

VPS Suburban Hubs

Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

As at 13 July 2022

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What are Suburban Hubs?

Suburban Hubs are office spaces outside of the Melbourne CBD, where Victorian Public Servants (VPS) can go to do focused work, network, and hold team meetings and workshops. They are part of the VPS's flexible working arrangements – allowing employees to work from a combination of home, Hub, and primary workplace.

Where are the Suburban Hubs located?

Hubs are open **Monday to Friday from 7:00am to 7:00pm** in these locations:

[Footscray – Level 10, 1 McNab Avenue \(State Trustees Building\)](#)

[Dandenong - Level 5, 14 Mason Street](#)

[Essendon Fields - Ground, 37 Vaughan Street \(Armaguard Building\)](#)

[Mulgrave - Level 2, 5 Nexus Court](#)

[Williams Landing - Level 4, 2 Kendall Street \(Target Building\)](#)

Is going to a Suburban Hub considered “a day in the office” as part of the three-day default guidance note?

Yes, Hubs are included in the three-day default as part of the [Flexible Work Policy](#). This means you can work from a Hub, however Hubs must not:

- be used at the complete exclusion of the primary office attendance; or
- compromise team or operational requirements for face-to-face interactions.

What's the difference between working from a Hub and a primary office?

Hubs are hybrid working spaces, set up as an office environment, with dual monitors, offices, meetings rooms, and WoVG wi-fi. Hubs offer social connection and networking with employees from across the VPS. Hubs are not intended to replace the primary office.

Will Suburban Hubs replace primary office locations e.g., CBD?

No. Suburban Hubs are workspaces in addition to home and primary office locations. Hubs play a key role in supporting flexible working arrangements for the VPS, they are not intended to be used as your full-time place of work.

Can I attend more than one Hub?

Yes, you can attend more than one Hub. Employees are encouraged to use the Hub nearest to their home or most convenient to them.

COVID-19 Safety

Do I need to wear a mask?

You are **strongly encouraged** to wear a mask inside the Hub, especially if you can't physically distance from others, although you are not required to. Always carry a mask.

Do I need to be vaccinated to attend a Hub?

Hubs are open to vaccinated employees and those with a medical exemption. Users are required to upload their vaccination status to their department's designated system **prior to** booking and attending a Hub.

What COVID-safe practices have been implemented to help keep me safe?

Each Hub has a COVIDSafe plan and is maintained in line with public health orders. The COVID safe plan sets out safe workplace practices including cleaning, safe hygiene practices, physical distancing etc.

What do I need to do at the Hub to keep myself and others safe?

You are also responsible for taking reasonable care for your health and safety in the workplace, including:

- Booking a desk using our online desk booking system (Engage)
- Maintaining appropriate physical distancing of 1.5m, wherever possible
- Keeping a mask with you and wear it in indoor settings and in crowded areas
- Cleaning your workstation, office, and equipment with the provided antibacterial wipes before and after use
- Adhering to the clean and clear desk policy
- Practising good hygiene e.g., washing of hands, using hand sanitiser
- Taking reasonable care for your health and safety in the workplace. You must also take reasonable care for the health and safety of others who may be affected by what you do or don't do.
- Cooperating with customer service representatives (CSRs) about any action they take to comply with COVIDSafe requirements or other occupational health and safety laws or regulations. For example, use equipment properly, follow safe work policies and procedures and attend training.
- Not intentionally or recklessly interfering with or misusing anything at the Hub.
- Staying home if you are feeling unwell or ill.

Do the Hubs have appropriate ventilation?

Our workplace HVAC systems have been kept operational, even throughout the 2021 lockdowns. This means that systems have been proactively monitored, maintained and / or cleaned. In addition, the VPS' Shared Service Provider (SSP) are reviewing buildings across its portfolio, using available information on the ongoing maintenance of HVAC systems and specific elements such as air flow rate, purge cycles and filter changes. SSP have an ongoing commitment to best practice and ensuring our workplaces have appropriate ventilation.

