

NSW COVID-19 MEASURES FOR STRATA AND COMMUNITY SCHEMES EXTENDED

The NSW Department of Fair Trading has recently announced that the State Government has extended its temporary COVID-19 emergency measures for strata and community schemes to 29 September 2022.

This means that strata Owners Corporations and Community Land Associations can continue, until 29 September 2022, to:

- meet and vote electronically, without passing a resolution to authorise this beforehand;
- validly execute documents, without affixing the seal of the Owners Corporation or Association.

The previous temporary measure of allowing certain documents to be sent by email has not been extended because of changes made by the *COVID-19 and Other Legislation Amendment (Regulatory Reforms) Act 2022* (the Act) on 24 March 2022. The changes mean that an Owners Corporation and Association can send documents to an email address nominated by a lot owner, lot occupier or another person on the roll.

The Act makes other permanent changes to the strata and community scheme laws on ways of voting and using an electronic seal. These changes are currently expected to start on 30 September 2022, once supporting regulations are made.

The measures allow Owners Corporations and Community Land Associations to continue operating as they have been during 2020 and 2021, until the permanent changes commence.

NSW Strata Scheme Reporting

All strata schemes in NSW will have to report annually to NSW Fair Trading through a new strata portal by 31 December 2022.

The reporting will make it easier to access key strata information, and it will deliver a range of benefits. For example, emergency services will have access to a dedicated contact for each scheme in the event of an emergency.

The Department of Fair Trading will be implementing the portal's functions in stages. From July 2022, Owners Corporations can register a scheme, set up a profile and access educational webinars. More features will be added in the following months.

Strata communities in NSW can now start to prepare for the reporting now by:

- knowing what information you'll need to report and where to find it;
- deciding who will do the reporting and who will be the emergency services contact.