



Information for Industry

ACT Government – Lockdown Guidance for the ACT Construction Sector 21 August 2021

The ACT Chief Health Officer has issued *Public Health (Lockdown Restrictions) Emergency Direction 2021 (No 4)* (the '**Direction**') which has extended the ACT's 'lockdown' until 5pm on Thursday 2 September 2021.

This document is designed to provide further guidance to the ACT building and construction sector on the effect of the Direction.

Background

Under the Direction, only essential business, activities or undertakings are permitted.

Essential services include:

- Urgent repair and maintenance services, including for example plumbing, electrical and heating repair.
- Urgent services necessary for the health and safety of any person or animal.

Essential workers include:

- A person who is working for an essential provider or business that is permitted to operate.
- A person who is critical to, and involved in, the ACT's COVID-19 response.
- Any person who provides or works in essential infrastructure and essential services required to maintain or protect the safety, health or welfare of the community or a section of the community (whether provided by a public or private undertaking), includes construction, maintenance and repair of such infrastructure.
- Any person who provides or works in urgent repair and maintenance services, including plumbing, electrical and heating repair.

- A person who is a Federal, State or Local Government worker determined to be essential by the relevant Head of the Government Agency.
- A person who performs work that is essential for the continued operation of emergency services, including state security or national security.
- Forestry industry and timber fabricators.

Guidance for the ACT Construction Sector

Construction Projects

1. Construction projects in the ACT are expected to stop during the continuing lockdown. The only exceptions to this are:
 - a. A very limited number of ACT Government projects and associated activities the ACT Government has determined to be essential, or which relate to the ACT Government's COVID-19 response.
 - b. A very limited number of Commonwealth Government projects which are determined to be essential by the relevant Head of the responsible Government agency. Any such projects should be notified to the ACT Government (through Major Projects Canberra) prior to re-commencement.
 - c. Other urgent or essential works which may be necessary for emergency or essential services from time to time in accordance with the Direction.
2. Construction sites must be kept safe and secure during the lockdown. In this respect:
 - a. It is acknowledged that 'keep-safe' activities may need to continue during the continuing lockdown. Only activities necessary to keep a shut-down site safe should occur during the lockdown. This may include, for example:
 - i. Works to ensure emergency access to property is possible;
 - ii. Concrete stressing and testing works following concrete poured prior to the lockdown;
 - iii. Crane (mobile and tower) inspections, including re-accreditation inspections.

- b. In keeping a site safe, attention should be made to:
 - i. Ensuring site fencing is appropriate and secure;
 - ii. Ensuring materials cannot blow off the site or otherwise be improperly accessed;
 - iii. Ensuring works or materials that need to be safely propped are done so;
 - iv. Ensuring 'fall from height' and trenching risks are appropriately made secure;
 - v. Ensuring any other site-specific hazards are addressed;
 - vi. Ensuring the risk of environmental spills are addressed;
 - vii. Covering, protecting or moving materials which, if exposed to the elements, would be unsafe;
 - viii. Ensure regulatory signage is installed and visible. This should include contact details for the site; and
 - ix. Ensuring all other actions normally undertaken to secure a site during a shutdown (such as during the Christmas shutdown) are undertaken and maintained in a safe manner.
- 3. It is acknowledged that minimal site attendance will be required during the lock-down to ensure the closed site remains safe and secure.
- 4. All people on site must wear a mask, must maintain physical distancing and appropriate hand hygiene measures, and must otherwise act in accordance with the Direction and the site's Covid-safe plan.

Freight and deliveries

- 5. Although transport, freight and logistics are essential services, deliveries should **not** occur at construction sites which are otherwise shut down.

Offsite fabrication and manufacturing

- 6. Offsite fabrication and manufacturing activities are not permitted, with the exception of:
 - a. Manufacturing, fabrication or assembly of goods and materials necessary for or related to supporting defence or security industries is deemed to be essential; and
 - b. Manufacturing, fabrication, assembly of goods and materials and equipment supply activities necessary to enable the very limited number of projects determined to be essential. Permitted plants will be informed on a case-by-case basis by ACT Government officials.

Union Right of Access

7. To the extent unions have a statutory right of access to a construction site, and provided union officials otherwise act in accordance with the Direction in force and the site's Covid-safe plan, union officials may continue to exercise their statutory site access rights during the current lockdown.

Cross-border movement of construction workers

8. All of NSW is now deemed a COVID-affected area.
9. **For NSW residents who work on ACT construction projects** - If you live in one of the following postcode areas, you can only enter the ACT for essential purposes (provided you have not been anywhere in NSW outside these regions in the past 14 days) *as defined by the ACT Government*:

Postcodes	Included cities, townships and areas
2581	Gunning, Collector
2582	Murrumbateman, Yass
2584	Binalong
2611	Uriarra
2618	Walleroo, areas along the ACT's north-western edge
2619	Jerrabomberra
2620	Queanbeyan, Googong, Karabar, Sutton, Gundaroo, Michelago
2621	Bungendore
2623	Captains Flat
2626	Bredbo

10. All other NSW residents are not permitted to enter the ACT without an exemption. Exemptions are not currently being granted for construction activities.
11. **For ACT residents who work on NSW construction projects** - Generally, ACT residents who work on NSW construction, repair or maintenance projects are required to undertake 14 days quarantine upon return to the ACT. The only exception to this quarantine requirement is where:
 - a. The ACT resident is working on a construction site within one of the postcode areas listed above; AND

- b. Where the NSW construction, repair or maintenance activities are for essential infrastructure and essential services required to maintain or protect the safety, health or welfare of the community or a section of the community (whether provided by a public or private undertaking) *in accordance with the ACT Health Direction.*

If a construction activity is permitted in NSW, this does not by itself mean it is an essential construction activity for which ACT residents are allowed to travel.

To be permitted to travel to a construction site in the Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council area, a project must have specifically been declared essential for the purposes of the ACT Direction in writing by either the Head of the relevant NSW Government Agency, the CEO of Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council or the ACT Government.

To be permitted to travel to a construction site outside the border postcodes listed above, you must first seek an exemption from ACT Health so advice around quarantine conditions for your return can be provided before you travel.

End.