Reporting a positive COVID-19 test result

Do I have to disclose a positive COVID-19 test result to my employer?

If you have tested positive, you must tell your department and the Hubs if you worked onsite while infectious. Your infectious period started two days before you noticed

symptoms. You should also follow the steps in this [checklist](#) provided by Department of Health.

If I report a positive COVID-19 result, will it be disclosed to my work colleagues?

Your department will work to identify any workplace contacts (this may include working with you to identify colleagues who may have been in contact with) and will contact those individuals. They will not disclose your identity to those workplace contacts.

Who is responsible for letting me know if I am a workplace contact?

Your department will inform you if you are a workplace contact.

Who is eligible to use the Suburban Hubs?

Who can access Suburban Hubs?

Suburban Hubs are available to VPS office-based workers. To confirm your eligibility please click [here](#).

Will Suburban Hubs be extended to Victorian government entities (e.g., the sector)?

At this stage, Suburban Hubs are available to eligible VPS staff. We are currently trialling access of the Hubs to a couple public sector organisations to test the viability of attending Hubs with results to inform whether the scope of the trial evolves to include other sector agencies and entities.

How do I apply/book a desk?

How can I apply to work from a Hub?

Prior to accessing a Hub, you will need to complete an [Expression of Interest \(EOI\) form](#) and get approval from your manager, as part of your flexible working arrangements. You'll then be registered as a user and be able to book a desk.

How to book a desk

Desk and meeting room bookings are made through our online desk booking tool "Engage" and is accessible via a mobile app and web browser to download.

What's available at the Hubs?

What's available at the Hubs? Is there car parking or public transport available nearby?

Please refer to "Hubs at a glance" at the end of this document.

What accessibility options are available at the Hubs?

Hubs are comfortable and accessible workspaces suitable for a large and diverse group of VPS staff. If you require any adjustments, please contact the Suburban Hubs project team at suburbanHubs@dpc.vic.gov.au to discuss and implement adjustments.

What do I need to bring?

You'll need to bring the following equipment to the Hub:

- Laptop/tablet and charger
- Mouse and keyboard
- Headphones
- Mobile phone

Workstations are equipped with docking stations or connector cables to enable you to connect your device to a monitor. **Printers, photocopiers, and landlines are so 2019** (you won't find any of them at the Hub).

How to access the Hub

Access is permitted via a desk or meeting room booking and must be booked in advance. Once you have a booking, access into the Hub varies depending on which Hub you attend.

Can I have meetings with external people at a Hub?

No. Contractors, consultants, visitors, or any person conducting private or non-Government business are not permitted into the Hub unless it is essential.

Questions for managers

Can Suburban Hubs be used by my staff members as their primary office?

No, the Hubs are not intended to be used as a staff member's primary office. Since the Hubs have opened, users have reported working from Hubs on average two days per week either on a regular or casual basis. [Click here to learn more about real-life Hub user stories.](#)

How can a Hub be used by me and my team?

Hubs are great for individual desk work and 2-3 persons, meetings where possible and whilst maintaining physical distancing. The Hubs trial is expanding and will soon be used for collaboration purposes and larger team meetings.

As a manager, what processes can I put in place to ensure my team members are delivering on work outcomes while working from a Hub?

You should be talking to your team members regularly about outcomes and deliverables expected of them, whether they are working from the primary office, home, or Hubs, or a combination of all three. As a guide, talk to your team members about how they can structure their time. This might include completing some work during a morning or



afternoon session at the Hub, then finalising work either back in the office or during adjusted start and finish times at home to allow for other commitments. This should be an ongoing conversation over time, as work and personal commitments or circumstances change.

My staff member wants to use the Suburban Hubs, but I want them to work from the primary office. What can I do?

