

## COVID-19: Frequently Asked Questions

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### 1. What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a respiratory illness caused by a new virus. Symptoms may range from a mild cough to pneumonia. Some people recover easily from COVID-19, while others can get very unwell, very quickly.

### 2. How does COVID-19 differ from the flu?

The first symptoms of COVID-19 and influenza (flu) infections are often very similar. Both viruses are also transmitted in the same way, by coughing or sneezing, or by contact with hands, surfaces or objects contaminated with the virus.

COVID-19 patients may have fever, cough, runny nose, sore throat, shortness of breath, chills, body aches, or headaches. These symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually. Most people recover without special treatment. In severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia with severe acute respiratory distress. These symptoms are limited to a small number of cases.

### 3. Who is at risk of developing severe illness?

The elderly and people with pre-existing medical conditions (such as high blood pressure, heart disease, or diabetes) appear to be at most risk of developing serious illness.

### 4. How long is the COVID-19 incubation period?

The time between when a person is exposed to the virus and when symptoms first appear is typically 5 to 6 days, although may range from 2 to 14 days.

### 5. Is there any medication I can take for COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a virus for which a vaccine does not presently exist. There is no medication specifically for COVID-19. You should seek advice on medication from a medical professional. Self-medicating can be harmful.

### 6. How long does the COVID-19 infection last?

The infection period for the virus will vary from person to person. Mild symptoms in an otherwise healthy individual may resolve over just a few days. Similar to influenza, for an individual with other ongoing health issues, such as a respiratory condition, recovery may take weeks and in severe cases could be potentially fatal.

### 7. How long does the virus survive on surfaces?

According to the World Health Organization, it is not certain how long the virus that causes COVID-19 survives on surfaces. Studies suggest that COVID-19 may persist on surfaces for a few hours or up to several days. This may vary under different conditions (e.g. type of surface, temperature or humidity of the environment).

### 8. What can I do to protect myself and prevent it from spreading?

The following simple actions can help reduce the risk of infection:

- Clean your hands regularly with soap and water for 20 seconds (sing Happy Birthday twice through) or use an alcohol based sanitiser.
- Cover your nose and mouth when coughing and sneezing with tissue or a flexed elbow.
- Avoid close contact with anyone with cold or flu-like symptoms.
- Practice cough etiquette (keep away from other people, cover coughs and sneezes with disposable tissues or clothing, and clean your hands).
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth.
- Use of disinfectants (e.g. alcohol-based hand sanitisers) can inactivate COVID-19 on surfaces.
- Stay home if you feel unwell.
- Follow the directions of your local health professional, call **Health Direct** to speak to a medical professional for free advice or **1800 022 222**, or call the **National Coronavirus Hotline** on **1800 020 080**

### **9. I have recently travelled to another country. What should I do?**

If you have been overseas in the last 14 days, you should advise your supervisor and self-isolate yourself for 14 days from the day you returned or arrived from overseas and monitor yourself for symptoms. **This is an Australian Government directive.**

If you develop a fever or respiratory symptoms, call your doctor or Health Direct on 1800 022 222 or (if your symptoms are severe) visit your local Emergency Department. When you call, tell staff where you have travelled or if you have been in contact with a confirmed case.

### **10. What do I do if I start to display flu-like symptoms at work?**

You should follow the usual practice of calling your supervisor. If you have fever or flu like symptoms you will be required to return home and seek medical attention.

### **11. What is self-isolation?**

You must isolate yourself at home and avoid contact with others until 14 days after you returned from overseas or were last exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19. You can also be instructed by the Government or your employer to self-isolate. If you are unwell you should self-isolate pending medical advice.

- Try to remain indoors, except for seeking medical care.
- You should stay in a different room to other people as much as possible, and wear a surgical mask when you are in the same room as another person and when seeking medical care. Use a separate bathroom if available.
- Do not go to work, school, or public areas, and do not use public transportation, taxi services or rideshares.

