

Staying Safe on Site

COVID-19 Alert Level 3 Protocols

Staying Safe on Site outlines the best practices that construction sites will maintain in order to keep workers, and all those affected by the work, safe and healthy as soon as non-essential work resumes under COVID-19 Alert Level 3.

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 3. 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 escalating 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 3

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.

Employers must have an understanding of how workers will travel to and from site and will communicate the [site transportation protocol](#) to all.

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



Only essential personnel are to access the site. All office employees supporting a project will work remotely, where possible.

A daily register of workers entering and leaving site must be completed along with a health declaration. If electronic sign in machines are used, these must be cleaned and sanitised after each use. Use your existing sign in register or the example [sign-in register](#).

Signage reminding workers of the COVID-19 [physical distancing and hygiene protocol](#) will be posted at the site entrance and in common areas as appropriate.

If an in-person induction is required, the [physical distancing and hygiene protocol](#) must be followed.

Site operations



All work is to be undertaken in such a way as to reduce any possible contact between workers and to promote physical distancing wherever possible, as per the [physical distancing and hygiene protocol](#).

All visitors to the site, such as necessary delivery workers, will be restricted to one person wherever possible. These workers must follow the [site transportation 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](#).

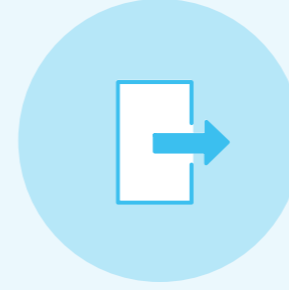
Toolbox talks should be held with physical distancing in place as per the [physical distancing and hygiene protocol](#). A [COVID-19 level 3 Toolbox Talk](#) is available for use to assist with your Toolbox Talks.

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 sanitizer, 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 emergency 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](#).

Workers must follow the [site transportation protocol](#).

Management Protocols



Have an up to date **site plan** that is communicated and agreed with the appropriate persons.

Review contractors site plans

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

A **risk register** must be compiled for every project before work starts on site and kept current throughout the project.

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.

Have a **COVID-19 emergency response plan** must be in place.

Have a protocol for workers who may feel unwell, as per the **COVID-19 emergency response plan**.

Complete an **Exposure Report** in the event of a potential or actual exposure.

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

Assist workers to access mental health and wellbeing information– e.g. Mates in Construction etc.

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

A site separation map detailing access and exit points will be completed.

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

FAQ's

Q: Where you can get a SSSP etc?

A: You can find...

Q: Is health screening required?

A: Only if required by the main contractor and in line with MoH guidelines.

Q: Does everyone need to be reinducted to the site?

A: When first returning to work at Level 3, all workers and contractors are to be reinducted and informed of this Protocol. This only needs to happen once per site.

More information

Healthline

call 0800 3585453
www.health.govt.nz

www.covid19.govt.nz

Physical Distancing and Hygiene Protocol - Alert Level 3

Safe work practices to limit exposure to COVID-19 while operating under alert level 3 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.

1. What is physical distancing?

- a. Physical distancing, sometimes known as “social distancing”, is about keeping a safe distance from others. Physical distancing means remaining 2 metres away from other people. This is important to help protect us from COVID-19, which spreads via droplets from coughing and sneezing. Staying 2 metres away from others is an effective measure.

2. General Working Arrangements

- a. Keep team sizes as small as possible.
- b. Keep a record of who is in each team every day as you may be required to track back for contact tracing.
- c. Site teams are encouraged to put forward split/alternating shifts to avoid extensive intermingling to reduce potential of exposure.
- d. Work site is to be segregated to the extent possible in zones or other methods to keep different teams/trades physically separated at all times.
- e. Where possible apply a one-way system in high-traffic areas, such as lifts, stairwells and scaffolds.
- f. Where practical, all office employees supporting a project work remotely.
- g. When using a vehicle, the **Cleaning Guide** must be followed.
- h. When using a vehicle, limit this to one person per vehicle if possible.

