

Managing Positive Cases and Close Contacts

National Cabinet has agreed to a unified approach to how we manage COVID-19, which currently applies to NSW, QLD, VIC, TAS, SA, ACT and will eventually be adopted by WA and NT. This approach outlines how positive COVID cases are managed including updated testing requirements and a new definition for close contacts. Following advice from the NSW Government, this document (originally distributed on 7 January 2022) has been updated. Further updates will be provided if / when new Health Directions are issued or when advice is received from the NSW Government.



DEFINITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR POSITIVE CASES / CLOSE CONTACTS

If someone develops symptoms of COVID-19, they should NOT attend work and seek to get tested immediately. The testing can be a Rapid Antigen Test (RAT), or a PCR test if they have not got a RAT. If the RAT is positive, then they do not need a PCR test (unless they are a person at high risk of health complications, including an unvaccinated person, or asked to by their doctor).

Confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 must:

- Isolate for seven days from the date they got tested – a Worker may only leave isolation after 7 days if they don't have symptoms (sore throat, runny nose, cough or shortness of breath)
- Inform their employer and the workplace of the date of their test, the date they got sick (if they have symptoms), and the days they were at work whilst infectious – this assists with contact tracing
- Inform people they have spent time with from 2 days before they started having symptoms or tested positive (whichever came first) that they have COVID-19
- If they still have symptoms beyond 7 days, they must remain isolated until 24 hours after they no longer have symptoms
- Once they complete their isolation, they must wear a mask when interacting with other people and avoid high risk settings for 3 days

Close contacts will be defined, except in exceptional circumstances (as deemed by NSW Health), as a household contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case. A household contact is someone who lives with a confirmed case or has spent more than 4 hours with them in a house, accommodation or care facility setting.

Close contacts must:

- Isolate for 7 days from the date of exposure to a confirmed positive case and obtain a RAT or PCR test as soon as possible
- A RAT is required on day 6 and if positive, they must follow the above guidelines for a positive case
- High risk settings (health care, aged care, disability care, or correctional facilities) should be avoided for a further 7 days

All other contacts who have been potentially exposed to a case but who are at lower risk of infection must monitor for symptoms and only need to have a RAT or PCR test if symptoms occur.



PROCESS FOR MANAGING A POSITIVE CASE

1. Site team is notified of a Worker who has received a positive result:
 - a. The Worker who has received the positive test result and household members they have spent more than 4 hours with (a 'close contact') must follow government directions
 - b. The Worker must stay isolated for 7 days from the day they got tested
 - c. The Worker may only leave isolation after 7 days if they have not had any symptoms for at least 24 hours (sore throat, runny nose, cough or shortness of breath)
2. Safety Committee and Site Management Team to work with the positive case to identify where they have been on site to determine high touchpoint areas that require a more detailed clean
3. Works on site or in an office are to continue as normal while the detailed clean is conducted (**Note** that a third party clean and hygienist sign off is not required)
4. All Workers who were on the project at the same time as the Worker who has tested positive are to be notified by the Site Management Team of the positive case. All Workers who are identified as having been potentially exposed to the positive case are required to monitor for symptoms (**Note** it is recommended that all Workers also notify their own household members so that they too can monitor for symptoms). If symptoms do develop follow the process outlined above.
5. Continue working as normal, ensuring all sensible and practical COVID Safe measures are in place including regular cleaning, good hygiene, checking in and suitable PPE



ADDITIONAL MEASURES

All Workers must continue signing or scanning into any site-specific systems (ie a register and / or prestart tool). This will ensure sites know which Workers were on site at all times. Continue utilising contact tracing software (ie like Contact Herald) where it is in place on construction sites. This will ensure potentially affected workers are informed immediately when a positive case is identified.

The NSW Government has reintroduced mandatory masks for everywhere indoors, except in homes or accommodation, and when it is unsafe to do so. On construction sites:

- Masks must be worn indoors unless undertaking strenuous activity, or it is not safe, or eating or drinking, or enunciation or visibility of a person's mouth is essential, or a person is deaf or hard of hearing, or work is in an indoor area and no other person is in the area
- Masks should be worn by hoist and lift drivers, as well as cleaners due to the high exposure to all workers and the tasks being performed
- Maintain 1.5 metres from others

COVIDSAFE MEASURES



Social distancing (staying 1.5m from others when practicable)



Wearing a mask when required and it is safe to do so



Maintaining good hand hygiene and cleaning



Staying home when sick and getting tested



Signing in when entering a construction site / office