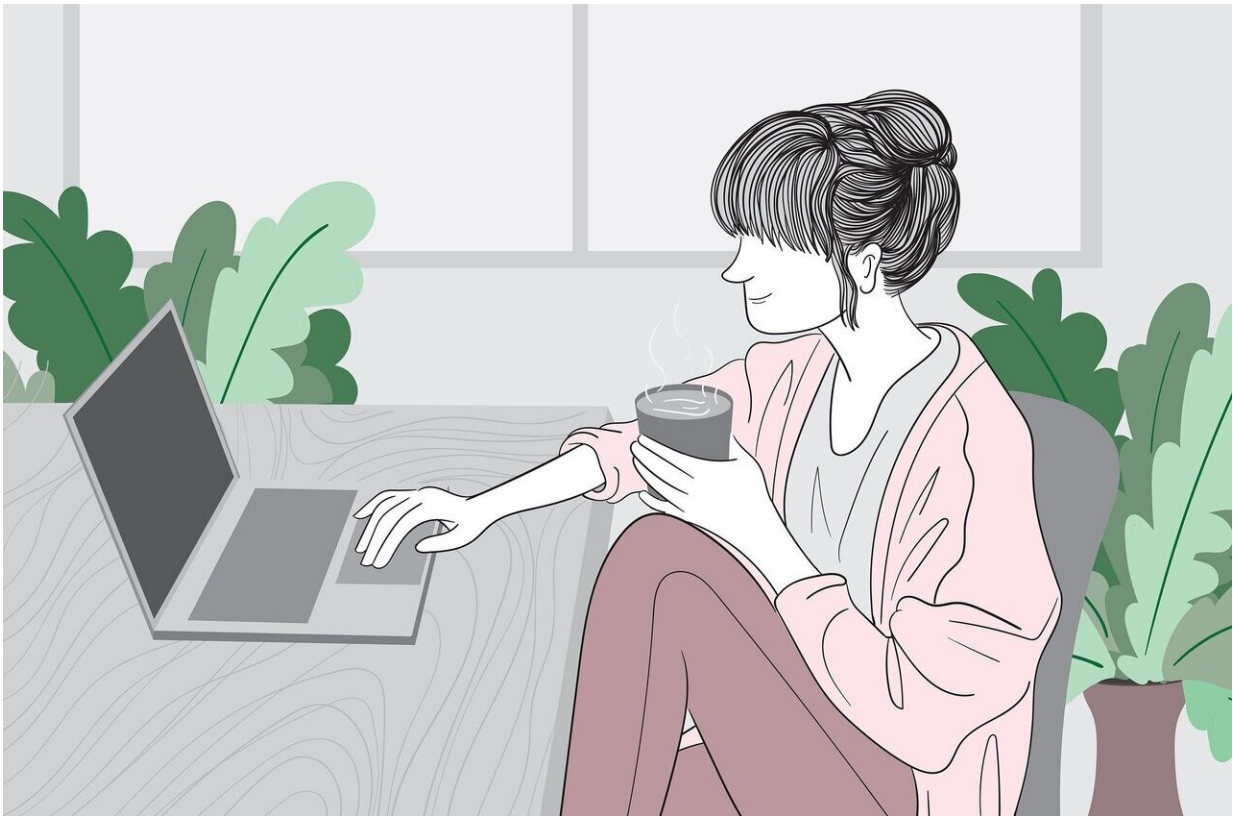


Australian apartment blocks placed in hard lockdown

July 13 2021



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An Australian apartment block was placed under strict lockdown with police posted outside Tuesday, as authorities stepped up efforts to curb a fast-growing coronavirus outbreak.

Police guarded both the front and rear exits of an [apartment](#) block in Sydney's Bondi neighbourhood, where nine people have tested positive for COVID-19, with movement in and out of the building restricted.

A sign taped to one apartment window read "Send Beer" while another asked, "where is the vaccine?"

Sydney is currently in its third week of a partial lockdown as authorities try to stamp out the spread of the virus in the community.

Most residents of Australia's largest city are allowed to leave home for exercise, essential shopping, work or health reasons, but are encouraged to remain at home.

Tougher restrictions are placed on people who have visited locations that are declared a virus hotspot, which may include mandatory 14-day quarantine.

Australia's latest COVID-19 outbreak began in mid-June and has since grown to 767 cases.

An entire apartment block in Melbourne was also placed under isolation for 14 days, after removal workers who visited from Sydney tested positive.

Authorities are now asking Australians living in other apartment buildings to wear a mask when in common areas.

"When you're in [apartment buildings](#), we're not wanting you to congregate in any shared spaces," said New South Wales chief health official Kerry Chant.

"We are really requiring under a public health order that you wear masks

when you're transiting through common areas."

Residents in one southwest Sydney neighbourhood, where the virus is currently spreading most quickly, are now required to get tested every three days if they leave the area for work.

Under 10 percent of Australians have been fully vaccinated, leaving the population highly vulnerable to the quick-spreading Delta variant.

Sydney's lockdown had been scheduled to end Friday, but an extension is now looking likely, despite a drop in new infections to 89 in the past 24 hours.

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