3. External interfaces

- a. One member of the crew nominated to receive supplies etc
- b. Keep the engagement with the other person as brief as possible
- c. 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.

4. Site Entry

- a. Limit visitors to site where ever possible
- b. Introduce staggered start and finish times where possible to reduce congestion and contact.
- c. Monitor site access points to enable social distancing – you may need to change the number of access points, either increase to reduce congestion or decrease to enable monitoring
- d. Where entry systems that require skin contact e.g. fingerprint scanners are used, the Cleaning Guide must be followed.
- e. Require all workers to wash or clean their hands before entering and leaving the site
- f. Allow plenty of space (two metres) between people waiting to enter site
- g. 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
- h. 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. Refer to the FAQs

- i. Delivery drivers should remain in their vehicles if the load will allow it and must wash or clean their hands before unloading goods and materials.
- j. 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.
 - as per document handling in external interfaces

5. Site Meetings

- a. Only absolutely necessary meeting participants should attend
- b. Attendees should be two metres apart from each other
- c. Rooms should be well ventilated / windows opened to allow fresh air circulation
- d. Hold meetings in open areas where possible.
- e. Meetings are to be held through teleconferencing or videoconferencing where possible.

6. Avoiding Close Working

- a. There will be situations where it is not possible or safe for workers to distance themselves from each other by 2 metres. In such cases appropriate [PPE](#) must be worn - facemasks are optional.
- b. Teams working in close proximity (within 2m) should stay in these teams for close work. To minimise risk of exposure, do not introduce or change members of teams.
- c. Plan all work to minimise contact between workers
- d. Re-usable PPE should be thoroughly cleaned after use and not shared between workers
- e. Single use PPE should be disposed of so that it cannot be reused
- f. Stairs should be used in preference to lifts or hoists
- g. Where lifts or hoists must be used:
 - Lower their capacity to reduce congestion and contact at all times
 - Regularly clean touchpoints, doors, buttons etc.
- h. Increase ventilation in enclosed spaces

7. Toilet Facilities

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

8. Eating Arrangements

- a. If you need to leave site for any reason, follow site entry procedures on return.
- b. Dedicated eating areas should be identified on site to reduce food waste and contamination

- c. Break times should be staggered to reduce congestion and contact at all times
- d. 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
- e. The workforce should be asked to bring pre-prepared meals and refillable drinking bottles from home
- f. Workers should sit 2 metres apart from each other whilst eating and avoid all contact
- g. Where catering is provided on site, it should provide pre-prepared and wrapped food only
- h. Payments should be taken by contactless card wherever possible
- i. Shared crockery, eating utensils, cups etc. should not be used unless a dishwasher is available to clean them.
- j. Tables should be cleaned between each use
- k. All rubbish should be put straight in the bin and not left for someone else to clear up
- l. All areas used for eating must be thoroughly cleaned at the end of each break and shift, including chairs, door handles, vending machines..
- m. Limit access and use of coffee machines and water fountains.
- n. Consider numbers on site for site facilities as physical distancing may require additional space/facilities.

9. Changing Facilities, Showers and Drying Rooms

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

10. General Hygiene

- a. Each worker must sanitise their hands with hot soapy water or hand sanitiser before entry onto site.
- b. 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.
- c. Any personal items brought to site by workers must be segregated (kept separate from other workers items).
- d. Individual PPE for workers must be kept separate from other workers PPE and cleaned correctly as per the **Cleaning Guide**.
- e. All eating and drinking utensils to be cleaned by the user.

11. Smoking

- a. 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.
- b. Stand so that smoke or vapor produced is not going into another persons breathing zone.

12. Hand Washing

- a. Provide additional hand washing facilities to the usual welfare facilities if a large spread out site or significant numbers of personnel on site
- b. Ensure soap and fresh water is readily available and kept topped up at all times
- c. Provide hand sanitiser where hand washing facilities are unavailable
- d. Regularly clean the hand washing facilities and check soap and sanitiser levels
- e. Provide suitable and sufficient rubbish bins for hand towels with regular removal and disposal.
- f. 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.



