

COVID-19: Development Industry Update

- Construction Industry to Re-open – with **significant** restrictions

Wednesday July 28, 2021 (11.10am)

This morning we received a pre-announcement update from DPC, Treasury and Minister Stuart Ayres.

Bad news: Lockdown to be extended till 28th August.

More bad news: Locked down (restricted) LGAs are to be expanded from the existing 5 to 8.

- Liverpool
- Fairfield
- Canterbury Bankstown
- Cumberland
- Blacktown
- **Georges River**
- **Parramatta**
- **Campbelltown**

The Government will announce that construction workers will not be allowed to leave those LGAs and construction work will NOT be allowed to occur within those LGAs.

A re-opening Checklist – has been developed with industry and is attached below.

Preparatory works can start from tomorrow (Thursday) – see Attachment B to the Checklist.

The COVID Safe Construction industry Checklist does not apply till full (not preparation) re-starts (from 31st July).

Occupied residences construction work will be allowed again – as long as the work is contactless.

Supply chain – those delivering for the purpose of deliveries for construction work will be “authorised workers” even from the nominated restricted LGAs. They will be allowed to cross those LGA boundary lines.

Construction workers (per se), at this stage, are not authorised workers.

Demonstrating the safety of the industry and compliance with the checklist over the next two weeks will be critical to convincing health officials to list the construction industry as “authorised workers” ASAP.

There are many industries and businesses that are not re-opening and this is an important first step for our industry.

Looking forward, Government is focussing on development of “rapid antigen testing” and the construction industry will be used for trials and roll out.

Health NSW is looking at approving “Antigen testing kits”.

See the Checklist details below

Tom Forrest
CEO
Urban Taskforce
m. +61 429 460 863
e. CEO@UrbanTaskforce.com.au

For more information go to <https://www.urbantaskforce.com.au/covid-19-information-for-the-development-industry/>

***** STRICTLY EMBARGOED *****

The below information is strictly embargoed until 11.00am today and is provided in strict confidence to assist industry to commence preparations for the reopening of construction.

The below Information includes updates for:

- construction sites
- work at occupied places of residences
- the construction supply chain.

Construction sites

- From 31 July, work can recommence on construction sites, subject to the site to completion of a COVID-19 Safety Plan for each site in Greater Sydney.
- Note that construction sites in the identified LGAs with additional restrictions will remain closed. Construction workers who reside in these LGAs may not leave their local area for work.
- The COVID-19 Safety Plan will be available to access later today at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/covid-safe> but for reference the required measures are included at **Appendix A**. You must address how each requirement will be met on each site, recognising that there may be some common practices across sites.
- Plans must be completed before works can recommence on Saturday 31 July (or whenever construction recommences) and a printed copy of your plan must be available for inspection on site.
- An updated Public Health Order will also enable preparatory works to be conducted on site from Thursday 29 July. These are outlined at **Appendix B**. Your COVID-19 Safety Plan is not required for these works.
- Urgent works on construction sites can also continue to be undertaken until 31 July. This also applies after 31 July in the identified LGAs.

Residential premises

- Work at occupied residential premises will be permitted from 31 July providing there is no contact between workers and occupiers.
- There will be a limit of up to 2 workers for indoor services and 5 workers for outdoor services, and works will only be possible where it is feasible for residents to vacate the area of works. This will require real physical separation between workers and residents.
- Works are not permitted within the identified LGAs, and workers from those LGAs are not permitted to leave their local area to provide services.
- Urgent works can continue to be undertaken until 31 July. This also applies after 31 July in the identified LGAs.

Supply chain businesses

- Businesses which are critical to the construction supply chain will be permitted to continue operations if they are located within an identified LGA.
- Workers for the construction supply chain will be added to the authorised worker list. This includes workers engaged in manufacturing of construction materials, plant and components.
- This means that if they live in an identified LGA, they may leave home to attend work. Please note that COVID-19 testing requirements may apply.
- General construction workers are not authorised workers.

