

## COVID-19: ACT Advice 12 August 2021

This factsheet is to provide information and help you understand your rights and obligations relating to COVID-19 and the public health directions in the ACT. **It was updated on 12 August 2021 following the announcement of the lockdown.**

### Powers of the Chief Health Officer

A Public Health Emergency has been declared in the ACT and the Chief Medical Officer has made several Emergency Directions that apply **to all ACT residents** and significantly changes our day to day activities.

### What happens if I don't comply with a direction?

If a person fails to comply with a direction, a police officer, or other authorised persons (eg: ambulance officer), can direct a person to do such things to comply with the direction, and can use reasonable force and assistance as is necessary to enforce compliance with the direction. This can include requesting a person produce proof of identification.

A person commits a criminal offence if they fail to comply with a direction. This offence is punishable by a fine up to \$8,000.

### What if I am diagnosed with COVID-19?

If you are not at home at the time you receive this information, you must **immediately** travel home, or to a place where you can self isolate, and remain there until you have been cleared by the authorised medical officer. You must not stop off at a shop to obtain supplies for the self isolation period. You must tell people who may come into contact with you following your diagnosis, eg: other members of your household. You must not leave your house except to obtain medical care or an emergency situation. You must not allow any other person to enter your house unless they ordinarily live there or for medical or emergency purposes.

### I am in self-isolation. What does that mean?

If you are in self-isolation, you must not go out in public for 14 days. You can still go out into your garden. If you live in a residential complex and there is an outdoor area, you may go outside where it is possible to avoid close contact with others but you should wear a mask to minimise the risk of infecting others. You must not attend work if you are self isolating. For up-to-date information on when you should self-isolate, see the Australian Government Department of Health [information page](#).

### Can I leave my home?

There are 5 reasons why you are allowed to leave the house as of 5pm Thursday 12 August 2021.

1. To shop for essentials like medical supplies and groceries;
2. To get essential health care including being tested for COVID-19 or to get the vaccination;
3. To exercise outdoors in your region for no more than 1 hour per day with 1 other person, or the people in your household
4. To provide essential caregiving services
5. To undertake essential work

If you are 12 years old or older, you need to wear a face mask when outside your home.

### Can I invite people over to my house?

No more than 2 people can come over but only if for an approved reason such as to provide caregiving services or for compassionate purposes.

Intimate partners are allowed to visit. People who live alone can identify one other household they can visit or receive visits from.

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### Can I go out in public with more than 2 people who are not my family?

No. You can leave your home for a permitted reason with 1 other person or more than 2 people if all from the same household.

### Can I hold an event outdoors?

No, not during the lock down starting 5.00pm Thursday 12 August 2021.

### What does COVID-19 mean for my parenting arrangement?

The expectation of the courts is that parents will continue to comply with existing parenting orders, where possible. Leaving your home to fulfil a parenting arrangement is considered a reasonable excuse for going outside, unless you are self isolating.

If a change in circumstances means you can no longer comply with a specific term of your arrangement e.g. a 'pick-up' arrangement at a school that is now closed, communicate with your ex-partner to find an alternative way of fulfilling the parenting obligations.

### I have a court date during the lockdown period, can I leave the house?

Yes, fulfilling legal obligations is a reason to leave the house. However, check with the court if you are still required to attend in person.

### I was staying with a friend in the ACT when lockdown was announced, can I leave their place to return home?

Yes, returning to your principal place of residence is a reason to leave the house.

### More information

More information can be found at the Australian Government Department of Health [COVID-19 health alert page](#). For information specific to the ACT, information can also be found at the ACT Health directorate [COVID-19 page](#). There is also an ACT-specific helpline at: (02) 6207 7244 8am-8pm

If you have need assistance with a legal issue, please call our Helpline on: 1300 354 314. Our Helpline staff can provide you legal advice and information on a range of matters.

*This factsheet was reviewed on 1 September 2021.*