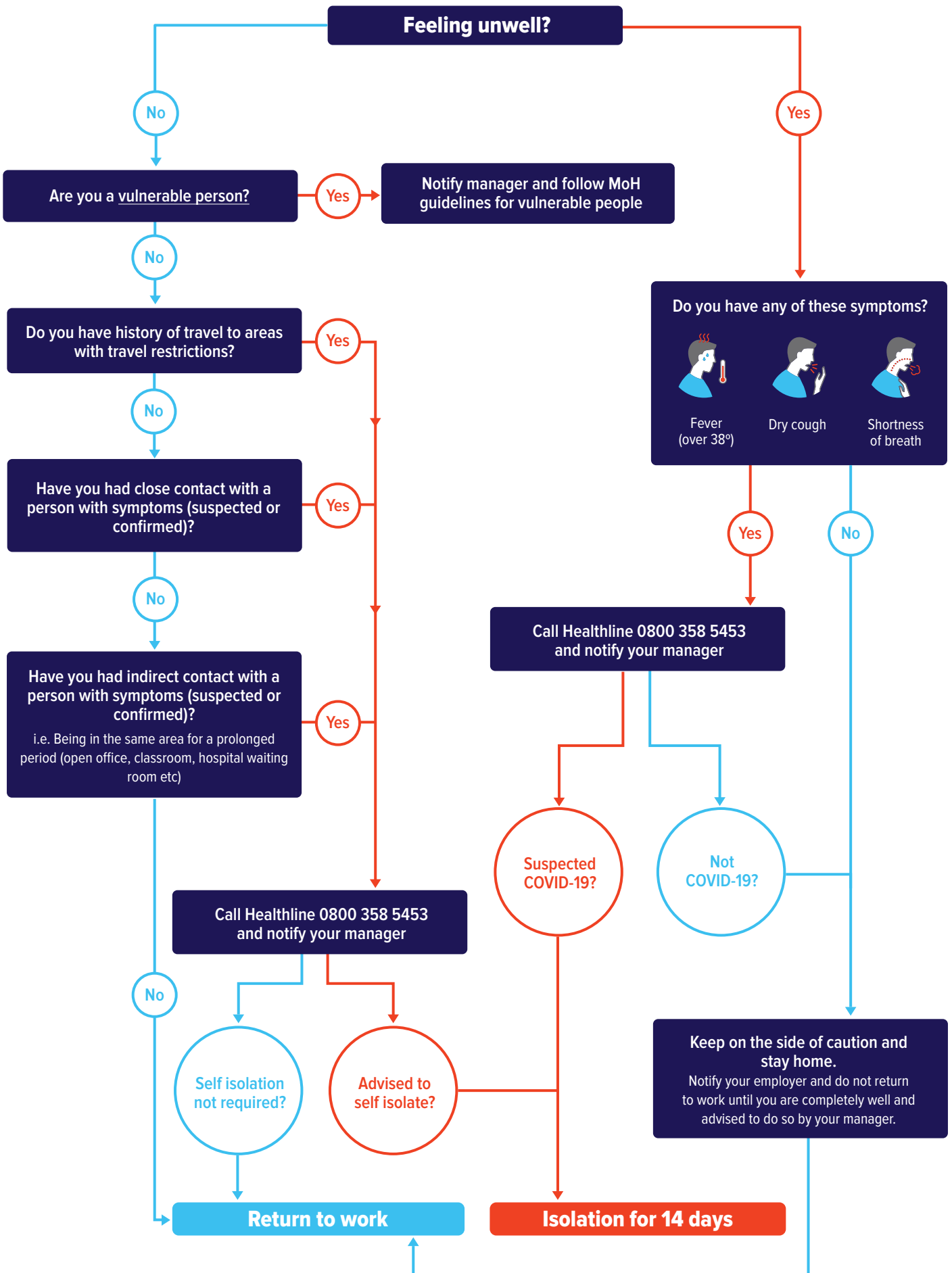
Rinse all the soap off under clean running water. Use warm water if available.



