

COVID Update – July 17, 2021

Categories : [COVID19](#)

Date : 17 July, 2021



Dear Members

This week the lockdown in Greater Sydney was extended by a further 2-week period until at least Friday, 30 July 2021 and throughout the week a range of new restrictions have been introduced effecting Union members throughout NSW.

On Saturday morning at 11am the NSW Government announced a further 111 cases of community transmission and there seems to be an expectation that numbers will increase. The NSW Government announced a range of new restrictions including shutting down construction and retail and additional restrictions for members in specific locations. These new restrictions are on top of

those put in place during the week.

A public health order is yet to be made, but the following is based on the Government's media release and advice from Transport for NSW. We will update members as soon as more information comes to hand.

Restrictions for Local Government Areas - Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown, Liverpool

From midnight tonight if you live in the Local Government Areas (LGA) of Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown, or Liverpool then you cannot leave your LGA for work. You will also be required to wear a mask in outdoor areas.

If you are from the Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown or Liverpool LGAs and are rostered on, **Transport has advised that you should not go to work tomorrow**. Only emergency service workers (i.e. nurses, firefighters, police) are able to leave their respective LGAs. Make sure you call your manager and advise them if you are from an effected LGA.

We have sought confirmation from Transport for NSW (**TfNSW**) on what the pay arrangements will be for public sector workers. TfNSW have not given a definitive answer yet, but it is likely that you will receive special leave for that period.

Transport for NSW have instructed employers to support staff to comply with their obligations under the new and ever evolving rules. For private sector workers, pay arrangements will be dependent on your employer. The RTBU is pushing hard to make sure that members, whether they are employed by the public or private sector get paid and supported to comply with the health instructions.

Restrictions for the Greater Sydney Region

The new restrictions announced today do not impose any additional restrictions for members in Greater Sydney (outside of the Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown, or Liverpool LGA's) beyond the public health orders announced on Thursday.

The Public Health Order which included additional requirements for Covid-19 testing, when announced caused mass confusion regarding whom they apply, and when they apply. They created the new label of "Greater Sydney Worker" for some workers throughout the NSW and imposed a 7-day COVID testing obligation on those who leave the Greater Sydney Region in particular circumstances.

To put it as plainly as possible:

- If you live in the Greater Sydney Region and travel to a workplace that is more than 50km outside the region ([see map here](#)), you are a "Greater Sydney Worker" and the 7-day COVID test rule applies to you.
- If you live outside the Greater Sydney Region but travel into the region and stay in a hotel or other temporary accommodation (for example barracks) while you are here, you are a "Greater Sydney Worker" and the 7-day COVID test rule applies to you.
- If you live outside the Greater Sydney Region, travel into the region but **do not** stay here in temporary accommodation (for example you arrive, have a meal break, then leave), then the 7-day COVID test rule **does not** apply to you. (unless you are from the Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown or Liverpool LGA)
- If you live in Greater Sydney and are only required to work in Greater Sydney the testing requirements do not apply (unless you are from the Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown or Liverpool LGA)

As an essential "**Greater Sydney Worker**", when you arrive at work, you will be asked to sign a declaration that you have had a COVID test or provide any other sort of proof you may have.

If you are a **“Greater Sydney Worker”** and you show up for work without having a test because you could not make it to a testing clinic or for some other reason, you will be directed to go and get a test during your shift (on pay) and then return for the rest of your shift. You should notify your manager as soon as you can that you could not get a test, and you will not be allowed into the workplace until you do.

Importantly, you do not need to have received the results back from the COVID test before you attend work.

If you refuse to be tested, you will not be able to enter the workplace.

All private transport operators have been told that this is how things need to be done. However, already we've heard reports that some private operators are flouting the new arrangements and are not allowing people to attend work until they have received a negative test. **This is not correct and you should contact the union immediately if you are told to do this.**

Remember, stay safe in this difficult time. If the situation changes, we'll get information out as soon as we can.