



New Zealand COVID-19 Alert Level 2

V&H Construction Protocols

These protocols and attachments are to be read in conjunction with the COVID-19 – Standard for New Zealand Construction Operations and reflect how the requirements in the standard may be achieved. Individual businesses and operations may need to adapt the protocols to their specific circumstances but the overall intent of the standard should still be applied in all cases. These protocols are expected to develop and evolve as requirements change from government and industry experience and are to be treated as living documents.

Version 3.0

11/05/2020

Amendments in Version 3.0:

New guidance from government for working under alert level 2 has required amendments to the V&H Construction Protocols.

- People working together should keep 1 metre physical distancing unless other mitigating measures are in place.
- When in public, people should keep 2 metres physical distancing from people they do not know.

The goals of this document are to:

- Keep workers and the wider community healthy and safe by preventing the spread of COVID-19.
- Apply relevant guidance from the Ministry of Health and other government agencies to the construction environment.
- Encourage a safe and respectful work environment and good communication between all stakeholders.
- Sit alongside your usual health and safety controls to ensure workers are safe on site.

New Zealand's COVID-19 alert levels

New Zealand's COVID-19 alert system specifies public health and social measures to be taken against COVID-19. The protocols in this document are designed for construction operating within COVID-19 alert level 2. As we move between alert levels, the protocols will indicate what we need to do to operate and plan for the kinds of restrictions we may be required to put in place. This includes restrictions on human contact, travel and business operations.

Our commitment as an industry:

- We are committed to working alongside government to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- As an industry, we are united against COVID-19 and will do our utmost to protect our workers, the wider community and New Zealand.
- We know that we're in this together – this means trusting those we work with will keep us safe and that we'll do the same for them.

We recognise that we must work together to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of everyone in the supply chain.

For information on what COVID-19 is, what the symptoms are, and how it spreads, visit www.covid19.govt.nz

The Five Step Guide for Returning to Work - Alert Level 2

Before arriving on site



Each contractor must have a plan detailing the steps they will take to mitigate risks, including those presented by COVID-19. The details of the plan must be communicated to workers before they start work.

Where possible, conduct a remote induction before arrival on site, this can be done via video conferencing or by phone. If an in-person induction is required, the [Physical Distancing and Hygiene Protocol](#) must be followed.

All workers should follow the [Personal Health Flowchart](#) to confirm they are safe to be on site.

Ensure all workers understand when additional PPE may be required due to COVID-19 and that workers have access to the correct PPE as per the [Ministry of Health PPE Guide](#) and WorkSafe guidelines. When required to use [face masks](#) or [gloves](#) please follow these processes.

Site entry



A daily register of workers entering and leaving site must be completed along with a health declaration to track and trace if you are sick. Use your existing sign-in register or the example [Sign-in Register](#).

[Signage](#) reminding workers of the COVID-19 protocols will be posted at the site entrance and in common areas where appropriate.

Site operations



All work is to be undertaken in such a way as to reduce any possible contact between workers and to promote the [Physical Distancing and Hygiene Protocol](#).

All offices and jobsites must implement cleaning measures as per the [Cleaning Guide](#).

All tools, equipment, plant and vehicles must be used in alignment with the [Cleaning Guide](#).

Toolbox talks should be held to communicate the information contained in these protocols. A [COVID-19 Toolbox Talk](#) is available for use to assist with your Toolbox Talks.

Additional sanitary measures are to be implemented on site to prevent the spread of COVID-19 e.g. hand washing stations, provision of additional hand sanitiser, provision of disinfectant wiping products, as per the [Physical Distancing and Hygiene Protocol](#).

Smokers must follow the [Physical Distancing and Hygiene Protocol](#).

A COVID-19 [Response Plan](#) must be available and accessible on site.

Leaving site



Workers must use the [Sign-in Register](#) to sign out.

When [Returning Home](#), workers will need to follow the necessary hygiene measures.

Each site must be cleaned and sanitised at the end of the working day or end of each shift, as per the [Cleaning Guide](#).

All waste and disposable PPE must be removed from site and securely disposed of as per the [Cleaning Guide](#).

