication throughout the multicultural community.
- Health approved messaging has been distributed to community leaders and key stakeholders with a request for them to communicate within their communities and to raise with Office for Multicultural Affairs any issues with the information, content or concerns within communities.
- In addition, health approved messaging has been provided to community radio stations and community language schools.
- All community activities within the Theo Notaras Multicultural Centre ceased from 5pm 12 August 2021 and all tenants received health approved information to assist them during this time.

PPE

- CSD holds a stock of PPE and is managing increased requests for the community sector and people with a disability.
- Supplies for PPE are made available to CSD for this purpose through the ESA stockpile.

Safe and Connected Youth service information

- The Safe and Connected Youth Program will continue in an amended format using phone calls and digital technology.
- Case workers are continuing contact with all children, young people and their families and providing services.
- This service supports children and young people aged 8 to 16 years who are at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness due to family conflict.

Contributed and last updated by CSD on 24 August 2021

CONSTRUCTION SECTOR

A partial reopening of the construction sector will commence under stringent COVID-safe requirements from Friday 3 September. These requirements will be actively enforced by Worksafe ACT and ACT Police.

The Government will continue detailed work this week with industry stakeholders on the strict COVID-safe measures that would allow other parts of the sector, such as residential construction, to recommence from 10 September subject to the public health advice at the time.

The ACT Government is appreciative of the support and ideas provided by construction sector participants to date. We urge all sector participants to strictly abide by lockdown restrictions which are currently in force, for the benefit of the sector and all Canberrans.

Under the *Public Health (Lockdown Restrictions) Emergency Direction 2021 (No 1)* (the '**Direction**'), only essential business, activities or undertakings are permitted.

Essential services include:

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- Urgent repair and maintenance services, including for example plumbing, electrical and heating repair.

Essential workers include:

- A person who is critical to, and involved in, the ACT's COVID-19 response.
- Any person who provides or works in essential infrastructure and essential services required to maintain or protect the safety, health or welfare of the community or a section of the community (whether provided by a public or private undertaking), includes construction, maintenance and repair of such infrastructure.
- Any person who provides or works in urgent repair and maintenance services, including plumbing, electrical and heating repair.

Construction Projects

A very limited number of ACT Government projects relating to the ACT Government's COVID-19 response may continue, subject to restrictions.

- There may be a very limited number of other works which may be necessary for emergency services.
- Construction sites must be made safe and secure during the lock-down. In this respect:
 - It is acknowledged that 'make-safe' activities may need to continue over the next 24 hours. Only works necessary to shut down and make safe a site should occur in this period. This may include, for example:
 - Works to ensure emergency access to property is possible. For example, completing a driveway to enable emergency access to a private residence; or
 - Concrete stressing works following concrete poured immediately prior to the lock-down, if failure to do so will cause other safety and structural integrity issues.
- In making a site safe, attention should be made to:
 - Ensuring site fencing is appropriate and secure;
 - Ensuring materials cannot blow off the site or otherwise be improperly accessed;
 - Ensuring works or materials that need to be safely propped are done so;
 - Ensuring 'fall from height' and trenching risks are appropriately made secure;
 - Ensuring any other site-specific hazards are addressed;
 - Ensuring the risk of environmental spills are addressed;
- Covering, protecting or moving materials which, if exposed to the elements, would be unsafe;
 - Ensure regulatory signage is installed and visible. This should include contact details for the site; and
 - Ensuring all other actions normally undertaken to secure a site during a shutdown (such as during the Christmas shutdown) are undertaken.
 - It is acknowledged that minimal site attendance will be required during the lock-down to ensure the closed site remains safe and secure.

Freight and deliveries

- Although transport, freight and logistics are essential services, deliveries should not occur at construction sites which are otherwise shut down.

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Offsite fabrication and manufacturing

- Offsite fabrication and manufacturing activities are not permitted, with one exception. Only manufacturing, fabrication or assembly of goods and materials necessary for or related to supporting defence or security industries is deemed to be essential.

Cross-border movement of construction workers

- All of NSW is now deemed a COVID-affected area.
- For NSW residents who work on ACT construction projects - If you live in one of the following postcode areas, you can only enter the ACT for essential work (or healthcare reasons) as defined by the ACT Government:

| Postcodes | Included cities, townships and areas |
|-----------|--|
| 2581 | Gunning, Collector |
| 2582 | Murrumbateman, Yass |
| 2584 | Binalong |
| 2611 | Uriarra |
| 2618 | Walleroo, areas along the ACT's north-western edge |
| 2619 | Jerrabomberra |
| 2620 | Queanbeyan, Googong, Karabar, Sutton, Gundaroo |
| 2621 | Bungendore |
| 2623 | Captains Flat |
| 2626 | Bredbo and Michelago |

- All other NSW residents are not permitted to enter the ACT without an exemption. Exemptions are generally not being granted for construction activities.
- For ACT residents who work on NSW construction projects - Generally, ACT residents who work on NSW construction, repair or maintenance projects are required to undertake 14 days quarantine upon return to the ACT. The only exception to this quarantine requirement is where:
 - The ACT resident is working on a construction site within one of the postcode areas listed above; AND
 - Where the NSW construction, repair or maintenance activities are for essential infrastructure and essential services required to maintain or protect the safety, health or welfare of the community or a section of the community (whether provided by a public or private undertaking).
- If a construction activity is permitted in NSW, this does not by itself mean it is an essential construction activity for which ACT residents are allowed to travel.
- It is the ACT Government assessment of "essential" which applies, even if a project is in NSW.

Exemption for public housing maintenance

- Essential maintenance on a number of public housing residences owned by Housing ACT is required during lockdown in the ACT.
- This is urgent and essential work to enable these properties to be used by those in need in our community

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- This work does NOT mean that construction or any other non-essential work is reopened in the ACT. The scope of non-essential work remains unchanged.
- This work will strictly follow COVIDSafe protocols including QR check-in and WHS requirements including re-inducting all workers to the sites.
- WorkSafe ACT is working closely with Major Projects Canberra and ACT Policing in surveilling ACT worksites and ensuring emergency Health Directions are complied with.

Gradual recommencement of construction activities from 3 September

Subject to the public health situation not deteriorating, the ACT Government is targeting a gradual recommencement of construction activities from Friday 3 September 2021.

The first stage of a gradual recommencement of construction activities is currently proposed to cover:

1. Civil construction activities for the construction of public roads and the subdivision of new suburbs;
2. Manufacturing, fabrication, testing, assembly and equipment supply activities necessary to facilitate permitted construction activities.
3. Large-scale construction projects, being construction projects:
 - Permitted (as per the Development Approval) to be at completion four or more storeys high (excluding basement), or
 - Larger than 1,500m² Gross Floor Area (inclusive of all floors);
4. ACT Government and Commonwealth Government construction projects.

A gradual re-opening of the construction sector would be accompanied by new COVIDSafe requirements under the Public Health Direction.

Compliance with COVID-Safe requirements will be strictly enforced by WorkSafeACT, Access Canberra and ACT Policing.

The targeted gradual re-opening of certain construction activities from Friday, 3 September 2021 is subject to final decisions of the ACT Chief Health Officer. The Chief Minister advised that further announcements will be made next week.

Contributed and updated by MPC 31 August