

# Youth Justice coronavirus (COVID-19) update

## Fact sheet for stakeholders

### Introduction

A range of measures are in place to reduce the risks of coronavirus (COVID-19) getting into in Youth Justice custodial facilities.

These measures are informed by advice from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and are there to protect young people, staff and everyone entering Youth Justice precincts; including service providers, contractors, and professional and personal visitors.

As coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions ease in the community, we will also take a stepped approach to easing restrictions in Youth Justice custodial facilities.

The potential for coronavirus (COVID-19) to spread in Youth Justice custodial facilities remains an ongoing challenge. This is why Youth Justice is easing restrictions cautiously in order to minimise the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19).

### Measures reducing the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19)

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) Management Plan remains in force across both Youth Justice precincts at Malmsbury and Parkville. The plan is the central source of high-level advice and instruction on managing the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) in Youth Justice precincts.

The plan covers key information including:

- managing coronavirus (COVID-19) risks for Youth Justice staff and service providers
- managing coronavirus (COVID-19) risks for young people
- use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and
- cleaning and laundry arrangements.

### Primary health, mental health and youth offending services

Primary health and mental health services – including nursing, general practitioner (GP) and specialist Intensive Intervention Unit services – have resumed onsite in line with COVIDSafe principles.

From **October 2020**, Youth Justice precincts resumed one-on-one and group-based delivery for assessments and programs, including:

- psychosocial programs
- criminogenic programs
- alcohol and other drugs (AOD) health stream programs.

Subject to coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions, a combination of face-to-face and remote delivery may be required.

### Professional visits

From **Monday 14 December 2020**, additional professional visits will return on-site in the Visitor's Centre. Professional visits may include visits from legal representatives, court related assessments or the Independent Visitors Program.

Essential face-to-face professional visits have continued throughout the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, with case-by-case assessments of what constitutes an essential professional visit.

Young people can also continue to access virtual professional visits, alongside face-to-face visits.

## Personal visits

Personal visits will recommence from **Friday 11 December 2020**.

All personal visits will need to be pre-booked and subject to indoor physical distancing limits for each of the visiting areas.

Young people can speak with their families and case managers regarding booking visits.

Families can also request visits now by calling the visits booking number on **1300 064 035**.

Virtual personal visits will remain in place to provide options for families and young people, particularly for those separated by distance.

### In-person visits before 11 December

Personal visits for compassionate reasons or in exceptional circumstances are being considered on a case-by-case basis, subject to approval by the precinct General Manager.

## Education and training

Parkville College commenced face-to-face classes with young people from the start of Term 4. Education has been modified to meet COVIDSafe requirements.

## Temporary leave

From **Monday 9 November 2020**, some temporary leave activities returned for young people at the Malmsbury Youth Justice Precinct.

Temporary leave arrangements are progressively returning for young people at both precincts, with a focus on reintroducing activities that support young people's reintegration into the community.

All temporary leave activities will continue to be subject to a risk assessment process and include consideration of any community restrictions where relevant e.g. wearing a face covering.

## Coronavirus (COVID-19) isolation

All young people entering custody are continuing to be tested for coronavirus (COVID-19) on arrival.

Young people who are confirmed cases, suspected cases, close contacts or who present with coronavirus (COVID-19) risk factors, such as

common symptoms, are subject to isolation arrangements in line with health advice.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) isolation arrangements are vital to protect young people and staff and have helped prevent the spread of the virus in Youth Justice custodial facilities.

From **Monday 30 November**, the 14-day admission isolation process ceased and young are placed in isolation on admission only for the minimum period necessary to return a negative test result.

Additional admission isolation arrangements may be introduced based on transmission risk in the broader community and updated health advice.

## Keeping safe

If you are visiting a Youth Justice precinct, it is important to keep doing key things to keep yourself and others safe, including by:

- practising good hygiene and regularly and thoroughly washing your hands
- maintaining physical distancing by keeping at least 1.5 metres away from others, where possible
- wearing appropriate personal protective equipment, including a face mask at all times
- **not attending a Youth Justice precinct if you feel unwell**

Symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) can include fever, cough, chills or sweats, sore throat, shortness of breath, runny nose or change in taste or smell.