Management Protocols



Follow the COVID-19 [Manager's Checklist](#).

Communicate the site expectations and prevention measures to all workers and contractors.

You must have a COVID-19 [Response Plan](#) in place to identify processes for dealing with probable and confirmed COVID-19 cases.

Stay in contact with all workers including those who may be in isolation or working remotely. Conduct Toolbox Talks regularly and keep track where and when workers are on site for contact tracing purposes and ensure they have the correct PPE.

Don't forget your normal health and safety obligations still apply. These protocols are in addition to your usual health and safety controls.

More information

Healthline
call 0800 3585453
www.health.govt.nz

Unite Against COVID-19
www.covid19.govt.nz

National Telehealth Service
1737.org.nz

Mental Health Foundation
www.mentalhealth.org.nz

Click [here](#) for FAQs

Manager's Checklist

Have an up-to-date site plan with alert level 2 requirements that is communicated and agreed with the appropriate persons.

Review contractor's site plans.

You must have a COVID-19 response plan in place to identify processes for dealing with probable and confirmed COVID-19 cases.

Complete an incident report in the event of a probable or confirmed case of COVID-19.

Maintain a [Sign-in Register](#) and detailed work schedule to understand the movements and activities of all workers in the event of an exposure to COVID-19.

Stay in contact with workers who may be in isolation or working remotely.

Follow the [Mental Health Protocol](#) and assist workers to access mental health and wellbeing information. Free call or text 1737 any time for support from a trained counsellor, or use the resources created by MATES in Construction available [here](#).

Hold Toolbox Talks regularly to keep workers up-to-date with COVID-19 protocols as we progress through stages.

Don't forget your normal health and safety obligations still apply. These Protocols are in addition to your usual health and safety controls.

Check that all required PPE is available for workers and on site including gloves and cleaning products.

Physical Distancing and Hygiene Protocol - Alert Level 2

Safe work practices to limit exposure to COVID-19 while operating under alert level 2 at work mean first assessing the risks, and then implementing the appropriate controls, so far as is reasonably practicable. All work must be undertaken in such a way as to reduce any possible contact between workers and to promote physical distancing wherever possible.

What is physical distancing?

Physical distancing, sometimes known as “social distancing”, is about keeping a safe distance from others. For physical distancing, people working together should keep one metre away from each other unless other mitigating measures are in place. When in public, people should keep two metres away from people they don't know. This is important to help protect us from COVID-19.

General Working Arrangements

- Keep team sizes as small as possible.
- Keep a record of who is in each team every day as you may be required to track back for contact tracing.
- Site teams are encouraged to consider split/alternating shifts to avoid extensive intermingling to reduce the potential of exposure.
- Consider if the work site can be segregated into zones (or by other methods) as much as possible to keep different teams/trades physically separated at all times.
- Where possible, apply a one-way system in high-traffic areas, such as lifts, stairwells and scaffolds.
- Where practical, all office employees supporting a project work remotely.
- When using a vehicle, the [Cleaning Guide](#) must be followed.
- When travelling for work or using a vehicle, limit the number of people per vehicle to maintain one metre spacing.

External interfaces

- Keep the engagement with the other person as brief as possible and maintain a one metre physical distance.
- Ask for paperwork to be emailed rather than handed over as much as possible:
 - If unavoidable, then either wear gloves when handling the item or wash hands before and after handling said items.

Site Entry

- Consider if staggered start and finish times are required to reduce congestion and contact under one metre.
- Monitor site access points to enable physical distancing – you may need to change the number of access points, increase to reduce congestion or decrease to enable monitoring.
- Where entry systems that require skin contact e.g. fingerprint scanners are used, the [Cleaning Guide](#) must be followed.
- Require all workers to wash or clean their hands before entering and leaving the site.
- Allow plenty of space (one metre) between people waiting to enter site.
- Regularly clean common contact surfaces in reception, office, access control and delivery areas e.g. scanners, turnstiles, screens, telephone handsets, desks, particularly during peak flow times.
- Where possible, conduct a remote induction before arrival on site, this can be done via video conferencing or by phone. If an in-person

induction is required, reduce the number of people and hold them outdoors wherever possible.

