



Resourcing Health & Education in the Sex Industry

A PROGRAM OF



August 2020

COVID-19 FACT SHEET

INFORMATION IF YOU CHOOSE TO DO SEX WORK

As of 6pm Sunday 2nd August, Metropolitan Melbourne has moved to Stage 4 restrictions.
As of 11:59pm on Wednesday 5th August all of Regional Victoria has moved to Stage 3 restrictions.
[Changes and additions to restrictions can be found here](#)

What does this mean for sex work?

Metropolitan Melbourne: all sex work is currently banned.

Regional Victoria: Outcalls and escort agencies are permitted.

The Victorian government has declared a state of emergency and given new powers to the Chief Health Officer. Police have power to fine people who do not follow these directions. We recognise that not everyone can economically afford to cease work during this time, but please be aware if you are living in Metropolitan Melbourne and are discovered to be breaching the stay at home rules, you may be fined.

We encourage workers to follow all recommendations from DHHS (dhhs.vic.gov.au/) and to reach out directly to RhED to talk about the changes to restrictions and how they affect the way you work directly.

[Links to assistance and support services during COVID-19](#)

Harm minimisation for sex working during COVID-19

1. Consider masks for both you and your client
2. Maintain the 1.5 metre physical distance rule until you have screened your client.

Screen your clients to check whether they have any symptoms (see further down for symptom reminder), or if they have been in contact with someone who has been identified with (or has a pending test result for) COVID-19. **If they answer “yes” to any of these questions, they should be immediately refused service.** If all answers are no, continue with your regular pre-booking health screenings.

* Please note that verbal and visual screening does not *eliminate* risk to yourself and others. It is important to remember that people can have the virus and pass it on without having any symptoms themselves. Consider an at home temperature checker to further screen clients.

3. Ensure you and your client both wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before touching any surfaces, conducting any health check screenings, or physical contact (use hand sanitiser with at least 60% alcohol if no soap and water available). Repeat this process at the end of the booking.
4. Try to choose sex positions that increase the distance between your face and your clients face. E.g. Doggy style, reverse cowgirl.
5. Avoid sharing cigarettes, make-up, razors, drinks or food.
6. Avoid sharing drug paraphernalia such as cash notes, straws, keys or pipes. Keep alcohol swabs and clean equipment before use.
7. Where possible, try to reduce handling cash. Wash your hands with soap before and after touching money (use hand sanitiser with at least 60% alcohol if no soap and water available).
8. Ensure your client thoroughly washes their hands and face at the beginning of the booking.
9. Avoid touching your own face and avoid letting clients touch your face, especially mouth, eyes and nose (as these are pathways for transmission).
10. Continue to conduct routine client health checks and use safer sex practices to prevent transmission of STIs.

**We know the virus that causes COVID-19 is transmitted during close contact.
If you're having sex with someone, you're going to be in close contact with them.
Sex is the very definition of close contact.**

COVID-19 SYMPTOM REMINDER

- fever
- flu-like symptoms such as coughing, sore throat and fatigue
- shortness of breath
- loss of smell or taste

If you suspect you have symptoms of COVID-19:

- you can conduct a self-assessment with this tool:
healthdirect.gov.au/symptom-checker/tool/basic-details.
- Call the Corona Virus information line: 1800 020 080
- Attend a testing site, check if the one you plan to attend is appropriate for your situation, eg do they test people without symptoms? You can find a testing site near you at:
<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/getting-tested-coronavirus-covid-19#where-to-get-tested>
- Seek medical attention if you have risk factors. It is best to call your GP before attending so they can advise you of precautions to take before you attend.
- Regular colds and flu are also present with these symptoms. If you feel unwell, you need to get a COVID test and follow medical advice.

HOW IS COVID-19 SPREAD?

COVID-19, like the flu, can be spread from person to person. When a person who has COVID-19 coughs, sneezes or talks, they may spread droplets containing the virus a short distance, which quickly settle on surrounding surfaces. You may get infected by the virus if you touch those surfaces or objects and then touch your mouth, nose or eyes.

That is why hand washing for 20 seconds with soap/sanitizing before and after touching your environment, especially money, other people's belongings and avoiding public spaces is essential to protecting you and the community.

CONTACTING RhED

RhED Hotline: 1800 458 752
Email: sexworker@sexworker.org.au

Text or call a support worker directly:
Alyx (Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri): 0416 242 577
Gabby (Wed, Thurs): 0403 099 477
Katie (Mon-Fri): 0459 988 804

You can also request a confidential one-on-one video call with a peer worker

We are available Monday-Friday, 9-5 so please don't hesitate to reach out to us for support, advice, referral or targeted information regarding the industry.

We remind you to try to focus on the things that are within your control and to stay safe.

Warmly, the team at RhED



A word from the World Health Organisation on COVID-19

"COVID-19 has and is likely to affect people from many countries, in many geographical locations. Do not attach it to any ethnicity or nationality. Be empathetic to all those who are affected, in and from any country. People who are affected by Covid-19 have not done anything wrong, and they deserve our support, compassion and kindness."

Information sourced from RhED peers and professionals, DHHS, Thorne Harbour Health