Appendix A

COVID-19 Safety plan for construction sites in Greater Sydney

(Note: construction sites are not permitted to operate in a number of identified LGAs)

Wellbeing of workers
Perform symptom check and exposure assessment on all workers upon entry to site in a manner that avoids congregation at entrances or close contact with screeners, where practicable.
Exclude workers who are unwell from the site.
Have protocols in place to manage sites where a person becomes unwell at work and to identify contacts in the event a worker tests positive for COVID-19. Request workers notify site owner as soon as they become aware of having tested positive to COVID-19 or have been notified they are a close contact.
Provide staff with training and advice in relation to personal hygiene, updated infection control practices and adherence to COVID-19 control requirements. Display signage about COVID-19 control measures such as physical distancing, face masks and hand hygiene around the workplace where practicable.
Ensure first aid personnel are provided adequate training and access to PPE (to manage COVID-19 exposure), where practicable. Note: this may not be applicable for small sites.
Encourage workers to access COVID-19 vaccination when eligible, including by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communicating COVID-19 vaccine eligibility criteria as outlined by the Australian Government • informing workers about how to make a COVID-19 vaccination booking through the COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility Checker • sharing resources and information about COVID-19 vaccines from trusted sources (e.g. Australian Government Department of Health, NSW Health) • identifying locations near work sites where COVID-19 vaccinations are available
allowing workers to get vaccinated during working hours in a manner consistent with site arrangements and ongoing site operations.
Have at least one nominated person and/or COVID Marshal (one per 50 workers) who is responsible for ensuring compliance with all COVID-19 safety measures, including site checks-ins, face masks and physical distancing. The nominated person may ensure compliance across multiple sites for smaller projects.
Ensure workers comply with mandatory surveillance COVID-19 testing requirements, where applicable.
Physical distancing
Provide parking at or near sites to reduce use of public transport, where practicable. Communicate and promote compliance with rules relating to carpooling.
Restrict inductions to site to the minimum practicable, to reduce movement of workers between different sites.
On sites for construction, renovation and additions on unoccupied residential buildings two storeys and under: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • limit the trades on-site to one at any time • cap the number of sites visited by trades person in any week to five sites. <p>Note: These restrictions do not apply to roles that involve inherently short and contactless visits to sites, such as supervisors, certifiers and professional services such as engineers and surveyors, delivery drivers and specialist installers working on their own.</p>
Wherever practicable, create separation of people and teams on site: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish separate zones and limit movement of people and teams between zones. • Create separated shifts or staggered shift start/finish times, as permitted by conditions of consent for working hours and related planning orders. <p>Note: this may not be applicable for small sites.</p>
Use contactless deliveries and invoicing where practicable.
Where practicable, delivery drivers and other occupants must remain in their vehicles if not required to unload. If they wind down their windows (e.g. to engage with people onsite) they must be wearing a face mask.
Where a driver is required to unload and it is practicable to do so, no other person should touch the vehicle and other workers should maintain at least 3 metres physical distance from the driver.
Drivers must use dedicated visitor amenities if available (not amenities used by workers). Note: this may not be applicable for small sites.
Establish physical distancing for meetings, break periods, meals site sheds, crib rooms, general access and exit including stairways, lifts, evacuation routes and muster points where practicable.
Wherever practicable, create additional meal facilities and amenities in outdoor, open fresh air environments within the confines of the site. This may include covered areas on ground level, or on floors of buildings that are structurally complete and otherwise safe, but have no facade restricting flow of fresh air.
Limit the number of people in any indoor areas, including indoor meal areas, to one person per 4 square metres of space where it is safe to do so (unless other legislated WHS requirements apply, e.g. working in confined spaces).
Limit hoist movements to teams who are working together and, where practicable, have teams work only on specified floors for their whole shift to avoid the need to move around the site.
Monitor entry and exit points to maintain physical distancing and prevent over-crowding, including but not limited to provision of supervision, line marking, clear signage, video communications/doorbell.
Conduct a task risk assessment to identify control measures necessary to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 when 1.5 metre physical distancing cannot be adhered to. For essential work activities where physical distancing is problematic, establish clearly documented processes of control and approval.

