

Leave Entitlements & Support for COVID-19 Isolation / Quarantine Periods

As the potential for exposure to COVID-19 in the community increases, the following provides guidance in relation to Construction Workers being required to stay home either due to having COVID-19, caring for someone with COVID or being deemed a close household contact and the leave entitlements and support options available for those individuals.

There are currently two circumstances when people would be required to stay home due to COVID:

POSITIVE / CONFIRMED CASE

Means someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 via a PCR Test or Rapid Antigen Test (RAT), or has symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (fever, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, headache).

CLOSE / HOUSEHOLD CONTACT

Means someone who is a close household contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case, which is currently defined as a someone who lives with a confirmed case or has spent more than 4 hours with them in a house, accommodation or care facility setting.

Available Entitlements & Support

Each of these circumstances are treated differently in relation to leave entitlements and support and specifically in relation to close / household contacts there are broadly two separate scenarios:

- For someone who has COVID-19** (or is suspected to have COVID-19 because they are symptomatic), they are entitled to access their accrued sick leave.
 - A doctor's certificate is not required for a person with COVID-19, but ideally copies of positive test results (if available and / or if directed by the employer) will be shared with the employer's relevant department (eg Payroll / HR).
 - As is typically the case, if the individual does not have sick leave accruals, they should discuss accessing other forms of leave (e.g. annual leave / RDOs) or support with their employer and also consider other financial support options below.
- For someone who is in isolation because they are defined as a close / household contact and they are caring for a person who has COVID-19.**

These people are entitled to carer's leave because they are caring for a partner, child and / or other household or family member who is sick. Carer's leave is drawn from sick leave balances and as is typically the case, if the individual does not have sick leave accruals, they should discuss accessing other forms of leave (eg annual leave / RDOs) or support with their employer and also consider other financial support options below.

People in this category would also be able to access Pandemic Leave as detailed below.
- For someone who is in isolation because they are defined as a close / household contact but are not caring for someone who is sick.**

This absence is due to a Government Direction and is treated differently to the circumstance when someone is absent because they have COVID-19 or are caring for someone who has COVID-19.

Essentially these Workers are unable to attend work due to the Government Direction and therefore they will be able to access Pandemic Leave. This is unpaid leave however the main difference to other types of unpaid leave is that the individual will continue to accrue leave entitlements. Alternatively, they may (with the approval of their employer) access other leave entitlements such as annual leave and RDOs.

They may also be able to access other form of support as detailed below.
- Workers Compensation** in certain circumstances if you are COVID positive you may be entitled to workers compensation. For further advice about this contact the Union Office on (02) 97490400.

- Note**
- > Workers may access sick leave if they fit into category 2 or 3 above and they subsequently test positive for COVID-19 whilst in isolation.
 - > Workers may also access sick leave if they are taking other types of leave (eg annual leave) and subsequently test positive for COVID-19 whilst on that leave.
 - > Sick leave entitlements will be able to be accessed from the time of the positive test result or symptom onset and for the entire isolation period.

In addition to accessing sick leave, carer's leave, pandemic leave, annual leave or RDOs, Workers may be eligible for financial support through the Government or their nominated redundancy fund.

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

If you have to isolate due to a positive test result or as a close contact, you may be eligible for financial support from the Australian Government. Find out more online: <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/em252> or call 180 22 66 (Monday to Friday 8am to 5pm).

Alternatively you may be entitled to the NSW Government Test and Isolate Support Payment.

Find out more online: <https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/apply-test-and-isolate-support-payment#eligibility>

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