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



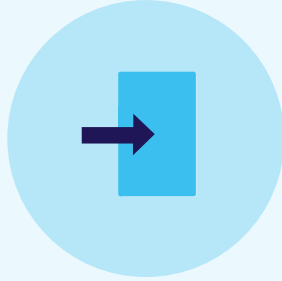
Site Transportation Protocol - Alert Level 3

Workers travel to site

Employers are required to have an understanding of how workers will travel to and from site.



Workers are to travel to the site one person per vehicle



Log is to be kept to record who has arrived on site, how they travelled and who they travelled with for contact tracing purposes

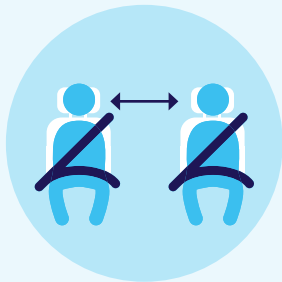


Workers must travel home in the same vehicle as they arrived in



Handwashing protocols to be observed before entering site

Any travel managed by the employer should ensure that adequate steps can be achieved for this transport – which includes:



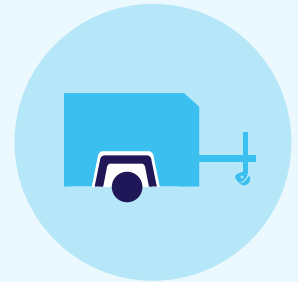
Allowing for spaces between passengers



Hygienic washing of hands before and after the journey



Follow Vehicle Cleaning Procedures as per the **Cleaning Guide**



Restricting equipment and baggage to trailers and or separate parts of the vehicle

Required process for deliveries to site



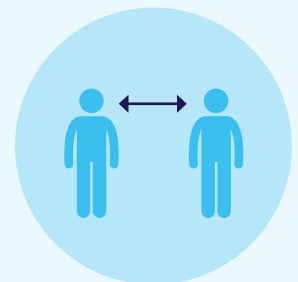
Deliveries to site should be delivered by one person only where possible



Handwashing protocols to be observed once arrived at site



Sign-in register must be completed for persons delivering goods to site



2m physical distancing rules to be applied at all times

Cleaning Guide - Alert Level 3

Construction sites operating after Coronavirus COVID-19 level 4 is lifted need to ensure they are protecting their workforce and minimising the risk of spread of infection.

Key cleaning tips

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 at 60C (140F) 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

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.
- High-touch public surfaces such as stairwell handrails, door handles, tabletops, lift buttons, microwaves and other kitchen surfaces.
- Screens and tables should be wiped after use, including iPads, photocopiers, digital check-in scanners and desktop stations
- Clean floors with disinfectant or bleach solution, starting from one end of the premises to another (from the exit inwards).
- Wash items such as towels, tea towels and other fabrics and dry thoroughly outside or with a dryer.

Site cleaning

Before leaving the office or jobsite 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. Each site must be cleaned and sanitised at the end of the working day or end of each shift.

Common touch points may include:

- All waste and disposable PPE must be removed from site and 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, 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

- Have 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 common 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 common touched areas of the vehicle before and after each day
- Have one person per vehicle where possible. If you are required to have more than one person 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.
- If you need to have multiple people in a vehicle then where possible, split teams into groups and stay in those groups when you travel together.

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 after handling dirty laundry. All clothes and towels should be washed at 60C (140F) or at 40C (104F) with a bleach-based laundry product to prevent germs from spreading. Don't leave laundry in the washing machine – any remaining germs can multiply rapidly.

Specialist Clean

If a worker is unwell and removed from site, a specialist clean will be completed in the area/ areas identified where the worker was working and has accessed. These areas are to be isolated until a specialist clean has taken place.

All equipment and vehicles used must be cleaned down and disinfected, concentrating on points of contact such as handles, steering wheels etc.

40C (104F) with a bleach-based laundry product to prevent germs from spreading. Don't leave laundry in the washing machine – any remaining germs can multiply rapidly.

