Department of Education and Training

Higher Education and Skills

**Participation, Inclusion and Regional Engagement Branch Memo**

**TO:** Learn Local providers, ACFE Board, ACFE Regional Councils, adult education institutions, peak bodies, key stakeholders, PIRE Branch staff

**FROM:** Ryan Collins, Director–Participation, Inclusion and Regional Engagement Branch

**DATE:** 23/03/2020

**SUBJECT: Business Continuity in pre-accredited provision and COVID-19**

**Actions / Critical Dates:**

* Learn Local providers are advised that the release of the second 2020 pre-accredited milestone payment will occur in April as scheduled, regardless of current reported delivery against the milestone target.
* No further action is required by your organisation for this to occur.

**Business Continuity in Learn Local provision and COVID-19**

Over the weekend, the Australian and Victorian Governments announced additional measures to slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) to protect Australians.

This included the [shutdown of non-essential services](https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/202003/Directions-Non-Essential-Business-Closure.pdf) across Victoria. It does not include the closures of TAFEs, Learn Locals or other training organisations.

The ACFE Board acknowledges the range of challenges currently faced by Learn Local providers as a result of COVID-19 and of the complex nature of each of your organisations.

The ACFE Board’s concern for Learn Local providers and their pre-accredited learners has resulted in the following decisions to support business continuity, provide some measure of funding assurance and to allow you to focus on your organisation and the services you provide:

1. Release of the second pre-accredited milestone payment, scheduled for release from 15 April 2020, to all Learn Local providers with a 2020 pre-accredited contract regardless of reported delivery against the milestone target at this stage.
2. Assurance to Learn Local providers that due consideration of the impact of COVID-19 on pre-accredited delivery against targets will be given in reconciling delivery against 2020 contract targets.
3. Acknowledgement of the increased use of take-home packs, online and other non-face to face delivery methods, as a valid approach to support continuity of provision of pre-accredited training where there is existing capability and capacity.

Where possible, within the strict social distancing requirements, classroom-based pre-accredited training can continue.

As independent organisations, Learn Local providers may exercise your own judgment in continuing pre-accredited training based upon the capacity and capability of your organisation to do so. You will otherwise be contacted directly if there is any prospect that your organisation should close, at the direction of appropriate authorities, either as a stand-alone closure or as part of a local or area-based closure.

The Department will continue to keep Learn Local providers updated on the potential implications of COVID-19 for training organisations.

For further information regarding the specific actions associated with this advice, please contact your relevant Regional Manager in the first instance:

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| **North Western Victoria Region** | **North Eastern Victoria Region** | **South Eastern Victoria Region** | **South Western Victoria Region** |
| Kaye CallaghanTel: 4433 7582 | Julie HebertTel: 7022 1802 | Robyn DownieTel: 8904 2580 | Georgina RyderTel: 5215 5204 |

**More Information**

Learn Local providers should continue to refer to the [Department of Education and Training’s coronavirus (COVID-19) web page](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/department/Pages/coronavirus.aspx) for the most up-to-date information.

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has provided [advice and tips on following social distancing](https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-covid-19-transmission-reduction-measures) in the classroom and workplace.

These tips include:

* no non-essential gatherings of more than 100 people
* 4 square meters provided per person in an enclosed space in a room
* keeping 1.5 metres distance between yourself and other people where possible
* avoiding crowds and mass gatherings
* avoiding small gatherings in enclosed spaces.