



# Permitted worker scheme

The following Q&As have been adapted from the Department of Justice's information on the permitted worker scheme.

For the latest up-to-date information, please visit: [www.justice.vic.gov.au/permitted-worker-scheme](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/permitted-worker-scheme)

## Q&As for people managers

### **What is the permitted worker scheme?**

From 11:59pm on Wednesday 5 August employers that require their staff to attend a work site must issue a worker permit to their employees under Stage 4 restrictions. It is the employer's responsibility to supply the permit.

### **Is Metro Trains still operating under the new restrictions?**

Yes. Providing an essential service such as public transport is a permitted activity. As such, Metro workplaces remain open.

### **When are the worker permits required?**

From 11:59pm Wednesday 5 August, employers that require their staff to work on-site must issue a worker permit to their employees – this is the employer's responsibility.

From 11:59pm Wednesday 5 August, all employees who are required to travel to and from a worksite for their job must carry their worker permit.

### **How will worker permits be used?**

Employees:

- may be required to show worker permits to prove they are a permitted worker who can be travelling to and from a work site, and
- must carry their worker permit and should carry photo identification whenever they travel to and from a work site.

### **What are the penalties for not complying?**

Penalties of up to \$19,826 (for individuals) and \$99,132 (for businesses) can apply to employers who issue worker permits to employees who do not meet the requirements of the worker permit scheme under the Public Health and Wellbeing Act.

There will also be on-the-spot fines of up to \$1,652 (for individuals) and up to \$9,913 (for businesses) for anyone who breaches the scheme requirements. This includes employees and employers who do not carry their worker permit when they are travelling to and from work.



### **Where can I find the worker permit template?**

At Metro, the People Division is coordinating this critical process for employees who need a permit.

### **What am I certifying on this worker permit?**

Employers must ensure an employee's work hours, place of work and permitted activity are correctly described on the worker permit.

They must also ensure that the permitted worker is required to be on site and cannot reasonably work from home, the business is permitted to be operating and that there is a COVID-19 safe plan in place for the work site.

Employers are also declaring that the person who has approved the worker permit is authorised and contactable.

### **Are there separate permit templates for ongoing and one-off worker permits?**

No. The worker permit needs to specify the hours of the employee's work.

It is up to the employer to determine how to use the worker template to meet their business requirements.

### **How do I specify the work hours for workers who are casual or do not have set hours?**

Employers may need to issue worker permits for specified date ranges for employees who do not have regular hours, for example for particular rostering periods.

### **What do I do for a worker who needs to 'pick up a shift' or cover for someone with an illness whose worker permit does not specify that time?**

Employees that are unexpectedly called in outside of their specified hours can travel to and from work without the risk of being fined.

They will need to carry the worker permit they do have, to ensure authorities can verify with their employer that they are on their way to work.

### **Does the person who signs the worker permit have to be the CEO?**

No. At Metro, the person who signs the worker permit must be a General Manager or senior leader. The People Division is coordinating this critical process for employees who need a permit.

### **What if an employee is at risk at home?**

Employees who are at risk of family violence, will be allowed to work from their workplace for their own safety. Employees will not need to carry a worker permit in these instances.

### **How can I be certain that my work practices are compliant with the Chief Health Officer's directions, WorkSafe's coronavirus (COVID-19) requirements and occupational health and safety (OH&S) obligations?**



The Chief Health Officer directions can be found on the Department of Health and Human Services website.

More information on WorkSafe requirements can be found at [worksafe.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-covid-19](https://worksafe.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-covid-19).

Any OH&S obligations for your business must continue to be met.

**Can I certify that people sub-contracted to me are required to attend the work site?**

The employer of the sub-contractor is required to authorise that an employee is required on-site. As you are not the employer of sub-contractors, you cannot issue them with a worker permit.

The sub-contractor employer will need to be satisfied that their employees are required at your workplace. They may request certain information from you to satisfy the requirements for issuing the worker permit.

**If I employ people at multiple sites, who is responsible for issuing the worker permit?**

Each employer must determine who will be authorised to worker permits to their employees.

For an employer with multiple work sites, they may decide to designate an authorised person at each work site.

Employers should minimise the need for employees to work at different sites. An employee working at more than one site must keep a log of the places visited including date, time and place of attendance.

**I have hundreds of employees; can I issue the same worker permit for each employee?**

No. Each employee required to be on site must receive an individual worker permit with their name, date of birth and specific work hours.