

MEDIA RELEASE

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MASTER BUILDERS CONFIRMS THAT BUILDERS AND TRADIES ARE OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Builders and tradies remain open for business and are complying with social distancing and hygiene rules, in line with the latest advice from government.

On advice from the Victorian Chief Health Officer, clients are still permitted to attend private appointments to view display homes and to meet with builders and consultants to make decisions, such as colours and fit-out details. While the two-person rule applies only to social gatherings, and workers are exempt when entering homes or private premises, everyone must comply with social distancing and hygiene measures and abide by the state's travel guidelines, including avoiding carrying multiple passengers and passengers who aren't in the same household.

"It's reassuring to hear that Victoria Police will continue to enforce rules in accordance with this interpretation. We appreciate and support the great work that Victoria Police and DHHS are doing to protect our community," Rebecca Casson, CEO of Master Builders Victoria, said.

"It's important for home and property owners to know with absolute confidence that that they will not be breaking any rules, or endangering anyone's health, by visiting display homes or going ahead with their residential building projects – so they don't need to stop their renovations," she said.

"Now is a great time to start talking to your builder to plan your new build or renovation. It takes more time than people think to plan, have plans approved and schedule building work. Given this, we encourage the public to make the time now to book an appointment with their builder to begin their new project, inspect a display home and continue with their building project or renovation," she said.

It's also important for home and property owners and the community to know that, if social distancing and hygiene measures are in place, there is no limit to the number of workers you can have working on site. For example, if a building activity requires four workers or trades, this is acceptable. However, home and property owners and our community should remember that safety is everyone's responsibility; builders, workers, tradespeople and clients must ensure that social distancing and hygiene rules are adhered to.

Board member of Master Builders Victoria and Chair of the Country Sector Committee, Mark Little, runs a regional construction company and told Ms Casson that builders care deeply about the needs of their clients, contractors and suppliers, and for the wellbeing of their communities.

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“Whether you’ve been planning a building, a renovation job or you’ve been eager to talk to your builder about preparing for this kind of project, you can still have your builder on your premises for purposes of work and be confident they are complying with the rules and that you are doing the right thing. Whether it’s indoors or outdoors there is absolutely no problem with your project going ahead. There is no need to put kitchen or bathroom renovations, plumbing or electrical work or landscaping on hold,” Mr Little said.

Kelvin Ryan, Joint CEO and Managing Director of Simonds Group, told Ms Casson that he had observed a positive trend among the company’s active work sites with increases in productivity, with tradespeople adhering to the guidelines for hygiene and social distancing on work sites.

“Home builders are very much open for business, and they’ll be central to helping our state recover from the significant disruption caused by this pandemic. Our tradespeople are very grateful that we are considered an essential service and can continue to work when many others in our community cannot,” Mr Ryan said.

“We’ve always been proud of our professional relationship with our trades and we value their work – this has been strengthened and we’re seeing our trades really making their efforts count,” he said.

There are nearly 102,000 residential building businesses in Victoria, including thousands of mum-and-dad businesses. The survival of these businesses is essential to the livelihoods of builders and their families and also the state economy, which is also under huge strain from the COVID-19 crisis.

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MASTER BUILDERS VICTORIA

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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:

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