- Delivery drivers must sign in and out using the register and follow the physical distancing protocols for the site at all times.
- Any sign-in registers should be recorded by one person where possible – do not pass material around the group and minimise contact with any screens or pens.

Site Meetings

- Meetings are to be held through teleconferencing or videoconferencing where possible.
- Attendees should be one metre apart from each other.
- Rooms should be well ventilated/windows opened to allow fresh air circulation.
- Hold meetings in open areas where possible.

Avoiding Close Working

- Risk assessments and method statements must be updated to include COVID-19 control measures.
- At least one metre's separation is preferred for work at level 2. We expect one metre separation between people at work as the minimum and greater separation where it is reasonably practicable to do so.
- In situations where it is believed work can only be done safely and effectively within one metre physical distancing, first consult the workers directly involved with the work.
- Where work can only be done safely and effectively within one metre physical distancing, then any work of less than one metre must only be done under the hierarchy of controls and risk management. Examples to be considered are:
 - Physical barriers.
 - Increased hygiene and cleanliness.
 - Short duration works.
 - Wearing of additional PPE (face masks & glasses or face shield, gloves etc).
- Re-usable PPE should be thoroughly cleaned after use and not shared between workers.
- Single use PPE should be disposed of so that it cannot be reused.
- Stairs should be used in preference to lifts or hoists.
- Where lifts or hoists must be used:
 - Lower their capacity to reduce congestion.
 - Regularly clean touchpoints, doors, buttons etc.
- Increase ventilation in enclosed spaces.

Toilet Facilities

- Physical distancing rules apply to the use of shared facilities, including toilets.
- Wash hands before and after using the facilities.
- Enhance the cleaning regimes for toilet facilities, particularly door handles, locks, toilet flush and sanitary bins.
- Provide suitable and sufficient rubbish bins for hand towels with regular removal and disposal.

Eating Arrangements

- If you need to leave site for any reason, follow site entry procedures on return.
- Dedicated eating areas should be identified on site to reduce food waste and contamination.
- Break times should be staggered to reduce congestion and contact if required.
- Hand cleaning facilities or hand sanitiser should be available at the entrance of any room where people eat and should be used by workers when entering and leaving the area.
- Workers should sit one metre apart from each other whilst eating and avoid all contact.
- Where catering is provided on site, it should provide pre-prepared and wrapped food only.
- Payments should be taken by contactless card wherever possible.
- Shared crockery, eating utensils, cups etc. should not be used unless they can be properly washed and dried.
- Tables should be cleaned between each use.
- All rubbish should be put straight in the bin and not left for someone else to clear up.
- All areas used for eating must be thoroughly cleaned at the end of each break and shift, including chairs, door handles, vending machines.
- Consider numbers on site for site facilities as physical distancing may require additional space/facilities.

Changing Facilities, Showers and Drying Rooms

- Consider staggered start and finish times to reduce congestion and contact at all times.
- Introduce enhanced cleaning of all facilities throughout the day and at the end of each day.
- Consider increasing the number or size of facilities available on site if possible.
- Based on the size of each facility, determine how many people can use it at any one time to maintain a distance of one metre.
- Provide suitable and sufficient rubbish bins in these areas with regular removal and disposal.

General Hygiene

- Each worker must sanitise their hands with hand sanitiser or soap and running water before entry onto site, use warm water if available.
- Set up a specific place near the entry of the site for handwashing and/or sanitising. This could be as simple as on the back of a ute.
- Individual PPE for workers must be kept separate from other workers' PPE and cleaned correctly as per the [Cleaning Guide](#).
- All eating and drinking utensils to be cleaned by the user. Have paper towels accessible to dry.

Smoking

- Smokers/vapers must use designated area or do so off-site and butts are to be placed in the designated receptacle. Hands must be washed before and after smoking.
- Stand so that smoke or vapor produced is not going into another person's breathing zone.

