



Seasonal horticulture COVIDSafe requirements factsheet

Farm businesses/hosts using seasonal workers for seasonal horticultural work (including the picking, packing and harvesting of seasonal produce but not production of nuts, wine grapes and olives or storage/distribution activities post production) and labour hire providers (to the extent they provide any onsite services for seasonal workers such as transport or accommodation) have additional obligations and **must** have a [Seasonal Horticulture Workers COVIDSafe Plan](#) with specific attachments as determined by the Workplace Additional Industry Obligations Directions to continue operating.

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 ✓

Seasonal workers residing away from their metropolitan Melbourne residences

- ❑ Farm businesses/hosts and labour hire providers must require each seasonal worker who has been in metropolitan Melbourne in the previous 14 days to provide evidence of a negative COVID-19 test. The test must be dated no more than four days prior to commencement, otherwise they cannot work.
- ❑ Farm businesses/hosts and labour hire providers must record which seasonal workers have been in metropolitan Melbourne in the previous 14 days (seasonal workers must provide a written declaration as to whether or not they have been in metropolitan Melbourne in the previous 14 days).
- ❑ Farm businesses/hosts and labour hire providers must keep records of testing of seasonal workers for coronavirus (COVID-19) as specified under the additional industry obligations.
- ❑ If the worker cannot provide evidence of a negative test result, then they must not be allowed to work until they have had a test and it is negative (direct them to a testing site where they will be able to access asymptomatic testing)

Seasonal workers residing in metropolitan Melbourne but commuting daily for seasonal work (to either regional Victoria or within metropolitan Melbourne)

- ❑ Each seasonal worker must declare, if they have travelled from metropolitan Melbourne that day and the employer must keep a daily record of these declarations.
- ❑ Where seasonal workers commute daily from metropolitan Melbourne, each farm business/host must also carry out and keep written records of surveillance testing for coronavirus (COVID-19) of all of its seasonal workers 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.

Record keeping - attendance

- ❑ Farm businesses/hosts must keep a daily written record 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.

Facemasks at the work premises

Farm business/host ✓ Labour hire provider X

- ❑ You and supply face masks free of charge to workers employed must ensure face masks are worn at all times unless an exemption applies 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 use of personal protective equipment (such as face masks), 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.

Correct as of 26/10/20. Check the website for the latest information

For additional information on coronavirus (COVID-19), including infection prevention, cleaning and disinfecting guidance, visit: <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus>

* as determined by the Workplace (Additional Industry Obligations) Directions





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.

Other information is also available at to <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/managing-risk-coronavirus-covid-19-exposure-agriculture-industry>.

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](#).