



Stay Safe, Stay Open: the plan for Victoria's public land and waterways this summer

Helping Victoria to stay safe and stay open: a summary of the *Public Safety on Public Land and Waterways COVIDSafe Summer Plan*.

This summer the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic creates new challenges to keeping everyone safe. As well, many of the usual seasonal risks, for example from bushfires, floods, drownings and traffic hazards, will increase with more people visiting public land and waterways, and the pandemic changes the way we manage and respond to the risks and emergencies.

The Summer Plan was developed to facilitate COVIDSafe community use of public land, waterways and public spaces throughout Victoria during the 2020-21 summer.

Key points:

- Visitation at Victoria's outdoor areas will increase significantly over summer 2020-21.
- Victorians are encouraged to get outdoors but must do so safely.
- Planning and preparations are underway to help create a COVIDSafe summer.
- Land and waterway managers are responsible for implementing the Summer Plan and making decisions about the specific public spaces, settings and circumstances they are responsible for.
- All Victorians have a responsibility to be COVIDSafe.
- Enquiries regarding the Summer Plan, the Guide, or public land management for a COVIDSafe summer can be emailed to Public.Land.Policy@delwp.vic.gov.au.

Up-to-date information about coronavirus (COVID-19) can be found at the [central Victorian Government resource website](#) and the [COVIDSafe Summer](#)

Summer 2020-21

Outdoor public areas play an important role in helping to rebuild the wellbeing of all Victorians after a difficult year.

Summer is always a busy time on public land and waterways, but this season we expect record numbers of visitors to our parks, forests, beaches and waterways because of the long period of restrictions during 2020 and the inability to travel overseas.

We know that the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) transmission is lower outdoors and we want everyone to get outside and enjoy these areas throughout Victoria. But we need them to do it safely.

What is the Summer Plan?

The Victorian Government developed the *Public Safety on Public Land and Waterways Summer Plan* to support COVIDSafe community use of these areas.

The Summer Plan was developed by a taskforce of Victorian Government agencies, local government, public land and waterways managers and other organisations supporting the safe management of these areas. These organisations were invited to take part because of their expertise in managing public areas, public health, water and marine safety, boating, fishing, tourism, sport, recreation, fire and emergency preparedness and response, and enforcement/compliance.

The Summer Plan applies to all areas of public land, waterways and public spaces in Victoria:

- national and state parks and reserves
- state forests
- local council parks and reserves
- beaches along Victoria's coastline
- public land managed by committees of management including coastal foreshore reserves
- inland lakes and waterways and Crown land river frontages
- public land managed under delegation by other authorities such as water corporations and local government authorities
- public land that is part of Victoria's alpine resorts
- public piers, jetties, boat ramps and mooring fields.

The Summer Plan does not apply to commercial ports, such as the Port of Melbourne, and commercial fishing operations for food supplies (where their own regulatory framework and compliance requirements apply). It also does not apply to private land, waterways and associated infrastructure.

What is the purpose of the Summer Plan?

The Summer Plan supports COVIDSafe community use of public land, waterways and public spaces throughout Victoria during the 2020-21 summer. It provides information and guidance to help land and waterway managers make consistent and coordinated decisions about specific public spaces, settings and circumstances they are responsible for. This will enable visitors to enjoy outdoor areas in a COVIDSafe way.

It's important to remember that *everyone* has a role to play to support COVIDSafe community use of public land, waterways and public spaces, and everyone benefits when the Summer Plan is implemented.

The Summer Plan aims to:

- contribute to Victoria's response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic
- support managers of these areas to reduce the risk of coronavirus transmission
- facilitate consistent, coordinated and collaborative management of access to public land and waterways
- guide effective public information and communications about use of public land and waterways over summer, including timely and accessible information.

The Summer Plan supports existing arrangements to prepare for and manage the usual seasonal risks in these areas and any emergencies that arise over summer.



Objectives of the Summer Plan

- **Management of public land, waterways and public space is consistent with directions from the Chief Health Officer.** These areas are COVIDSafe and contribute to the wellbeing of the Victorian community.
- **Roles and responsibilities are described clearly** for all public land, waterway and public space managers and organisations involved in supporting management of these areas.
- **COVIDSafe preparation and response on public land and waterways is coordinated and consistent** for similar areas.
- **Information is consistent**, regardless of land tenure, so that the community receives clear and consistent information and messages to support community safety.
- **Community warnings and messages** help individuals to take responsibility for their own safety.
- **Operational plans are developed** by public land and waterway managers to facilitate and support coordination and collaboration.
- A clear approach is in place for **making decisions and escalating issues** when needed.
- **Resources** support public land and waterway managers to operate in a COVIDSafe way.
- COVIDSafe management of public land and waterways is **integrated with emergency preparedness and response**.

What does the Summer Plan do?

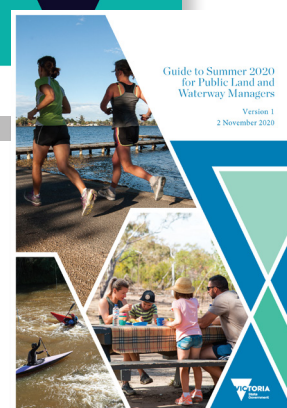
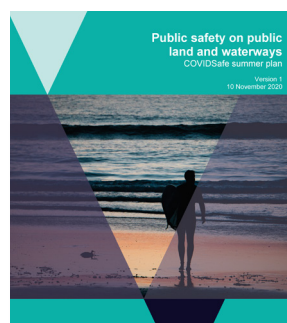
Information in the Summer Plan helps land and waterway managers to:

- make decisions about specific public spaces, settings and circumstances which they are responsible for and which are consistent with a Victoria-wide approach
- implement measures that will enable visitors to enjoy outdoor areas in a COVIDSafe way.

Specific information in the Summer Plan:

- describes the roles and responsibilities of those organisations and individuals involved in land and waterways management so everyone has a clear understanding
- supports better coordination of COVIDSafe activities and decisions across Victoria which help reduce confusion, ensure a consistent approach and improve outcomes for everyone
- helps improve the way risks are managed and responded to
- ensures consistent information regardless of land tenure
- provides resources and support for public land and waterway managers.

The Summer Plan is supported by the *Guide to Summer 2020-21 for Public Land and Waterway Managers*, which provides detailed and practical guidance on how to create COVIDSafe public spaces.



For further information about the Summer Plan contact Public.Land.Policy@delwp.vic.gov.au.

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