

## NECA MEMBER COVID-19 UPDATE

### LATEST FEDERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### 1. AUSTRALIAN SMALL BUSINESS AND FAMILY ENTERPRISE OMBUDSMAN – MY BUSINESS HEALTH PORTAL – COVID-19

The Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman 'My Business Health' web portal now features a dedicated section for small business owners struggling with the COVID-19 crisis.

The portal includes the latest information on Government support measures, as well as assistance with employer obligations, finances, available government payments, loans and tax. The portal also provides a number of resources by leading mental health organisations such as Beyond Blue, Lifeline and Everymind that deal with the impact of COVID-19.

More information:

<https://www.asbfeo.gov.au/my-business-health/categories/covid-19>

#### 2. BUNNINGS INTRODUCES TEMPORARY PURCHASE LIMITS FOR HIGH PRODUCTS AND AN EXCLUSIVE TRADIE PERIOD

Bunnings has introduced temporary purchase limits for high demand products. From 26 March 2020, Bunnings will limit the quantity per customer per transaction for the following:

- Maximum four items per customer:
  - Cleaning products
  - Storage products
  - Garden sprayers
  - Household batteries
- Maximum one item per customer:
  - Generators
  - Gas bottles
  - Respirators/ face masks
  - Fuel cans o Methylated spirits
  - Turpentine

From 30 March 2020, Bunnings stores will open exclusively for trade customers, health and emergency services workers before 9am on weekdays.

Bunnings hopes this move will help health and emergency services workers get what they need but also enable tradies to keep their businesses running and get the items they need to help with vital maintenance and repair projects.

Bunnings stores will also close at 7pm on weekdays to enable team members to re-stock shelves and conduct a thorough clean of the store.

### **3. AUSTRALIAN APPRENTICESHIPS INCENTIVES PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

The Australian Apprenticeships Incentives Program Guidelines (Guidelines) has been released containing provisions to support small businesses to retain apprentices and trainees, as well as support for employers to reengage apprentices and trainees where a small business is not able to retain them.

Part H of the Guidelines reimburses 50 per cent of the Australian Apprentice's gross wage, over the nine month period 1 January 2020 to 30 September 2020. Employers will be reimbursed up to a maximum of \$7,000 per quarter, per eligible Australian Apprentice. It also outlines the eligibility criteria.

The Guideline will come into effect from 2 April 2020.

Further information:

<https://docs-jobs.govcms.gov.au/documents/australian-apprenticeships-incentives-program-guidelines>

### **4. NATIONAL STIMULUS PACKAGE**

The Federal Government is closely monitoring the effects of the recently announced measures with the possibility of a third round of support measures, possibly focussing on small and medium-sized business, as well as welfare measures to help those who lose their job.

## **LATEST STATE AND TERRITORY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Contact your local NECA Chapter website for regular updates.