Managers are required to carefully consider all flexible work requests, including requests to work from a Hub, and to consider an employee's suitability in relation to their job role, operational needs, and individual circumstances. Where used in combination with working in other locations (home, office), Hubs can add flexibility to support employees to manage their work and commitments. If you've not been to a Hub yourself, it might be worth attending to see what advantages they can offer.

We encourage managers to support staff members' flexible working needs which may include using a Hub, subject to team and operational requirements. Some of the reasons why a staff member may want to work from a Hub include, but are not limited to:

- employee health and safety, including existing reasonable adjustments
- working closer to home
- accessing greater flexibility to tend to caring responsibilities
- undertaking focused work (away from home or primary office distractions)
- networking and interacting with other local people from across the VPS.

It is recommended that you talk to your staff member about their preferences and any team or operational requirements requiring attendance at the primary place of work. There may be circumstances where an agreement cannot be reached with a staff member on their flexible working arrangements. In this event, please contact your People and Culture Business Partner to assist you.

My staff member has requested to use a Suburban Hub to avoid conflict with another employee in their primary office. How should I respond?

In the first instance you should speak to each team member and attempt to resolve the issues before exploring next steps.

You may seek advice from your People and Culture Business Partner to assist you with facilitating this conversation. If the problem cannot be satisfactorily solved and your team member's health and wellbeing is at risk, speak to your manager to consider what would work best for the team and individual team members.

Working from a Hub should not be considered a long-term solution or alternative to managing and resolving team difficulties or interpersonal differences.

My staff member has requested to work from a Hub. How can I ensure they are supported to perform their role whilst working from the Hub?

Health and safety including existing reasonable adjustments must be considered when supporting employees to perform their role¹. When discussing individual working arrangements, including from a Hub, Managers are to discuss with their employees and confirm whether there are any supports required to perform their job.

If a reasonable adjustment is needed to work from a Hub, the employee and/or manager (if nominated by the employee) can contact the Suburban Hubs project team at suburbanHubs@dpc.vic.gov.au to request any required adjustments. Some of these may include storage areas (lockers), adjustable desks and chairs.

Adjustments may change over time and with different workplaces, such as a Hub. This should be considered when discussing individual working arrangements with employees.

How do I know that the Hub will be safe and secure for my staff member? Going to a new or unfamiliar workplace can be daunting, especially for the first time.

Customer service representatives (CSRs) are available between 7am-7pm to manage booking enquiries, maintain COVID-safe practices and help with your set up. Supports can be accessed by users before attending the Hub for the first time. Staff can do walk-throughs (whether virtual or in person) to familiarise themselves with the configuration of a Hub, amenities, and access. There are virtual walk-throughs of the Footscray, Williams Landing, Mulgrave and Dandenong sites available from the Innovation network here: [Welcome to the VPS Suburban Hubs! | Innovation Network](#)

What is my role assessing an employee's request to work from a Hub?

When considering an employee's EOI, managers should have an open discussion with the employee about the type of work undertaken and the suitability of the employee to work from a Hub. Managers should also consider the following as part of the prioritisation process:

- Health, wellbeing, and safety of staff
- Operational needs
- Individual preferences

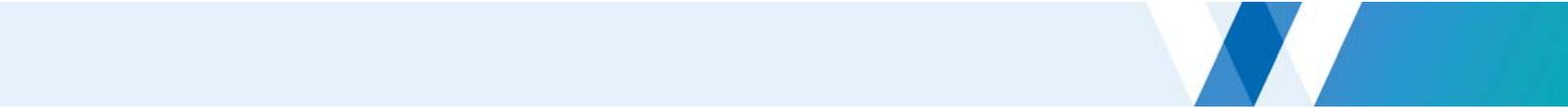
Is there a cost to work at the Hubs?

There is no cost to work at a Hub until the conclusion of the trial on 30 June 2023.

I haven't been to a Hub how can I recommend them to my staff?

