



COVID-19 update: Victorian restrictions

The Victorian Premier, Daniel Andrews, has announced that all Metropolitan Melbourne Local Government Areas and the Mitchell Shire will be returning to Stage 3 restrictions.

These restrictions are coming into effect from 8 July 2020 at 11:59pm and will be in effect for the next six weeks.

Importantly, the Courts remain open by conducting trials and other hearings electronically via telephone or Microsoft Teams. However, all face-to-face hearings in the Melbourne and Dandenong registries are suspended (as notified on 30 June 2020).

This notification is to remind the legal profession and all court users that there will be no face-to-face hearings in the Melbourne and Dandenong registries for at least the next six weeks unless expressly authorised by the Chief Justice and only in urgent circumstances.

Chief Justice Alstergren has previously raised the expectation that during these exceptional times, parties should cooperate and ensure that the best interests of the child are addressed by complying with court orders. If strict adherence to parenting orders is not possible, it is imperative that any revised arrangements reflect the spirit of the orders.

“Our Courts understand the very difficult situation that many Victorian residents now face following the announcement of further restrictions and border closures. However, families can be reassured to know that they are not alone and if they cannot resolve their disputes independently, they should seek help from the many support services that are available, or contact the Courts which are open and here to assist through the National COVID-19 List for example,” Chief Justice Alstergren said.

The Courts have previously issued information in relation to parenting issues that may be of assistance:

[National COVID-19 List](#) – National court list dedicated to dealing exclusively with urgent family law disputes that have arisen as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Border restrictions and parenting orders](#) – Guidance in relation to border restrictions and shared parenting.

[Parenting orders](#) - Statement from Chief Justice, the Hon Will Alstergren

Further information is available from the Courts' websites:

<http://www.federalcircuitcourt.gov.au>

<http://www.familycourt.gov.au>

More information about the Victorian Government's restrictions is available from the website of the [Victorian Government](#).