

20 April 2022

BUSINESS CELEBRATES CHANGING CLOSE CONTACT RESTRICTIONS

This morning's announcement by the NSW Government that workers who are a household close contact of someone that has Covid-19 has alternative options to self-isolation for seven days is very welcome news and cause for celebration for many businesses in the Illawarra.

On the back of calls from Business NSW in recent days, the government has agreed that from 6pm on Friday 22 April, if workers comply with other NSW Health guidelines, including testing negative to daily Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs) and feeling well before they go out in public then they are permitted to attend work and perform the duties of their job.

It will remain a requirement for workers to notify their employer they are a close contact and to wear a face mask in indoor settings outside of the home. There are no changes for those that record a positive RAT or PCR test with the current seven-day isolation requirement also remaining.

"With the ready availability of RATs and with a high level of responsibility and education at an individual level in our community, we are ready for this restriction being lifted in our region," said Business Illawarra Policy Manager Ken Whitton.

"This alternative to close contact quarantining marks another significant milestone in the Covid economic recovery and has come at a critical time for many local businesses that have struggled meeting customer demand due to their own staff shortages and downstream impacts on supply chains that these restrictions are causing."

"Some of our members have reported daily staff absences up to as high as 25 per cent due to lingering Covid restrictions continuing to apply to them, so we welcome this as another big step back to normality."

"The community now expects service standards to be back to pre-Covid levels and local businesses need this relief to take full advantage of our booming economy."

"Business Illawarra will continue to work with the government to progress additional lifting of restrictions to enhance business operations further when the time is right for the community," said Mr Whitton.

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About Business Illawarra

Formerly the Illawarra Business Chamber, *Business Illawarra* is the region's peak business organisation; a not-for-profit advocacy group dedicated to the economic development of the Illawarra.