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

Sign in Register

		Contact tracing Information			I declare that I HAVE NOT: (please sign)		
Date	Full name	Company or person visiting	People you travelled with	Contact Number	<ul style="list-style-type: none">arrived into NZ within the past 14 daysbeen in contact with someone with COVID-19 symptomshad any COVID-19 symptoms	Time in - time out	

Returning home after work

Stopping the spread of COVID-19 from work to home

As an essential worker, you need to be away from home to do your job. 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 four simple guidelines to follow:



No touching

When you return home, try not to touch anything



Shoes

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



Clothes and bags

Place your clothes and bags in a container and wash in a hot washing machine cycle (over 60°C)



Shower

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

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Protect yourself and your workmates

Ways to prevent spreading germs



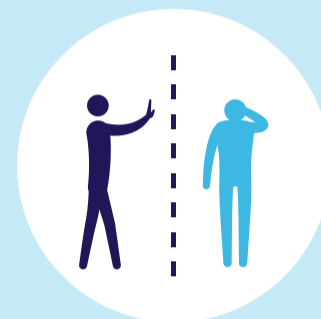
Throw tissues in a bin or plastic bag after use



Cough or sneeze into a tissue or your elbow



Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that people frequently touch



Avoid close contact with people who are sick, sneezing or coughing



Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands



Stay home when you are sick



Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly using soap and water for at least 20 seconds

14 days self isolation is required if you...



Have arrived or returned from overseas within the last 14 days



Are showing symptoms of COVID-19



Have been in close contact with someone confirmed with COVID-19 within the last 14 days

Symptoms can include:



Cough



Fever (at least 38°C)



Shortness of breath

For more information about COVID-19 visit
health.govt.nz/COVID-19

COVID-19 Health Advice
0800 358 5453

For international SIMs calls:
+64 9 358 5453

Protect yourself and your workmates against COVID-19



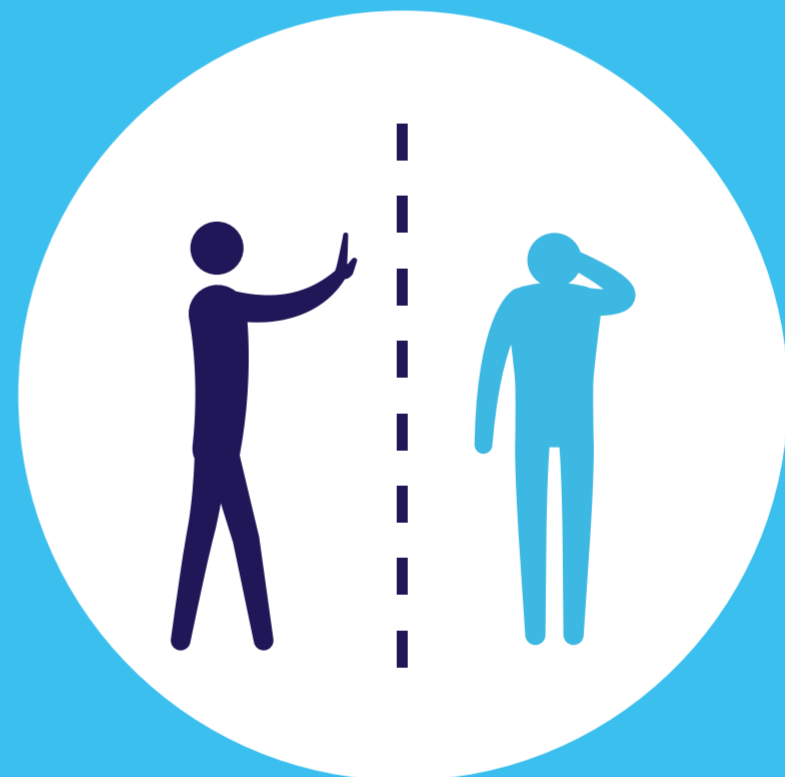
Cover your coughs or sneezes with tissues or your elbow



Put your used tissue in the rubbish bin or in a plastic bag



Wash and dry your hands often, especially after coughing or sneezing – use soap or hand sanitiser



Stay away from others if you're unwell

Protect your family/whanau from COVID-19 (coronavirus)

This advice is from The New Zealand Ministry of Health

For more information about COVID-19 visit health.govt.nz/COVID-19

COVID-19 Health Advice

0800 358 5453

For international SIMs calls

+64 9 358 5453

Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds to prevent spreading germs.