The Hubs are committed to meeting the working needs of a large and diverse group of VPS staff, with improvements in processes, equipment and technology regularly

¹ [Equal Opportunity Act 2010](#) and [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#) and VPS Flexible Working Policy



implemented. Onsite support staff including the Customer Service Representatives, Hub Hosts and the Digital Tech Bar are available to answer queries and are available for in person guided tours of the Hub spaces.

Still have questions that haven't been answered?

Questions and queries can be directed to Suburban Hubs Program Lead, Jody Culey on jody.culey@vpsc.vic.gov.au

Hubs at a glance

Hub	Footscray	Williams Landing	Mulgrave	Dandenong	Essendon Fields
Address	1 McNab Ave, Footscray (State Trustees building)	2 Kendall Street, Williams Landing (Target building)	5 Nexus Court, Mulgrave	15 Mason Street, Dandenong	37 Vaughn Street, Essendon Fields
Opening Hours	M – F 7am – 7pm	M – F 7am – 7pm	M – F 7am – 7pm	M – F 7am – 7pm	M – F 7am – 7pm
Access	Via lift	Via lift	Via lift	Via lift	Ground floor
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DDA compliant bathrooms • Flexible work areas • Sit to stand desks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DDA compliant bathrooms • Flexible work areas • Sit to stand desks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DDA compliant bathrooms • Flexible work areas • Sit to stand desks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DDA compliant bathrooms • Flexible work areas • Sit to stand desks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DDA compliant bathrooms • Flexible work areas
Workstations	87	255	68	120	98
Offices / meeting rooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 offices • 1 meeting room 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 meeting rooms • 1 conference room • Breakout / collaboration spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 offices • 3 meeting rooms • Break out / collaboration spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 offices • 4 meeting rooms • 4 quiet rooms • Breakout / collaboration spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 offices • 1 board room / conference room
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit /stand desks • Double screen workstations • Universal docking stations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit /stand desks • Double screen workstations • Universal docking stations • Reflection room • First Aid room 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit /stand desks • Double screen workstations • Universal docking stations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit /stand desks • Double screen workstations • Universal docking stations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Double screen workstation • Universal docking stations
Support staff	Customer Service Representatives, Hub Hosts and a Digital Tech Bar (for your ICT needs)				
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early bird \$9 all day parking located a short walk from the Hub at Footscray Plaza 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$3 all day parking at the train station and on Kendall Street 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited, 2 hour, free onsite parking located close by 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several parking spots on surrounding streets including \$9.80 all day parking on Robinson 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay and Display parking close to the Hub costs \$4 all day.

	Shopping Centre and Footscray Market (\$8 per day).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 and 3-hour spots at the nearby Williams Landing Shopping Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free all day parking a short walk away. 	St, and \$4.20 all day parking on Newton Lane	
COVID- Safe Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QR code check in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-Safe Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily cleaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-Safe induction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPE supplied
Public Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5-minute walk to Footscray train station 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 minute walk to Williams Landing station 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located between Springvale on the Pakenham/Cranbourne lines and Glen Waverley on the Glen Waverley line, the 902 and 885 buses can be caught from both train stations to the Hub in approx. 20 mins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5-minute walk to Dandenong Train Station 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essendon train station (Albury and Craigieburn lines) is accessible by public bus or tram ride. • Bus route 477 operates 7 days per week between Broadmeadows and Moonee Ponds and is located within walking distance
End of trip facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showers • Bike racks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showers • Bike racks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showers • Bike racks (a short walk away) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shower • Bike cage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shower • Bike racks (coming!)
Food and beverage options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On site café • Melting pot of Footscray food options, a 5-minute walk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On site café • Williams Landing shopping centre a 2-minute walk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Onsite cafes and Brandon Park Shopping Centre within walking distance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An abundance of food options and Dandenong centre within walking distance • Onsite café under construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located within the Essendon Fields business park – cafes and LaManna Fresh Food(!) a short walk away