

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Wednesday, 15 September 2021

BALLARAT TO LOCK DOWN FOR A WEEK TO SLOW VIRUS SPREAD

With multiple wastewater detections, multiple exposure sites and four positive cases, on the advice of the Chief Health Officer, the City of Ballarat will tonight enter a seven day lock down to slow the spread of the virus in the community.

There are a growing number of signals in Ballarat that are of real concern to our public health officials, of particular concern are the multiple waste-water detections in the Ballarat area that are not accounted for by the current positive cases. Those detections have been identified across the city.

Because of these combined factors, Victoria's Chief Health Officer has declared that from 11.59pm tonight, the City of Ballarat will have the same restrictions – except for the curfew – in place as Metropolitan, Melbourne. This will last for seven days, until 11.59pm on Wednesday, 22 September.

The Shepparton community has done an incredible job in keeping each other safe. Because of this, today the Chief Health Officer has also declared that from 11.59pm tonight, they will have their restriction settings downgraded to match the rest of regional Victoria.

For the community in Ballarat, there will be only five reasons to leave home: shopping for necessary goods and services, authorised work and study, caregiving or compassionate reasons, exercise, and getting vaccinated.

Exercise and shopping will be limited to 5km from your home. If there's no shops in your 5km radius, you can travel to the ones closest to you. Masks will be mandatory indoors and outdoors – and there will still be no visitors allowed to the home.

Exercise will be limited to just you and one other person, plus dependants if they can't be left at home. Playgrounds will remain open for children under 12 but with only one parent or carer and adults should not remove their masks to eat or drink. Playgrounds must have QR codes.

If you're living in the City of Ballarat the best thing you can do is get tested immediately if you have any symptoms at all and get vaccinated if you haven't booked your appointment. There is a walk-in testing centre at the Ballarat Respiratory Clinic on Dana Street, and a drive through on Skipton Street.

Getting vaccinated has never been more important – it is well and truly our way out of this pandemic. The vast majority of people in Ballarat have had a least one dose of the vaccine, which is a positive sign but if you're not among them, it's time to get it done.

Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"We know this will be disappointing for the Ballarat community, but we'd rather get on top of these cases open up again as quickly as possible, than let cases get out of control in the area."

"It's so important that people in these LGAs continue to check for exposure sites near them, get tested if they have any symptoms at all and most important – get vaccinated if you haven't already."

Quote attributable Minister for Health Martin Foley

"Our regional communities have gotten on top of these outbreaks before and we know the Ballarat will do exactly the same, to keep their friends, their family and whole community safe."

For more information call the coronavirus hotline on 1800 675 398 or visit coronavirus.vic.gov.au.