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 (or, if at home, a clean dry towel).

STOP THE SPREAD OF CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Are you experiencing
shortness of breath?



Do you have a a high
temperature (at least 38°C)?



Are you coughing?



If so, please **DO NOT ENTER** this site.
If you have these symptoms call Healthline
on **0800 358 5453**

Introduction

This toolbox talk is about what to do as the Coronavirus (aka COVID-19) spreads through New Zealand and what you can do to protect yourself, your family and the people around you.

The most up-to-date information for New Zealand is at the [Ministry of Health website](#).

The disease

COVID-19 is a new contagious illness that can affect the lungs and airways; it is caused by a type of coronavirus. Early information out of China, where COVID-19 first started, shows that some people are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. This includes older adults and people who have serious chronic medical conditions like heart disease, lung disease and diabetes.

It spreads through tiny droplets of saliva or body fluids spread by such things as talking, sneezing, kissing and coughing. The disease can survive on surfaces such as benchtops and door handles for a number of hours and can then be picked up from there which is why washing your hands is very important.

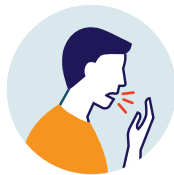
Signs and symptoms

Some people get a very mild form of the disease but it can kill some people quite quickly, especially if they have diabetes or heart disease.

The signs and symptoms are:



A high temperature.
(At least 38°C)



Coughing



Breathing problems

Milder symptoms can be helped with normal medicines but if there is trouble breathing people may need to go to hospital.

If you have these symptoms call the Ministry of Health's special COVID-19 number on **0800 358 5453 at any time**. Or call your doctor, but don't go in without warning them. We can't have doctors getting infected as they will have to go into isolation.

Most of the deaths are from fluid building up in the lungs so people can't breathe. Only about one in 100 people are dying but because it is so easy to spread, this could amount to a lot of people throughout the whole country. And the death rate is much higher in the elderly. The only good thing so far is that almost no children have died from the disease.

Prevention

There is no cure or vaccine yet so preventing the spread is the best defence.



A face mask won't stop the virus, but it does help stop people touching their face to avoid any virus on their hands going into their mouths or eyes.



Because it attacks the lungs, if you smoke, stop now. There's never been a better time!



Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces such as doorknobs and railings.



Wash your hands. Ordinary soap is even better than expensive hand sanitisers. A 20 second wash with soap will dissolve the virus's protective coating. Keep plenty of soap, water and disposable handtowels on site.



Stay home if you are sick. The Ministry of Health wants people suspected of having the virus to stay home and quarantine themselves for 14 days so make sure you have enough supplies to last that long. If one of your team is sick, send them home.



Cough into your elbow, not your hands. This helps stop the spread.



If you have been in contact with someone who has the disease, assume you may have it and stay home. Stopping the spread is our best weapon to stop our medical system getting swamped.

Self-isolation

If you are showing signs of being unwell or have recently arrived or returned from overseas (or have been in contact with someone who has) you may be required to self-isolate). The situation is evolving so please visit the [Ministry of Health website](#) for the most up-to-date information.

Financial issues

Some employers may be able to cover the wages of workers being at home. Others may be able to offer support with food and other necessities.

If being at home causes financial hardship, contact Work and Income via phone or email to see about financial support.

Even if you don't think you qualify, call **0800 559 009** (Monday to Friday 7am–6pm, Saturday 8am – 1pm) to check for eligibility. There may be other options available and they will have suggestions.

Because of the outbreak, the usual two-week stand-down between when a benefit is approved and when it starts has been wiped and from March 23 payments begin as soon as a benefit is approved.

[Work and Income](#) can also help with food and clothing and accommodation costs if you have to move. (This may need to be paid back depending on the situation.)