



**Australian Government**

**Department of Health**

**Acting Chief Medical Officer**

Hon Scott Morrison MP  
Prime Minister of Australia  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister,

I am writing to provide you with advice on how the offices operated by Federal Members of Parliament and Senators (Parliamentarians) can continue to deliver essential services and to serve the Australian people in a COVIDsafe manner.

Adherence to the movement restrictions in place in Victoria is critical to supporting Victoria's efforts to suppress community transmission of COVID-19. I recognise, however, that the business of Parliament and work of Members of Parliament, along with their electorate staff, provide support to people to access important services, and these services are even more crucial during this challenging time.

Each Victorian office, whether an electorate only or a joint Ministerial–electorate office, would be required to operate under a COVIDsafe Plan to ensure the health and well-being of staff and those persons entering the premises.

To fulfil work health and safety requirements, essential workplaces should undertake a risk assessment and develop a management plan. This would include a review of all aspects of operations and the development of risk management strategies to protect the health of employees and the community from COVID-19.

The COVIDsafe Plan will be different for each office and suitable controls will be dependent on the risk assessment. Some controls that might be incorporated may include:

- ensuring that office doors are locked to the public;
- not conducting face-to-face meetings with constituents or other members of the public where digital alternatives are available;
- placing a cap on the number of people working in the office, based on the 4sqm rule and the 1.5m distance rule;
- reducing staff numbers to the minimum required to deliver the essential services;

- requiring staff to wear masks within the office in accordance with Victorian Government directions; and
- minimising the number and mixing of different staff working in the office.

I have included additional guidance on required components for COVIDsafe guidelines and protocols and links to further guidance from SafeWork Australia at Attachment A for dissemination to Parliamentarians operating offices in Victoria, although my advice applies to all Parliamentarians.

By following this advice, Parliamentarians and their staff who are unable to undertake particular tasks remotely can continue to fulfil their roles and the administration of their duties and provide ongoing support to constituents through phone and online services.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Kelly', written in a cursive style.

Professor Paul Kelly  
Acting Chief Medical Officer

7 August 2020