

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Updated 3 April 2020

Caring for Sick/Isolated Workers

Workplaces must manage the risk of COVID-19 entering the workplace from workers presenting with symptoms.

Workers should be instructed that if they are feeling unwell they should not come to work or immediately return home if they become unwell in the workplace.

Managing workers with symptoms should be part of a documented COVID-19 management plan. This plan should include a process for monitoring worker symptoms and reporting illness.

If a worker shows symptoms at home

If a worker shows symptoms whilst at home, they should:

1. Call their manager and COVID-19 manager prior to their shift starting.
2. They should remain at home and isolate themselves from others they live with.
3. They should call their doctor or Healthline 0800 358 5453.
4. They should keep in touch with their manager **and** COVID-19 manager if they are suspected, being tested or confirmed positive for COVID-19.

If a worker shows symptoms at work

All workers should be screened on arrival for symptoms of COVID-19 and monitored for symptoms during the day.

If any worker develops symptoms during the day they should:

1. Report to their manager and COVID-19 manager immediately.
2. They should be asked to leave and isolate themselves at home immediately.
3. The unwell worker should call their doctor or Healthline 0800 358 5453.
4. Previous work areas, accommodation and vehicles used to transport suspected/confirmed worker should be cleaned following Ministry of Health instructions before it is re-occupied and used.
5. They should keep in touch with their manager and COVID-19 manager if they are suspected, being tested or confirmed positive for COVID-19.

Caring for sick / isolated workers in group /RSE accommodation

Immediate action

1. The sick worker should be isolated to a dedicated isolation room as soon as they show symptoms.
2. A sick worker should wear a face mask during transportation to the self-isolation area.
3. Erect signage to warn others that the area is being used as an isolation area with restricted access.
4. A sick worker should wear a face mask when in close contact (less than 2 metres) of others.
5. Someone should be assigned to care for the sick worker.

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Personal hygiene for the sick or isolated worker

- Cleaning hands often with soap for at least 20 seconds, dry hands thoroughly.
- Do not share towels with anyone else in the house.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, sleeve or elbow. Throw used tissues in a lined rubbish bin and immediately wash your hands with soap and water.

Use of household items by sick or isolated worker

- Have separate dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels.
- Have separate washcloths and bed linen pillows.
- Have separate toiletries including toilet paper, tissues, toothbrush, toothpaste and sanitisers.
- Wash dishes, drinking glasses, cups and eating utensils separately in a dishwasher or use detergent and hot water.

Use of facilities by sick or isolated worker

- If there is a shared toilet and bathroom, it's important that it is cleaned every time after it is used by the person.
- Use facilities when others are not around if possible.

Cleaning of sick or isolated workers accommodation

- It is important to keep rooms well ventilated and clean. Refer to the NZAPI 'Group/RSE Accommodation Cleaning Recommendations' for more information on cleaning products and frequency.

Correct care and monitoring

While in isolation sick or isolated workers must be cared for properly

- Provide enough water / drinks to maintain normal hydration levels.
- Prepare meals away from the isolation room and deliver food regularly without any physical contact.
- Regular checks should be made on the worker throughout the day (minimum 3 times daily).
- Provision for the isolated worker to contact loved ones/family.

Monitoring sick or isolated worker

Check at least 3 times a day, ask about:

1. Temperature
2. Status of breathing
3. State of wellbeing
4. Fluid intake
5. Any other issues

If health gets worse, get medical help and follow the health care provider instructions on what to do next.

During isolation, sick or isolated workers do not need to be confined to a bed/room.

They can:

- Have face to face contact for short periods of time, but no closer than 2 metres.
- They can go outside but must maintain the 2 metre separation distances from others.

They cannot:

- Be closer than 2 metres to other people
- Share food and drinks or prepare food for others
- Have social visitors, such as friends and family to visit
- Go to populated areas such as supermarkets
- Use public transport
- Sleep in common areas

PPE for carer

If you enter the sick or isolated person's room wear

- Disposable gloves
- P2 mask
- Face shields/visor
- Plastic apron

Make sure you are monitoring the health of those caring for the sick or isolated worker. This includes checking for signs and symptoms of sickness/COVID-19 daily.

How long should a sick or isolated worker stay in isolation

The sick or isolated worker must remain under isolation until public health staff say that they no longer need to. This will be when the risk of transmission to others no longer exists.