Implement a strategy suitable to the circumstances of the site to avoid crowding and contact, such as using telephone or video for essential meetings, considering what work can be done offsite (such as prefabrication or administration), holding inductions and toolbox talks in smaller groups and in open, well-ventilated spaces within the construction site and discouraging congregation outside sites before/after shifts and on meal breaks.

Hygiene and cleaning

Face masks must be worn by workers, unless exempt.

Have hand sanitiser or wash stations at key points around the site, such as entry and exit points and meal areas.

Bathrooms must be well stocked with hand soap and paper towels.

Clean indoor hard surface areas frequented by workers at least daily with detergent or disinfectant. Clean frequently touched areas and surfaces, including delivery areas, turnstiles, lifts, hoists, printers, plant and machinery controls, handrails, taps and washing facilities, several times per day with a detergent or disinfectant solution or wipe, where practicable. Note: this may not be applicable for small sites.

Staff are to wear the required personal protective equipment when cleaning, including gloves, and wash hands thoroughly before and after with soap and water.

If sharing tools and equipment is unavoidable ensure cleaning with a detergent solution or disinfectant wipes in between use, where practicable.

Site vehicles and plant must be operated by a single designated operator and regularly cleaned where practicable. Where shared use is unavoidable, regularly clean the inside of vehicle cabs and between use where practicable. Note: this may not be applicable for small sites.

Record keeping

Use the NSW Government QR code system to collect an electronic record of the name, contact number and entry time for all staff, site visitors and contractors.

Processes must be in place to ensure that people provide the required contact information, such as by checking phones for the green tick to confirm they have checked in. QR codes should be clearly visible and accessible including at entrances to the premises.

Wherever practicable, establish unique NSW Government QR codes for different zones and locations on site, including meal rooms, toilet facilities and delivery points to assist NSW Health contact tracing if a positive COVID-19 case is identified. Note: this may not be applicable for small sites.

If a person is unable to provide contact details, for example due to age or language barriers, another person may provide contact details on their behalf. If it is not possible for check-in to occur via a Service NSW QR code, keep a record of the name, contact number and entry time for all workers and visitors for a period of at least 28 days. These records must be provided in an electronic format such as a spreadsheet as soon as possible, but within 4 hours, upon request from an authorised officer.

Issue NSW Government QR codes electronically to delivery drivers prior to site entry, where practicable. Note: this may not be applicable for small sites.

Consider implementing use of tracing cards to track contacts between employees, drivers and visitors on site.

Cross check delivery crew induction details to ensure address details are registered and compliant with public health order restrictions.

Employers must maintain records on their staff, including but not limited to:

- records of other sites visited
- place of residence to determine whether staff are required to undertake surveillance COVID-19 testing
- mandatory surveillance COVID-19 testing results
- age and vaccination status – if a person declines to provide vaccination information, it is sufficient to record that fact.

Cooperate with NSW Health if contacted in relation to a positive case of COVID-19 at your workplace, and notify SafeWork NSW on 13 10 50.

Appendix B

Preparatory works

From Thursday 29 July 2021, some preparatory work is permitted on construction sites, including:

- checking or maintaining installations or equipment
- cleaning, waste removal or waste management
- stocktaking or restocking
- delivery of materials or equipment
- servicing or installation of amenities
- relocation on the construction site of plant or equipment
- issuing permits or certificates
- establishing arrangements or procedures to help protect persons from COVID-19
- erecting fencing or hoarding
- inspections, including for technical reasons, or safety, including work, health and safety, or for valuations or other financial reasons
- removing water
- connecting power, fuel or services
- safety work, including work related to fire safety or electrical safety
- surveying or marking out
- training required to be carried out on the construction site.