

WHS advice for small business

swa.gov.au/coronavirus

Under the model Work Health and Safety laws, employers have a duty of care for the health and safety of their workers and others at the workplace. These laws apply even if workers are required to work somewhere other than their usual workplace, for example, working from home.

Workers also have a duty to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and to not adversely affect the health and safety of others.

Identifying and minimising risks

As an employer, you need to identify risks to work health and safety from exposure to the COVID-19 virus, and wherever possible, put in place appropriate controls. You need to follow government directions, including implementing appropriate [physical distancing](#) – keeping everyone at the workplace at least 1.5 metres physically apart.

Risks from the COVID-19 virus can be physical or psychosocial. What you can do to manage the risk of exposure to COVID-19 will depend on your workplace and the work that you do. For example, you could:

- > put measures in place to avoid close contact between people – keep everyone at the workplace at least 1.5 metres physically apart
- > encourage everyone in the workplace to practice [good hygiene](#) by providing access to appropriate hygiene facilities to enable workers to wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or alcohol-based hand sanitiser
- > provide access to personal protective equipment
- > increase cleaning in the workplace
- > limit access to the workplace by other people
- > direct workers to work from another location, such as their home – keep in mind this may change, increase or create new work health and safety risks

You need to talk to your workers about what you plan to do.

If a worker is suspected or confirmed to have the COVID-19 virus

You must make sure they stay away from the workplace. You should encourage them to seek medical advice.

If you know a worker has COVID-19:

- > ensure they do not return to work while they are infectious
- > seek advice from health authorities immediately

Keeping workers informed

Give your workers clear direction and guidance. Tell them what is expected of them and update them when this changes. You should:

- > make sure workers know when they need to stay away from a workplace
- > make sure they know what to do if they become unwell
- > provide a point of contact to discuss any concerns

Provide your workers with the fact sheet *Coronavirus (COVID-19) - Work health and safety advice for workers*.

More information

- > For information about COVID-19 and work health and safety, go to swa.gov.au/coronavirus
- > For information on leave and pay for your employees, go to fairwork.gov.au/coronavirus
- > For health information, go to health.gov.au

Please note the model WHS laws have been implemented in all jurisdictions except Victoria and Western Australia. For information specific to your location of work, please contact the relevant WHS regulator in your state or territory.



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