

Victorian Outdoor Dining Fact Sheet 10 November 2020



Background:

The Victorian Government has prioritized outdoor dining throughout the COVID-19 Re-Opening Roadmap as health advice has indicated that outdoor activity is much safer than indoor activity – as more and more businesses begin to open as the roadmap progresses, R&CA has developed the following factsheet for businesses seeking to access outdoor dining for the first time.

For City of Melbourne Businesses:

As COVID-19 restrictions ease, the City of Melbourne (CoM) is seeking to make it as easy as possible for businesses to welcome the community safely back to the cafes and restaurants.

Extended outdoor dining permits will make it easier for hospitality venues to expand their seating onto footpaths, car parking spaces and other areas.

Extending outdoor dining and entertaining will help hospitality businesses cater to more customers and operate viably within the health restrictions advised by the Victorian Government.

How will extended outdoor dining permits support businesses to reopen?

CoM will provide free, temporary extended outdoor dining permits for up to 12 months for eligible hospitality venues to:

- expand trading onto the footpath outside your premises or neighbouring premises
- expand trading using an on-street parking space immediately in front of your business and adjoining businesses
- join with neighbouring businesses to take over sections of on-street car parking, footpaths and (in some cases) street space
- join with neighbouring businesses to expand into a laneway adjacent to your business.

Which hospitality businesses are eligible for extended outdoor dining permits?

- Businesses with an existing outdoor trading permit can apply to extend their dining space.
- Businesses that don't trade outdoors can apply to do so.
- Neighbouring hospitality businesses can work together on an outdoor solution that suits their unique part of the city.

What criteria do I need to meet to apply for the permit?

The permits will be assessed against criteria including:

- Is your business a registered hospitality venue within the City of Melbourne?
- How will your venue be able to accommodate patron safety and physical distancing?

- Will the extension of outdoor trading still allow adequate access for pedestrians, residents and essential vehicles?
- How will you work to minimise impacts on local residents?
- Does your business have a COVIDSafe Plan?

Having this information ready when applying will help CoM assess your application as quickly as possible.

When and how can I apply for the permit?

- Applications are now open. Apply on the City of Melbourne website at melbourne.vic.gov.au/outdoordining, where a full list of resources and guidelines is available to help you with your application.
- Businesses can also contact the Business Concierge Service on 9658 9658 for information and support.
- We're working to fast-track the application process to make sure eligible businesses have their permits approved and are ready to trade outdoors from 26 October, or once all criteria in the Third Step of the Victorian Government's Roadmap to Reopening have been met.

What about liquor licensing?

- Businesses will need to apply for a liquor licence for their new outdoor trading area or apply to vary an existing licence for extended areas.
- CoM has worked with The Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation to ensure your extended outdoor dining permit from the City of Melbourne (once received) will help fast-track your liquor licence.
- [For more information about different temporary outdoor liquor licences click here.](#)

Will there be financial support to get my venue ready?

- Yes. We recently announced a partnership with the Victorian Government to create the \$100 million Central City Reactivation Fund. As part of our ongoing support for the business community, and in partnership with the Victorian Government, we're delivering grants of up to \$10,000 to help cover the cost of outdoor dining and support the safe reopening of our local businesses. Find out more and apply via melbourne.vic.gov.au/business.

Can I trade on nature strips or in parkland?

- We are investigating ways to approve trading in some parks and gardens where it might otherwise not be permitted.
- We are mindful of protecting our world-class parks and gardens to ensure they remain available for public recreation and will evaluate applications on a case-by-case basis.

There may be some areas that are not appropriate for extended outdoor trading because of safety and amenity conditions. Further information about our extended outdoor dining permits is available on our website at melbourne.vic.gov.au/outdoordining, along with eligibility criteria and the full guidelines for trading safely outdoors in the City of Melbourne.

Non-City of Melbourne Businesses:

Please note: each individual council area will have slightly different rules and guidelines for approving outdoor dining permits, check your local council website for full details.

Councils across Victoria are making it as easy as possible for traders to either start or expand their outdoor dining space, to support local hospitality businesses in the recovery from COVID-19.

This means that cafes and restaurants may be able to temporarily expand their dine-in option outside either along the footpath or another public open space following approval of the temporary permit and in consultation with Council, in order to maximise the number of customers that are able to dine-in.

A temporary outdoor dining permit is required for any of the following:

- To introduce or expand your dining area onto the footpath
- To take over on-street parking immediately outside your business
- To join with adjacent businesses to take over sections of footpaths, on-street car parking, laneways or another Council space.

To further support businesses, there is no cost for this temporary permit and councils often will fast-track the application process. To ensure you understand exactly what is required in terms of documentation and approvals you will need to check with your individual council. If you are unsure of what council area you are in you can find out here: <https://knowyourcouncil.vic.gov.au/councils>

How does Outdoor Dining interact with my liquor license?

- An outdoor dining permit only deals with food and non-alcoholic beverages that are then consumed outside. Venues who also wish to extend their liquor licence will need to apply for a separate temporary liquor licence.
- [For more information about different temporary outdoor liquor licences click here.](#)

Is there any monetary support available to help me set up outside?

- Yes. The \$58 million Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Package business grants help businesses adapt their operations to outdoor dining. Grants are available to licensed and unlicensed hospitality businesses, including restaurants, cafes, bars and takeaway food venues.
- Eligible businesses can apply for a grant of \$5,000. Funds can be used to pay for practical things like umbrellas, outdoor furniture, screens and other equipment.
- Applications will remain open until funds are exhausted or until 11.59pm on 11 December 2020, whichever is earlier.
- [For more information about this grant fund please click here.](#)