

## HGPA MEDIA RELEASE 4<sup>th</sup> April 2020

### Call for Retailers to Protect Customers from COVID-19

It is essential that our community make every effort to slow the spread of COVID-19 and [decrease the number and severity of cases](#), with the goal of [minimising preventable deaths](#).

Under the “[stay at home rules](#)”, a remaining activity that increases risk for the public is shopping for “*food and essentials*”.

It is critical for our community that [all reasonable steps](#) are taken by retailers to address this risk by minimising shoppers’ contact with staff, and keeping each shoppers’ time inside every store to a minimum. This will reduce the chance of infection by droplet spread.

We applaud steps already taken by retailers to protect customers, including prioritising vulnerable customers for home delivery services, adding floor markings to aid physical distancing, frequent cleaning of surfaces, the provision of facilities for service staff to sanitise their hands in between customer interactions, the use of Plexiglass screens at staffed checkouts, and managing the number of customers within their stores.

**We note, however, that there is variability between retailers and, in some instances, between outlets of the same retailer.**

We recognise it is difficult at the current staffing levels to clean all surfaces in between every customer contact, hence our recommendation that facilities make sanitising products available to customers in store so they can do this for themselves as well.

#### **We call on retailers, in addition to current measures, to:**

- 1. Actively support and promote, via advertising/social media & in-store announcements, measures that will reduce in-store risks** (e.g. encourage customers to stay at home if sick or vulnerable; prioritise home delivery services and online ordering with drive-through pickup; contactless payment; planned shopping vs browsing)
- 2. Kill the virus on shared surfaces** ([as it survives for many hours but is easily inactivated by disinfection](#)) by immediately providing the means:
  - For customers to sanitise their hands (both when entering and when exiting the store)
  - For customers to sanitise the [handles of shopping trolleys and baskets](#)
  - For cleaning the touch panels and EFTPOS machines of self-service checkouts in between every customer use