



COVID-19

Member Update - 4 August 2020

Our year of extraordinary disruption continues, as this week all of Victoria returns to entirely remote learning. The new restrictions that we now live and work under will be very challenging, and the economic impacts of the intensified lockdown will affect many families and individuals. We do however welcome the certainty afforded by the move to across-the-board remote learning, as the hybrid model in place across Melbourne and the Mitchell Shire over recent weeks had resulted in far too much inconsistency and uncertainty, particularly around the issue of staff attendance at the workplace.

Some details of the new arrangements are still being clarified, particularly around issues such as the eligibility of students for on-site supervision and child-care arrangements for school staff. We anticipate that these details should be resolved either later today or tomorrow.

This is what we know so far:

- Yesterday was the last day of on-site learning until the last week of Term 3 for senior students in Melbourne and the Mitchell Shire, and all students elsewhere in Victoria. Today should in most cases be a pupil-free day, and many regional schools are also planning a second pupil-free day tomorrow to allow for planning around the transition to remote learning.
- The already revised VCE timetable will remain in place, but the GAT will be postponed until the start of Term 4.
- Schools must provide on-site supervision for vulnerable students and the children of 'permitted workers' and must ensure that sufficient staff are available for this. Appropriately qualified school staff, including teachers, education support staff and CRTs can support the on-site supervision program.
- Principals should consult with their staff to identify those willing and able to work on-site, either on an ongoing or rostered basis. This should take place in the context of the consultative arrangements in place at each school to ensure staff are consulted on, and have input into, the ways that work may be organised and allocated.
- Staff who are medically vulnerable or live with a medically vulnerable person must not work on-site.
- Staff not required for on-site supervision or other essential tasks to maintain the school must work from home.

[See here for an overview of the other aspects of the new restrictions across Victoria.](#)

We know that we can get through this together. School staff demonstrated extraordinary agility and dedication during the Term 2 period of remote learning, and managed to deliver quality education and essential student support in very difficult circumstances. It won't be easy, but we can do it again.

The vast majority of principals and school leaders have shown a genuine commitment to staff health, wellbeing, workload management, employment security and to meaningful workplace consultation throughout this crisis, and we expect this to continue. Where employers put the health and safety of IEU members at risk or make unreasonable threats to employment or income, your union will be there to fight for you.

We know that some IEU members - particularly CRTs and those employed in ELICOS or RTO / Private Provider settings - are far more likely to have their employment and income seriously affected over coming weeks. Make sure you keep us posted about your situation, and remember that we can waive membership fees for those suffering serious financial hardship (this will happen automatically for CRT members and on application for others).

We will continue to advocate for you and to individually assist and support those members who need us. Please don't hesitate to contact us for advice or support – you can reach us at info@ieuvictas.org.au or by sending a text message to 0480 092 251.

You can find further information and updates on the dedicated section of our website and by following us on [Facebook](#), [twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

In unity

Debra James

General Secretary