

# MAKING SPACE ON SITE:

# A guide to VIC display homes during COVID-19



**Building a new home is always a big decision. Making that decision now, while the COVID-19 restrictions are in place, is likely to feel even more challenging.**

This Guide has been prepared to explain how home buyers can still visit a display home or village in VIC.

## Home building work is permitted to continue

The Federal, State and Territory governments have agreed the home building industry is an essential service and it is not subject to the current restrictions on non-essential public gatherings. This means that home buyers are permitted to attend meetings, visit a display home, showroom or selection centre to make home buying decisions, product selections or attend required inspections of completed building work.

Home builders understand how important it is that you have the opportunity to make an informed decision and visiting a display home provides an important way to understand the products and workmanship they offer.

For this reason, builders will follow these guidelines in their display homes to help ensure the safety of their customer and their staff during COVID-19.

1

### Manage access and entry to the display home by:

- Collecting contact details for all visitors to assist with potential contact tracing, including customer name, contact details (phone, residential address and email) and time of entry and exit of the display home.
- Ensuring anyone with symptoms of illness does not enter a display home.

2

### Ensure the Government's social distancing requirements are met at all times by:

- Limiting the number of people in a display home to 10 people at any one time, including sales staff.
- Limiting access to any site to people directly involved in the activity of display, design or contract administration.
- Adopting the 1.5 metre social distancing requirement at all times.
- Applying the 1 person per 4 square metre rule for any enclosed or internal work spaces.

3

### Ensure adequate hygiene facilities and cleaning regimes are in place by:

- Providing hand-wash facilities, hand-sanitising or gloves upon entry and exit to the display home.
- Cleaning all high-touch areas including door handles, taps, counters, benches and amenities with an anti-bacterial cleaner before and after viewings.
- Using digital sales and communication platforms where possible to reduce the need for physical contact and supplement the sales process
- Promoting healthy air flow within the home or showroom by opening windows, using air conditioning or other ventilation options.

These measures, are recommended in the interest of the health and safety of the consumer, the staff and the community. If you are interested in viewing a builder's display home or showroom, please reach out to the builder or showroom directly, they will be only too happy to assist you.

13 May 2020

## Building and Display Homes - COVID-19 Restrictions in Victoria

On Monday the Premier announced some updates to Victoria's COVID-19 restrictions.

The details are now available and confirm that subject to social distancing and cleaning requirements display homes remain open for business. There were also no changes that impact building work.

### Why did the Premier make an announcement around restrictions?

The National Cabinet Roadmap to a COVIDSafe Australia acknowledges that states will be the drivers of any easing of restrictions based on local conditions. The Premier's announcement was required as the State of Emergency provisions announced in March in Victoria expired on Monday. Essentially the government needed to advise Victorians whether current restrictions will continue or would be eased in some way.

### What was announced?

The Premier announced that the basic four reasons that allow someone to leave their home remain in place - these include shopping for food and supplies, care and caregiving, exercise, and study or work – if they can't be done from home. One additional reason for travel has been added.

As of midnight, Tuesday 12 May, Victorians are able to leave home to visit friends and family – with a maximum of 5 visitors to a home. Outdoor gatherings of up to ten people are also now permitted with physical distancing in place. There are also some change to weddings, funerals and religious gatherings. [Read more here.](#)

### How are display homes treated?

As you will be aware, HIA has made a strong case to the Premier and key Ministers to provide some clarity around the operations of display homes during COVID-19 to assist the industry understand their obligations.

The changes announced do not change the current arrangements.

Display homes are permitted to operate as they are classed as an open retail facility and are not prohibited under the *Restricted Activity Directions*.

Builders need to ensure that a display home is managed to ensure compliance with the [Restricted Activity Directions](#) including social distancing, signage requirements and density quotas.

Customers are permitted to travel to a display home under the leaving premises to obtain necessary goods and services clause of the [Stay at Home Directions](#).

In an effort to reduce confusion for home buyers, HIA members voluntarily adopted the approach applied to real estate agents which initially limited access to appointment only. These rules have now changed to remove the requirement for appointments and to allow up to 10 people to be in a property.

HIA considers it sensible for members to continue to align their approach with the real estate requirements and on this basis we have prepared a guideline to assist members.

The attached HIA Guide to Display Homes in Victoria reflects these arrangements.

For further information contact HIA on 1300 650 620.



# MEMBER ALERT