

Coronavirus (COVID-19) requirements under the VEU program



Information for program participants

12 August 2020



Stage 4 restrictions are now in place for metropolitan Melbourne which impose further restrictions on households and businesses to slow the spread of coronavirus.



Many of the upgrades under the program may not be eligible due to current circumstances.

Accredited persons should discuss with the commission before starting any upgrades that are not critical repairs such as failed heating systems.



Accredited persons are required to provide the commission with:

- Updated COVIDSafe Plan information by 5pm, 14 August 2020.
- Evidence, upon request, that upgrades undertaken done in in metropolitan Melbourne during stage 4 restrictions comply with the public health measures

Stage 4 restrictions in metropolitan Melbourne

Stage 4 restrictions are now in place for metropolitan Melbourne to help slow the spread of coronavirus. This means that businesses in Melbourne can only conduct on-site operations if they are a permitted work premises and have a COVIDSafe Plan implemented.

If you are a permitted industry, it is the responsibility of employers – accredited persons and their sub-contractors – to follow workplace obligations available from the [Business Victoria website](#).

These obligations include:





- having an up to date COVIDSafe Plan
- issuing a worker permit to their employees.

Employees must carry the worker permit and photo identification when travelling to and from the workplace. For information on the permitted worker scheme, visit:

www.justice.vic.gov.au/permitted-worker-scheme

Eligibility of VEU upgrades under current restrictions

Work involving critical repairs to any premises where required for emergency or safety can be undertaken under stage 4 restrictions.

Our current position is that the following upgrades are eligible under the program during the stage 4 restriction period:

- replacement of **failed** water heating systems and space heating systems in residential premises are allowed
- replacement of **failed** water heating systems, space heating systems, refrigerated display cabinets and gas fired boiler/heater or burners at permitted worksites are allowed.

For upgrades that are not evidently allowed under stage 4 restrictions (i.e. upgrades not listed above), we recommend you discuss the nature of your upgrades with the commission (email: veu@esc.vic.gov.au) before carrying out the upgrade. Further, we note that accredited persons should be reviewing the government's restriction requirements themselves and taking responsibility for their own business decisions.

Where there is any uncertainty around the eligibility of the upgrade, we recommend you **do not start the upgrade.**

This guidance reflects the commission's current understanding of eligibility under the VEU program but this may change with the release of further information or advice from the Victorian Government. We will endeavour to communicate any further changes to stakeholders as soon as we can.

There have been queries around whether employees can travel from metropolitan Melbourne to regional Victoria to conduct upgrades. To protect the integrity of the program, we recommend program participants adopt a conservative approach and restrict employee movement from metropolitan Melbourne to regional Victoria.





Requirements to be completed under the program

As the regulator of the VEU program, we will be implementing the following measures to ensure participants comply with the new restrictions:

- All accredited persons undertaking or planning to undertake VEU program activities from 3 August to 13 September 2020 will need to submit their tailored COVIDSafe Plan (which accredited persons should already have in place) to us by **5pm, 14 August 2020** (reflecting the latest risk mitigation requirements). You will also need to:
 - advise us if you intend to undertake VEU program activities in metropolitan Melbourne (where stage 4 restrictions currently apply) and/or in regional Victoria (where stage 3 restrictions currently apply)
 - provide us with a declaration that your organisation has provided its employees (including third party contractors and agents) with appropriate training to manage these risks in accordance with the COVIDSafe Plan.

We may delay assessment of certificates for accredited persons who fail to submit this information to us.

- As part of the validation of certificate creations, accredited persons may need to submit evidence that upgrades undertaken in metropolitan Melbourne during stage 4 comply with these restrictions.

All accredited persons (and their sub-contractors) are responsible for familiarising themselves with all their current legal obligations and complying with those obligations.

Where to get help

If you have any questions or feedback with respect to matters set out in this program update and/or wish to discuss a proposed upgrade under the VEU program under current restrictions, please contact VEU Support on (03) 9032 1310 or veu@esc.vic.gov.au.

For assistance on developing a COVIDSafe Plan, you can access information from the [Business Victoria website](#) or contact Worksafe: www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/contact

