

COVID-19 NSW and Victoria Border Closure – what do I need to know?

FACTSHEET

Who is this factsheet for?

This factsheet is for people who are fined under a law of NSW.

If you live in Victoria and have a question about a Victorian law, go to the [Victoria Legal Aid website](#) for more information.

What are the changes?

The NSW Government has made new orders to limit the spread of COVID-19. They have been issued under the *Public Health Act*.

The new order closes the border between NSW and Victoria. This is to restrict entry into NSW of people who have been in Victoria within the previous 14 days before entry. The order will be enforced by NSW Police at all border crossings by road, rail, air, foot or water.

The border closed at 12.01am on Wednesday 8 July 2020.

The order lasts for 90 days unless revoked earlier.

Can anyone travel from Victoria to NSW?

You need to have a permit to enter NSW from Victoria

- Permits are required for adults and children
- Permits are valid for 14 days from the date of issue and apply to all borders – land, air, sea and river crossings.

You do not need a permit to enter NSW from Victoria in these situations:

- As an emergency services worker
- As a law enforcement services worker
- For medical or hospital services
- To avoid injury or escape a risk of harm such as domestic violence
- To attend court or meet other legal obligations

You need a permit to enter NSW from Victoria to travel to another State or Territory:

You can enter NSW for the sole purpose of travelling by the most direct route to another State or Territory by road, air or rail.

Do I need to self-isolate when I arrive in NSW from Victoria?

Your entry permit will tell you if you have any special conditions that you need to comply with.

You will need to go into 14 days of self-isolation when you enter NSW from Victoria if you are a:

COVID-19 NSW and Victoria Border Closure – what do I need to know?

FACTSHEET

- NSW resident (see below about border community residents)
- person entering for child access or care arrangements (see below about parenting orders)
- seasonal worker

What about people who live in border communities?

Border community residents:

- require an entry permit to travel from Victoria to NSW.
- only need to self-isolate for 14 days if they have travelled to a place in Victoria outside the border community.

What about my parenting arrangements?

You might be able to travel to NSW if you need to do so because of the arrangements you have for your children, for example you have a court order which says that you should have time with your children on weekends. You will need to apply for an entry permit to do this and the permit will last for 14 days. If you do not live in a border community, you are required to self-isolate for 14 days following your arrival in NSW. You should get legal advice if you are in this situation.

If you need to cross the border, consider these things:

- Keep photo identification with you.
- Have a copy of your court orders or your parenting plan or other written agreement of your arrangement.
- Have the other parent available by telephone in case they need to be contacted by police.
- Keep in mind that it might take a lot longer than usual to cross the border.
- Get legal advice before trying to cross the border.

You might find that you, or the other parent, cannot cross the border. Parents need to be as flexible as possible in these circumstances. If the children are with you, try to arrange for them to stay in touch with the other parent by telephone, video or FaceTime chats, or email. You may also want to consider arranging “make-up time” for the other parent once border travel becomes possible again.

See also the Legal Aid NSW factsheet about [COVID-19 and parenting orders](#).

What does self-isolation mean?

This means:

- You must go directly to your place of residence or another suitable place to stay. You must stay there for 14 days from the date you entered NSW and take reasonable steps to minimise contact with other persons. You can only leave your isolation to:
 - get medical care or medical supplies
 - comply with a legal obligation or a court or tribunal order
 - in an emergency
 - to provide a critical service
 - to leave NSW by a direct route.

COVID-19 NSW and Victoria Border Closure – what do I need to know?

FACTSHEET

- No-one can enter the place where you are self-isolating, unless they:
 - normally live there or they are also in self-isolation in the place you are staying
 - are delivering food or essential items
 - for medical or emergency purposes.
- Follow the [NSW Health self-isolation guidelines](#).

What is a critical service?

Critical services are:

- Movement of freight or persons on a commercial basis
- Maintenance and repair of critical infrastructure
- Medical or hospital care
- Law enforcement
- Commonwealth defence and security services
- Mining, agriculture, construction, energy or manufacturing.

Where do I get an entry permit?

You need to apply for a permit online through Service NSW. All adults and children travelling into NSW from Victoria need to have a valid permit. Permits last for 14 days.

<https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/apply-covid-19-nsw-border-declaration-permit>

For more information, call **Service NSW on 13 77 88**, 24 hours, 7 days a week.

What do I do with my entry permit?

If asked, you must provide a current entry permit to an enforcement officer for each person who is travelling across the border from Victoria into NSW.

What happens if I break this public health order?

For individuals the maximum penalty is \$11,000, or imprisonment for 6 months, or both. A further \$5,500 penalty may apply for each day the offence continues.

For corporations the maximum penalty is \$55,000. A further \$27,500 penalty may apply for each day the offence continues.

On-the-spot fines

NSW Police may issue on-the-spot fines of \$1,000 to individuals or \$5,000 to corporations for breaking a public health order. Fines can be issued to adults and children aged 10 to 18 years.

NSW Police may also issue an on-the-spot fine of \$4,000 if:

COVID-19 NSW and Victoria Border Closure – what do I need to know?

FACTSHEET

- a person does not provide information to enable an enforcement officer to decide if you have been in Victoria in the past 14 days and if you are authorised to enter NSW.
- a person does not provide information that is true and accurate.

Producing a current entry permit for inspection is sufficient information to meet these requirements.

What are my options if I get a public health order fine?

You have the option to:

- pay the fine
- dispute the fine
- go on a payment plan
- consider a Work and Development Order (WDO)

You should get legal advice to find out the best option for you.

If you have received a NSW public health order fine or charge, contact LawAccess NSW on 1300 888 529.

How can I get help?

For free legal help call **LawAccess NSW 1300 888 529**, Monday to Friday 9.00am to 5.00pm.

Redfern Legal Centre has a [Public Health Laws and Police Powers](#) factsheet on their website.

Legal Aid NSW has a series of [factsheets about COVID-19 and the law](#) available on their website to assist you to manage all the changes that are happening in our community.

If you need an interpreter, call the Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450 and ask for LawAccess NSW.

If you find it hard to hear or speak, call the National Relay Service on 133 677 and ask for LawAccess NSW or visit www.relayservice.gov.au.

Call 1800 020 080 (24/7) for COVID-19 health questions or to check symptoms.

This factsheet is intended as a general guide to the law. Do not rely on this information as legal advice. We recommend you talk to a lawyer about your situation. This information is correct at the time of writing, however, it may change.

CVCIV07 | 14 July 2020 | © Legal Aid NSW