



Seasonal horticulture COVIDSafe requirements factsheet

All Victorian farm businesses and labour hire providers must have a COVIDSafe Plan.

Employers (farm businesses/hosts) that undertake horticultural seasonal work with a seasonal workforce, and labour hire providers offering transport and/or accommodation for seasonal workers also have additional obligations and must have a [Seasonal Horticulture Workers COVIDSafe Plan*](#), with attachments that relate to seasonal workers. This factsheet outlines what seasonal worker employers (farm businesses and hosts) and labour hire providers must have in place for the 2020-21 harvest season.

What are my obligations?

Testing and record keeping

Farm business/host ✓ Labour hire provider ✓

- ❑ **For seasonal workers residing away from their Melbourne residence (relocating for work):** You must require each seasonal worker who has been in Melbourne in the previous 14 days to produce evidence of a negative coronavirus (COVID-19) test. The test must be no more than four days old, otherwise they cannot commence work.
- ❑ You must require each seasonal worker who comes on site to provide a written declaration stating if they have been in Melbourne in the last 14 days and record the answer. If the answer is 'Yes' you must record the negative coronavirus (COVID-19) test result date.
- ❑ If the seasonal worker cannot provide evidence of a test then they must not be allowed to work until they have had one (direct them to a testing site where they will be able to access asymptomatic testing).
- ❑ Keep records of testing and detailed workplace attendance sheets for 28 days, then securely destroy them, unless another statutory requirement permits or requires the personal information to be retained.
- ❑ Keep daily written records of all workers and all visitors (who attend the Work Premises for longer than 15 minutes), which includes the first name, contact phone number, date and time at which the person attended and the areas which the person attended..
- ❑ This is in addition to the requirement of all workers (whether they have travelled from Melbourne or not) to declare in writing at the start of each shift but before entering a Work Premises that they: are free of coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, have not been in contact with a confirmed case, and have not been required to self-isolate or self-quarantine.
- ❑ **For seasonal workers residing in greater Melbourne but commuting for seasonal work in regional Victoria:** You must carry out surveillance testing for coronavirus (COVID-19) of seasonal workers in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Health and Human Services and have them available for inspection by an Authorised Officer.
- ❑ DHHS will commence a program of surveillance testing and contact farm businesses for appointments to come on-site to test workers. Not every farm or seasonal business will be contacted. However, if you are contacted you must cooperate under the Directions.
- ❑ Keep records of surveillance testing for 28 days, then securely destroy these records, unless another statutory requirement permits or requires the personal information to be retained.

Facemasks at the work premises

Farm business/host ✓ Labour hire provider X

- ❑ You must ensure face masks are worn at all times unless an exemption applies and supply face masks free of charge to workers employed or engaged at the workplace.

Training and induction at the work premises

Farm business/host ✓ Labour hire provider X

- ❑ You must provide induction to all new workers when they enter the seasonal work premises that covers good hygiene practices, advising workers to not attend work when unwell and the arrangements for workplace bubbles.

Workforce bubbles

Farm business/host ✓ Labour hire provider X

- ❑ Group workers into smaller bubbles (teams) within a shift and minimise physical interactions between bubbles.
- ❑ Ensure shifts do not overlap, bubbles must take breaks together.
- ❑ Family members or those living in same accommodation should work in the same bubble.
- ❑ Maintain bubbles at accommodation and while commuting, wherever practicable.

Accommodation

Farm business/host ✓ Labour hire provider ✓

- ❑ If you provide accommodation to seasonal workers you must include as part of your Seasonal Horticulture Workers COVIDSafe Plan, an attachment to the plan with statements outlining how you will provide accommodation that is COVIDSafe.
- ❑ Statements should address density, sanitation, use of communal facilities, regular cleaning and provision of alternative facilities should a resident be forced to isolate as a confirmed case or quarantine as a close contact

Transport

Farm business/host ✓ Labour hire provider ✓

- ❑ If you provide transportation to seasonal workers you must include as part of your Seasonal Horticultural Worker COVIDSafe Plan, statements outlining how you will provide transport arrangements that are COVIDSafe.
- ❑ Statements should address distancing, ventilation, wearing of face masks and regular cleaning.



Seasonal horticulture COVIDSafe requirements factsheet (continued)

Additional resources are available for the seasonal horticulture workforce to support farm businesses, hosts and labour hire providers to safely operate and maintain a COVIDSafe workplace.

Conduct regular comprehensive cleaning and maintain a cleaning log

Farm business/host ✓ Labour hire provider X

- Comprehensive cleaning of the seasonal work premises must occur each evening.
- A cleaning log must be on display in all shared workplaces and publicly accessible areas

Definitions

A **seasonal worker** is a worker who is temporarily employed or engaged to perform seasonal horticultural work at a seasonal work premises.

Seasonal horticultural work is work that is seasonal in nature in the production of fruit and vegetables such as picking, packing and harvesting of seasonal produce. It does not include the production of nuts, wine grapes and olives or the storage and distribution activities that occur post- production.

It includes fruit and vegetables that are produced on rotation, in glasshouses or other covered arrangements.

A **farm business/host** is the operator of a seasonal work premises who enters into a contract of employment with a seasonal worker, engages a seasonal worker in exchange for payment or enters into a contract with a labour hire provider for the engagement of seasonal workers.

A **labour hire provider** is a person who arranges, engages, supplies, subcontracts or otherwise provides seasonal workers (as employees, independent contractors or otherwise) for seasonal horticultural work in a seasonal work premises. Includes a person who is self-employed or a sole trader.

A **seasonal work premise** is a farm or workplace where seasonal horticultural work is undertaken.

Additional resources

Additional resources are available for the seasonal horticulture workforce to support farm businesses, hosts and labour hire providers to safely operate and maintain a COVIDSafe workplace.

The Seasonal Agriculture Workforce Coordinators and Seasonal Agriculture CALD Engagement Officers can support you navigate the complexities of harvest during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic:

- **Sunraysia:** Sue McConnell (0418 572 087)
- **Goulburn Murray:** Aimee McCutcheon (0407 545 966)
- **Other regions:** Sze Flett (0419 573 886)
- **CALD:** Del Delpitiya (0436 649 860)

Support for worker relocation, induction and training, and business adaption is also available through the Agriculture Workforce Plan. The Agriculture Workforce Plan provides targeted support to agriculture, food processing and critical food supply chain businesses in rural, regional and outer metropolitan areas in Victoria, to meet their labour and operational needs during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Register for seasonal workforce support or read more on the Agriculture Victoria [website](#).