Find out more about how to manage self-isolation here: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-isolation-guidance>

### **12. Someone in my household is self-isolating. Do I need to self-isolate too?**

Other members of the household are not required to be isolated unless they have also been overseas in the last 14 days or been in close contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case.

### **13. I'm concerned one of my colleagues seems sick and perhaps should self-isolate. What should I do?**

Raise this concern with your supervisor who can speak with your colleague regarding their health. In the meantime, take precautions such as social distancing and washing your hands frequently.

### **14. When someone has finished 14 days isolation, do they need to see their GP?**

If you are not exhibiting symptoms at the end of 14 days of self-isolation, you can return to work.

### **15. I am a contractor, what does this mean for me?**

Contractors must comply with all of our health and safety measures in relation to COVID-19. However we recommend you also talk directly to your employer.

### **16. I have to self-isolate but have insufficient sick leave. What should I do?**

If you feel well enough to work and your role enables remote work, you can work from home. The Company will consider crediting Special Personal (Sick or Carer's) Leave up to an amount to cover your rostered days over one consecutive 14 calendar day period if required. Crediting Special Personal Leave means you will have permission to go 'into the red' by up to an amount to cover your rostered days over one consecutive 14 calendar day period in your accruals. Over time, usual Personal Leave accrual processes will repay the credited Special Personal Leave.

However, you should discuss your circumstances with your supervisor in the first instance.

### **17. I fly in to a regional airport to get to work, what do I do if flights are cancelled or significantly reduced in frequency?**

You should monitor updates from the airlines you travel with. If your usual means of travel to the region for work have been cancelled, inform your supervisor as soon as possible. If your role enables it, you may be able to work remotely from home. If your role is not suitable for remote working you may be able to access Personal Leave.

### **18. I drive / get on a bus to get to my work location, is it OK for me to keep doing this?**

You should continue to attend work as usual and monitor your health and wellbeing. If you feel unwell, do not travel to work. If you car pool / get on a bus and feel unwell, do not put your teammates at risk by travelling to work. Stay at home, speak to your supervisor as soon as possible and follow the usual leave approval processes.

**19. What if I car pool / fly / get a bus to work and become sick, how will I get home?**

If you start feeling unwell, inform your supervisor immediately and suitable arrangements will be made to get you home.

**20. What if I am residing in a Civeo camp and get sick?**

Immediately inform your supervisor and Civeo reception. You will need to vacate your room and proceed home to seek medical attention.

**21. What are the current requirements for people to stay at a Civeo camp?**

All Civeo guests must now complete a screening questionnaire upon arrival. You should contact Civeo in advance of your arrival to check on the latest arrangements. The Civeo Reservations number is 1300 622 222.

**22. Large indoor and outdoor gatherings have been banned. Does this apply to us?**

The current Government position is no indoor gatherings of more than 100 people and no outdoor gatherings of more than 500 people. At the present time this does not apply to any of our sites but we will keep this under review.

**23. How do I keep a distance of 1.5 metres at work? What about in vehicles?**

Use your best efforts to keep as much distance as possible. If you're in a vehicle, for example, this could mean seating one in the front and one in the back.

**24. Should I cancel all face to face meetings and/or attendance at events?**

Continue work as normal but preference phone and video meetings ahead of face-to-face meetings.

**25. Will you let us know if there's a confirmed case of COVID-19 amongst our workforce?**

While there are privacy issues around identifying individuals, we will notify directly impacted teammates as well as the broader workforce should the situation arise.

**26. Do we have a Trigger Action Response Plan in place?**

A Trigger Action Response Plan (TARP) has been developed and will be posted on noticeboards at your site. If you have any questions about the TARP, please ask your supervisor.

**27. Where can I find further information?**

NSW Health website: [www.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au)

Australian Government Department of Health website: [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)

National Coronavirus Health Information Line: 1800 020 080

Health Direct Hotline: 1800 022 222

Whitehaven will distribute updates periodically as events unfold.