Hand Washing

- Provide additional hand washing facilities to the usual welfare facilities on large, spread out sites or significant numbers of personnel on site.
- Ensure soap and fresh water is readily available and kept topped up at all times.
- Provide hand sanitiser where hand washing facilities are unavailable.
- Regularly clean the hand washing facilities and check soap and sanitiser levels.
- Sites will need extra supplies of soap, hand sanitiser and paper towels and these should be securely stored.

Hand washing



Wet your hands under clean running water. Use warm water if available.



Put soap on your hands and wash for 20 seconds. Liquid soap is best.



Rub on both sides of both hands...



and in between fingers and thumbs...



and round and round both hands.



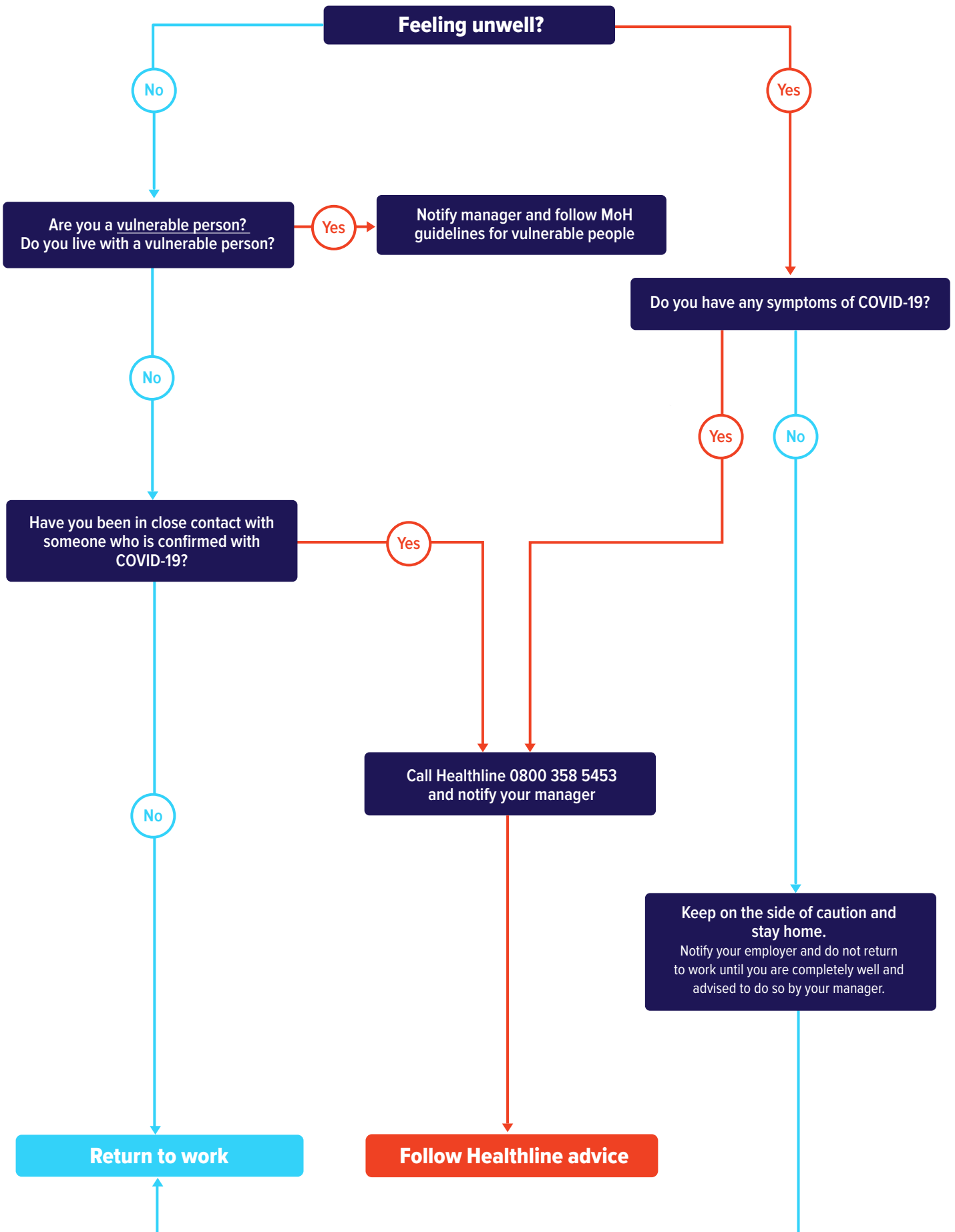
Rinse all the soap off under clean running water. Use warm water if available.



