

City of Ballarat's Update on COVID-19

The COVID-19 emergency is an unprecedented event in recent history. To protect the health of residents and staff, the City of Ballarat has instigated its Response and Recovery Pandemic 2020 Plan for its staff, ratepayers, residents and the broader community.

Evidence from around the world has shown that pre-emptive measures are extremely effective in containing the spread of the disease.

NOTE: This is an extremely fluid situation and events are changing daily.

All information listed below is correct as at 3.30pm, Tuesday 24 March but is subject to change. Please keep up-to-date by visiting ballarat.vic.gov.au

The City of Ballarat has a key role to play in all emergency management situations affecting the municipality.

The City of Ballarat's primary focus for the next six months is to ensure that we have the best chance of avoiding the major impacts of COVID-19.

Message to all City of Ballarat staff from CEO Justine Linley

Overnight hundreds of people in Ballarat have lost their jobs. With many cafes, pubs, restaurants, gyms and other venues closing indefinitely.

Not since the Great Depression has this community faced the economic prospects ahead of us. We expect that many members of our community will not be able to afford to meet their commitments, including paying their rates which we, as a local government, rely on.

As an organisation it will take us 10 years to return to the strong financial position we were in at the start of 2020. In just three months this will have been wiped out as we look at ways to maintain sufficient cashflow to keep our essential services going. Services that keep much of this city operating and provide for the most marginalised and vulnerable people in the state.

Yesterday, City of Ballarat staff were asked to start working from home. This was to keep them safe, to keep their colleagues safe, to keep their loved ones safe, to keep the community safe.

We want to prevent this virus from causing our local health system from crippling under the weight of a pandemic. If we flatten the curve, we will get through this together.

As CEO, I have approved special leave for the remainder of this week until Sunday as tougher lock-down measures loom Australia wide. From next week, I have asked, not instructed, a small section of our staff to consider taking leave if they are not able to continue to work from home or be redeployed to essential services, such as Meals on Wheels or waste collection.

I don't think it is fair for the ratepayers and community members who have had to close their businesses, already lost their jobs and entitlements or who have joined the long lines at Centrelink to still pay their rates only for our staff to stay away and not work, when there is no work to do.

I am asking, not instructing, my staff to do something I never thought I would have to. But we are in times we never thought we would see. We must all take this pandemic seriously and work together as a community to flatten the curve and flatten it now.

Justine Linley
City of Ballarat CEO

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Council Waste Services Update

Ballarat residents are being assured that they still have access to Waste Services following the City of Ballarat's decision to activate its Recovery Pandemic 2020 Plan in the wake of COVID-19.

However, the COVID-19 situation is fluid, and Waste Services are subject to any further restrictions imposed by State and Federal Governments.

Kerbside Collection

All three kerbside collection bin services will continue to the existing service schedule. Please note usual waste collection times may differ, so Council is asking everyone to be patient.

To report a missed bin, contact the City of Ballarat service centre on 5320 5500. As many people will be in self-isolation at home it's critical that bins are correctly placed on the kerbside. For more information visit: ballarat.vic.gov.au

Street Cleaning

Street sweeping and sanitation of Public Place Bins will continue as normal to maintain the health and safety of these high-use public assets.

Ballarat Transfer Station

Ballarat Transfer Station will remain open on weekdays (8am – 4pm) and weekends (10am – 4pm), but with some important changes. The Transfer Station is currently only accepting vouchers from residents and card-based payment. No cash, accounts or rainchecks. Traffic management practices may change throughout the day to manage peaks in visitation. Please remain patient and pay attention to onsite staff at all times.

Ballarat Regional Landfill

Ballarat Regional Landfill will remain open on weekdays (7:30am - 4pm) and Saturdays (9am to 2pm). Closed on Sunday. It is open to all licensed material types including Commercial & Industrial (C&I), Construction & Demolition (C&D) and Category C Prescribed Industrial Waste (PIW Cat C). For PIW Cat C the standard procedure of pre-approval by City of Ballarat continues to apply.

Pass on Glass Drop-off Sites

Pass on Glass drop-off sites will remain in operation. We ask residents not to place glass in their yellow-lidded recycle bins but continue to access the Pass on Glass drop-off sites.

Council Road Management Plan

The City of Ballarat will suspend all intervention response time frames of the Road Management Plan.

This frequency of inspections conducted on the road and footpath network as well as the time frames for repairing identified defects is currently suspended.

City of Ballarat staff will continue to respond to incidents and hazards reported and the Rapid Response crew will triage these on a risk basis.

Permits and Bookings

The City of Ballarat will not be providing permits or booking approvals for the use of Council sports grounds, parks or other facilities for any formalised gatherings of people for exercise or other activities.