

Background

This plan and policy is made in response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic and seeks to identify, isolate and prevent the spread of illness in order to support the safety of our workers and the wider community, and support the business continuity plans of organisations to which DFP provides services.

COVID-19 symptoms range from a mild cough to pneumonia. Some people recover easily, others may get very sick very quickly. Good hygiene and cleaning, physical distancing, and protective equipment can minimise the risk of infection. The incubation period is 14 days.

Response to COVID-19 is rapidly changing in line with State and Federal Government updates and directions. It is important that DFP workers read and follow the directions, information, procedures delivered by DFP and the host client to ensure they are up to date with preventative measures.

Updated information about COVID-19 is available from the national Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080. Alternatively, if you wish to speak to a registered nurse about your health concerns, call 1800 022 222. Information is also available from the Australian Department of Health and can be accessed via the following link www.health.gov.au.

Common signs of infection include:

The symptoms to watch out for are:

- Loss or changes in sense of smell or taste
- Fever
- Chills or sweats
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Shortness of breath
- Runny nose

Vulnerable workers

The Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) considers that, based on the limited current evidence, the following people are, or are likely to be, at higher risk of serious illness if they are infected with the virus:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people 50 years and older with one or more chronic medical conditions
- People 65 years and older with chronic medical conditions. Conditions included in the definition of 'chronic medical conditions' will be refined as more evidence emerges. The most current list can be accessed on the Department of Health [website](#)
- People 70 years and older
- People with compromised immune systems

Workers in any of these groups are encouraged to notify their DFP consultant.

Working from home

All DFP workers who are approved to work from home will be required to complete a DFP WFH checklist. Failure to complete and provide a WFH safety checklist may mean withdrawal from the assignment.

Infection control

The key health, safety and environmental hazards related to COVID-19 at work are:

- Close contact with an infectious person, ie. Someone who has covid-19

- Contact with droplets or other body fluids from an infected person
- Touching objects or surfaces contaminated by an infected person and then touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

It is the responsibility of all involved to monitor, consult and communicate about health and safety matters; it is therefore important that DFP on-hire workers participate and follow instructions related to infection and health controls as well as take responsibility for notifying DFP of any cases or concerns.

DFP workers have a responsibility to:

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety
- Take reasonable care for the health and safety of persons who may be affected by the employee's acts or omissions at a workplace
- Co-operate with DFP or the host client with respect to any action taken by either to comply with a requirement imposed by law.
- Report incidents or concerns related to infection control management

Recommendations to protect yourself and others should be followed and are listed below:

Physical and social distance

All workers are to personally ensure physical distancing measures are maintained at all times. This includes:

- Distancing guidelines of 1.5 metres between individuals in places where people gather such as communal areas, tea rooms, meeting rooms and entrances and exits to buildings.
- Consideration of screens and barriers
- Following guidelines in place to manage the passage of people between sites, locations or shifts.

Hygiene and cleaning

Regular hand washing, covering mouth and nose when coughing / sneezing and cleaning personal equipment or belongings is important. DFP will ensure that workplaces have adequate access to facilities and equipment necessary to support good hygiene and disinfection in the workplace.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Where it is required, all workers must wear required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) eg face masks, guards, gloves. DFP workers must report concerns to DFP related to the supply of PPE at the workplace.

For more information on preventing the spread of COVID-19, please read the [‘What you need to know’ information sheet](#)

Notification requirements

DFP workers who are unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 or who have been in ‘close contact’ with a confirmed case or have returned from overseas travel:

- must not enter a DFP workplace or client site and
- must notify their DFP contact immediately and
- self-isolate according to the current government advice.

Close Contact – Definition

'Close contact' means having face-to-face contact for more than 15 minutes with someone who has a confirmed case of COVID-19 – or alternatively sharing a closed space with them for more than two hours. Examples include:

- living in the same household or household-like setting (for example, a boarding school or hostel)
- direct contact with the body fluids or laboratory specimens of a confirmed case
- being in the same room or office for two hours or more
- face-to-face contact for more than 15 minutes in some other setting such as in a car or a lift or sitting next to them on public transport.

Suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19

Anyone who has symptoms of COVID-19, or has been a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19 (even if asymptomatic) or has returned from overseas travel will be for the purposes of this policy a suspected case.

In the event of a suspected case, DFP and host clients will co-ordinate to:

- instruct suspected case to self-isolate and undergo covid-19 test.
- inform all staff at the workplace to be vigilant about the onset of covid-19 symptoms,
- direct other workers to self-isolate at symptom onset and
- instruct to be tested as soon as reasonably practicable.

Workers who become unwell with cold and flu symptoms whilst on site must:

- advise their host client manager and DFP consultant immediately and be sent home
- be supported to travel home immediately or to isolate at work if unable to travel home immediately
- if isolating at work, the employee must wear a mask and be physically distancing from all others.
- under **no** circumstances should an employee transport the potentially infected person
- request that the worker undergo a covid-19 test and self-isolate.

For suspected cases the DFP Branch will contact CEO, COO and OHS. Further advice can be attained by contacting the Coronavirus Health Information Hotline on 1800 020 080.

In some circumstances it may be appropriate to discuss the option of working from home. When home based work is not possible leave must be taken.

Workers awaiting a test result for COVID-19 should advise the host client and DFP immediately and be off-work until medical advice is received confirming they are safe to return to work. They must complete any isolation period as directed by a public health official.

Should a test confirm COVID-19 infection, DFP will require information in regards to:

- the workplaces you attended and the dates attended
- workers you have been in close contact with during the 14 day period prior to becoming symptomatic.

A confirmed case in the workforce must be notified to the CEO, COO and OHS.

OHS will notify the appropriate health or government authority within mandated timeframes.

For a confirmed case in the workplace, DFP and host clients must inform authorities, staff, customers, visitors and identify those who are close contacts and direct them to self-isolate.

DFP will liaise with the host client to ensure cleaning and disinfection protocols are enacted and communicate with all workers.

Before returning to work after any isolation period, workers must speak with DFP.

Non Essential Travel

All non-essential travel is not approved at this time by DFP. All travel must be approved the CEO and COO. The Department of Home Affairs has up to date travel advice and can be accessed via their website at <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/news-media/current-alerts/novel-coronavirus>

More information

This management strategy will be modified as required to accommodate any future changes to Coronavirus information as it occurs. Furthermore, the host client may impose additional policy and business continuity strategies that may impact decisions regarding assignments and return to work.

Please contact your DFP Consultant if you have any questions about our Coronavirus management strategy on (03) 8632 9900.



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