Dry your hands all over for 20 seconds. Using a paper towel is best.

Steps provided by Ministry of Health's guide to hand washing

Personal Health Flowchart



Cleaning Guide - Alert Level 2

Construction sites operating in the wake of the Coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic need to ensure they are protecting their workforce and minimising the risk of spread of infection.

Consider your work environment and what is frequently used and touched by workers, customers and others. The virus can be spread from person to person or by touching unclean equipment or surfaces. To stop the spread, focus efforts on cleaning areas where the virus is more likely to spread, such as the kitchen and toilet.

Physical distancing should also be practiced when cleaning offices and jobsites. Refer to the [Physical Distancing and Hygiene Protocol](#) for more information.

- Schedule regular cleaning.
- Use a suitable cleaning product.
- Use disposable cloths, if available.
- Always wear disposable gloves when cleaning. When finished, place used gloves in a rubbish bin.
- Wear disposable gloves while handling soiled items.
- Wash hands immediately after removing gloves or after handling these items.

Disinfecting cleaning aids

Cleaning aids, such as cloths or mops, must be germ-free or they'll spread germs to other surfaces.

Here are some general cleaning tips to help prevent the spread of germs:

Cloths and sponges

- Use disposable cloths or paper towels when possible.
- Reusable cloths should be disinfected or washed after each use.

Washing-up brushes

- Wash brushes in a dishwasher regularly or clean with detergent and warm water after each use.

Mops and buckets

- Use two buckets for mopping – one for detergent and the other for rinsing.
- Mops and buckets should be cleaned and dried after each use.

Site cleaning

Before leaving the office or jobsite at the end of the working day or end of each shift, wipe down any tables/surfaces with soapy water or cleaning agents where possible. All workers must be checked out of site and record kept daily.

Common touch points may include:

- All waste and disposable PPE must be securely disposed of.
- All door handles, railings and personal workstation areas are wiped down with a disinfectant, such as disinfectant wipes. Individuals are responsible for cleaning their workstation area with disinfectant wipes.
- Clean all 'high-touch' surfaces such as desks, counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, light switches, phones, and keyboards every day with antiseptic wipes or disinfectant, including bleach solutions.

Cleaning bathrooms, toilets and showers

Clean toilets with a separate set of cleaning equipment (disposable cleaning cloths, mops, etc).

Clean sinks frequently, if they're used regularly.

If your jobsite has a shower:

- Clean shower trays frequently, if used regularly.
- If a shower hasn't been used for a while, let it run with hot water before using it.
- Keep tiles and grout in good condition.
- Clean shower curtains frequently.

Common toilet touch points may include:

- Keep the U-bend and toilet bowl clean by flushing after each use.
- Limescale should be regularly removed using a descaling product.
- Keep the toilet seat, handle and rim clean by using a disinfectant.

Cleaning tools and equipment

- Clean tools and equipment before and after each day's work with a disinfectant, concentrating on points of contact such as handles.
- Wash your hands after handling tools and equipment to prevent the spread of germs.
- If possible, don't share tools on site. If sharing cannot be prevented, take precautions and follow the hand washing guide before and after each use.

Cleaning vehicles

- Consider having dedicated drivers when using vehicles to avoid the spread of germs.
- Don't share vehicles if possible, if you need to use a shared vehicle then wipe down the commonly touched areas of the vehicle after each use (steering wheel, handbrake, gear stick, dashboard, handles, etc) and wash hands before and after using the vehicle.
- Wipe down the inside and commonly touched areas of the vehicle before and after each day.
- If you are required to have more than one person in a vehicle at the same time, then keep as much distance between people as possible, open the windows to keep air circulating and passengers to face towards the window to reduce the spread of germs.

