

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **MASTER BUILDERS VICTORIA COMMENDS CITY'S FLEXIBILITY ON OPERATING HOURS FOR BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION**

Master Builders Victoria praised the City of Melbourne for its agreement to accommodate more flexible operating hours on a temporary basis for commercial, large residential and mixed-use development construction work during the COVID-19 pandemic, citing this as an example of the kind of cooperative effort required to keep building sites safe and open, thousands of people in work and thousands of families more secure during this extraordinary health emergency.

“The building and construction industry is having to adapt to a rapidly changing environment and, given this unprecedented situation, we are very pleased that the City of Melbourne has stepped up to be more flexible,” Rebecca Casson, CEO of Master Builders Victoria said.

“It’s great to see that the City of Melbourne has waived fees, streamlined the application process and has committed to having an answer back to builders within 24 hours,” she said.

The people of Melbourne depend enormously on the essential service we deliver, and the city’s willingness to cooperate makes it possible for that to continue in a manner that protects the health and wellbeing of both our community and the Victorian economy.

To make this work and respect the city’s temporary accommodation means that all work sites must adhere to the new restrictions or face financial penalties and possible revocation of the new arrangement.

“Builders care deeply for the safety and well-being our community, and we will continue to follow the advice of the Victorian Chief Health Officer,” Ms Casson said.

“Building sites are very complex and we recognise the substantial cultural change that our industry is making. Everyone, including workers, subcontractors and management are eager to complete building projects as efficiently as possible. Whilst social distancing may slow progress, health and safety measures will help keep the work from ceasing altogether,” she said.

“To mitigate potential delays on projects due to COVID-19, Master Builders has urgently requested the Federal Government, in conjunction with the State Government, to publicly announce that they will not pursue liquidated damages in any supply contracts and ask that private clients take a similar approach,” Ms Casson said.

“This agreement must be embraced by all subcontractors throughout the building supply chain; we call on everyone to pay within 30 days. It is unconscionable for clients to put pressure on smaller businesses and contractors at any time, but especially now,” she said.

**ENDS:**

**Quotes attributable to Rebecca Casson, CEO of Master Builders Victoria:**

- “We appreciate the City of Melbourne’s flexibility in maintaining the essential services of building and construction which will keep thousands of people in work and thousands of families more secure.”
- “Builders care deeply for the safety and well-being our community, and we will continue to follow the advice of the Victorian Chief Health Officer.”

**MASTER BUILDERS VICTORIA**

[www.mbav.com.au](http://www.mbav.com.au)

Since 1875, Master Builders Victoria has grown to be Victoria’s leading building and construction industry voice.

A broad-based organisation, we service the needs of the entire industry, from residential to commercial and engineering businesses, principal contractors to subcontractors, manufacturers and suppliers.

We continually assist in developing the skills of our members by providing access to a wide range of services and proactive representation to government and industry. Master Builders Victoria also serves the community by fostering best practice work standards and acting as an independent advisory service for our industry.

**AVAILABLE FOR COMMENT:**

Master Builders Victoria CEO – Rebecca Casson

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