Cleaning PPE

Work clothes to be placed in washing machines and clean reusable PPE.

- Read and follow directions on the labels of laundry or clothing and detergent. In general, wash and dry laundry and clothing with the warmest temperatures recommended on the label.
- When handling soiled laundry wash your hands afterwards. All clothes and towels should be washed with a laundry product to prevent germs from spreading. Don't leave laundry in the washing machine – any remaining germs can multiply rapidly.

Key cleaning tips

- All offices and jobsites should implement additional cleaning measures of common areas as recommended by the Ministry of Health and to help minimise the spread of COVID-19.
- Regular cleaning of the workplace environment will minimise the spread of infection by reducing workers' contact with contaminated surfaces.
- Clean surfaces with a suitable cleaner and/or disinfectant and follow the manufacturer's instructions for use. When choosing a suitable cleaning product, consider what the product is effective against and the length of time the product needs to be left on a surface to clean it properly.
- Where possible, use disposable cloths or paper towels to clean surfaces. Reusable cloths should be disinfected and then dried after use, as bacteria and viruses can still survive on damp cloths.

Common internal touch points may include:



Coffee machines and water fountains



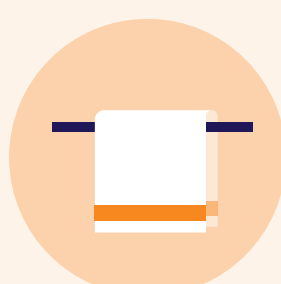
Common pens
for sign-in sheet to construction site



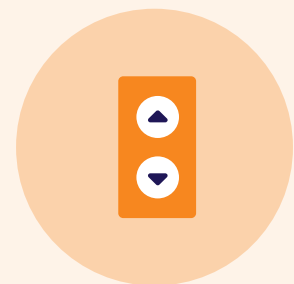
Doors/door handles
Look at all reasonable opportunities to remove them



Screens and tables
should be wiped after use, including iPads, photocopiers, digital check-in scanners and desktop stations



Wash items
Towels, tea towels and other fabrics and dry thoroughly outside or with a dryer



High-touch public surfaces
Stairwell handrails, door handles, tabletops, lift buttons, microwaves and other kitchen surfaces

Safe practices when using face masks on site



Wash hands first

Always make sure you wash your hands thoroughly before and after touching a mask.



Masks

There are many different kinds of masks, depending on the task.



The right side

There is a metal clip at the top of the mask.



Placement

Place the metal clip across the top of your nose.



Attach the mask

Attach the mask by pulling the elastic bands over your ears.



Stretch down

Stretch the mask down, so that it covers your chin.



Adjust

Bend the metal clip around your nose so that it sits securely.



Taking off the mask

Pull the elastic bands away from your ears.



Disposal

Always place the used mask in a closed rubbish bin for secure disposal.

Safe practices when using gloves on site

You will need to use gloves:



Any time you are completing a manual task
Use your usual work safety gloves.



If you are cleaning any surfaces
Use disposable gloves for this and throw them in the bin when you finish cleaning.

Remember to:



Avoid touching your face while wearing gloves



Remove your gloves and then wash your hands prior to eating, drinking or smoking/vaping



Practice good hand hygiene and good cough and sneeze etiquette while wearing gloves

Returning home after work

Stopping the spread of COVID-19 from work to home

To stop the possible spread of COVID-19, it is important that when you return home after work, you take all the necessary precautions to ensure that you and everyone in your bubble are safe. Here are five simple guidelines to follow:



No touching

When you return home, try not to touch anything until you have cleaned your hands properly.



Shoes

Remove your shoes, do not walk through the house with them on - leave them outside.



Items

Leave non-essential items at work and disinfect items you have used at work that you have to keep with you, e.g. mobile phones.



Clothes and bags

Place your clothes and bags in a container and wash in a hot washing machine cycle.



Shower

Have a shower and make sure to clean your hands, wrists, arms, neck, nails and areas that might have been exposed.

Probable or confirmed case of COVID-19 at work

If the probable or confirmed case of COVID-19 is at work



1. Isolate

Isolate the person from others and provide a disposable surgical mask, if available, for the person to wear.



2. Inform

Call Healthline (0800 611 116). Follow the advice of health officials.



3. Transport

Ensure the person has transport to their home or to a medical facility.



4. Clean

Clean the area where the person was working and all places they have been. This may mean evacuating those areas. Use PPE when cleaning.



5. Identify

Identify who at the workplace had close contact with the infected person in the 24-hours before that infected person started showing symptoms. Send those people home to isolate. Allow employees to raise concerns.



6. Clean

Clean the area where the close contact people were working and all common areas they have been. This may mean evacuating those areas. Use PPE when cleaning.



7. Review

Review risk management controls relating to COVID-19 and review whether work may need to change. Keep employees up-to-date on what is happening.

If the probable or confirmed case of COVID-19 is not at work when diagnosed



1. Inform

Call Healthline (0800 358 5453). Follow advice of health officials.



2. Identify

Identify who at the workplace had close contact with the infected person in the 24-hours before that infected person started showing symptoms. Send those people home to isolate. Allow employees to raise concerns.



3. Clean

Clean the area where the infected person and their close contacts were working and all common areas they have been. This may mean evacuating those areas. Use PPE when cleaning.



4. Review

Review risk management controls relating to COVID-19 and review whether work may need to change. Keep employees up-to-date on what is happening.

Remember:

- From a health and safety perspective, there is not an automatic requirement to close down an entire workplace, particularly if the person infected has only visited parts of the workplace.
- Workers assisting the person who has probable or confirmed COVID-19 should be provided with appropriate PPE, if available, such as gloves. They should also follow hand hygiene procedures.
- Be aware of privacy obligations.
- Follow the advice of health officials at all times.

COVID-19 BACK TO WORK MENTAL HEALTH PROTOCOLS

FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS

Feeling stressed is an experience that you and many of your MATES are likely going through.

It is normal to be feeling this way in the current situation.

Stress and the feelings associated with it are by no means a reflection that you cannot do your job or that you are weak.

Recognise where you are sitting with your emotions and take some time to stay focused on the now.

Consider if your emotions are more extreme than usual and if so, you might need some further support.

WELLBEING

Managing your stress and wellbeing during this time is as crucial as:

- Looking after your physical health.
- Take care of your everyday needs and ensure rest and time out during work or after work, eat healthy, engage in physical activity, and stay in contact with family and friends.
- Continue to use the self-care strategies that you know work for you.
- Consider your wellbeing bucket – you will need to fill it up as it will feel empty at times.

CHANGES IN BEHAVIOUR

There could be changes that you or a MATE might be showing. These are not one-off incidences but are happening more often than usual.

Are they:

- Angry or agitated
- Isolating themselves
“Not wanting to talk to people”
- Using alcohol or drugs as a way of coping
- Being distant
“Not replying to messages”
- Finding it hard to cope with everyday things
- Not looking after themselves, washing, looking unkempt
- Struggling to concentrate
- Struggling to finish work
- Coming into work late or being absent a lot

SUPPORT AVAILABLE

Sometimes what might be happening for us might require more help.

Talk to someone that you trust at work or a friend or family member.

We know there is a range of support in the community that is available.

MATES in Construction Team can help navigate you through some of the supports available.

MATES in Construction is a free confidential service available 24/7.

Simply ring MATES in Construction on **0800 111 315** or text us on **5353** and one of our staff will support you.

WHAT CAN EMPLOYERS DO?

Clear communication during Covid-19 is essential. Make mental health part of the conversation.

Know your workers. Look out for any changes in their behavior.

Proactively support workers who identify as being at risk of workplace psychological injury.

Use the MATES induction tools on site.

Talk about how everyone is travelling at Toolbox Talks and breaks.

If you have an Employee Assistance Programme, inform your workers that it is available.

Have MATES signage as much as you can across the site to encourage help seeking behaviors.

Simply ring MATES in Construction on **0800 111 315** or text us on **5353** and one of our staff will support you.