



Novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

Information for Hotels and Hotel Staff

An outbreak of novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) was detected in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in late December 2019.

Can I go to work?

If you have travelled to Hubei Province, China within the past 14 days, you must isolate yourself in your home for 14 days after leaving Hubei Province. If you have been in close contact with a confirmed case of novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV), or suspect that you may have come into contact with a confirmed case of novel coronavirus, you must isolate yourself in your home for 14 days after last contact with the confirmed case. You are particularly advised not to attend your work and to avoid contact with co-workers and hotel patrons. Please visit the Department of Health website for additional information on how to self-isolate.

If you have travelled to mainland China in general but not Hubei Province, we do not currently recommend self-isolation. The development of cases outside of Hubei Province is being closely monitored and this advice will be updated if necessary.

If you develop symptoms (listed below) within 14 days of returning from Hubei Province or within 14 days of contact with a confirmed case of novel coronavirus, you should arrange to see your usual doctor for urgent assessment. You should telephone the health clinic or hospital before you arrive and tell them that you have returned from Hubei Province within the past 14 days. Your doctor will liaise with Public Health authorities to manage your care. You must remain isolated in your home or a healthcare setting until Public Health authorities inform you it is safe for you to return to your usual activities.

Hotel staff who are self-isolated due to one of the above situations should alert their employer to discuss alternative arrangements such as working from home.

I am an employer – what should I tell my staff?

Hotel management should provide information and brief all employees and contract staff, including domestic and cleaning staff, on relevant information and procedures to prevent the spread of 2019-nCoV to people in the hotel setting. You should inform staff who meet the above criteria that they should remain isolated in their home. Workers should advise their employer if they develop symptoms during the isolation period, particularly if they have been in the workplace.

What is this virus?

Coronaviruses can make humans and animals sick. Some coronaviruses can cause illness similar to the common cold and others can cause more serious diseases, including Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS).

The virus seen in mainland China, particularly Hubei Province is called 'novel' because it is new. It has not been detected before this outbreak. Most people currently infected live in, or have travelled to Hubei Province, China. There have been some cases of 2019-nCoV reported in other

Chinese provinces and other countries. It is likely that the virus originally came from an animal, and there is now evidence that it can spread from person-to-person.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms can range from mild illness to severe illness including pneumonia, and include (but are not limited to) fever, cough, sore throat, fatigue and shortness of breath.

How is the virus spread?

The virus is most likely to spread from person to person through:

- direct contact with a person whilst they are infectious;
- contact with droplets when a person with a confirmed infection coughs or sneezes; or
- touching objects or surfaces (such as doorknobs or tables) that were contaminated by droplets from secretions coughed or sneezed from a person with a confirmed infection, and then touching your mouth or face.

For how long can a person spread the infection to other people?

The length of time that a person is infectious, that is, can spread the infection to others, is not yet known. However, there has been emerging evidence of asymptomatic or minimally symptomatic infection and pre-symptomatic transmission in at least one case cluster. It is therefore likely that a person can spread the infection from before the time they first develop symptoms until up to one day after symptoms stop.

Therefore, the Australian Government Department of Health is currently recommending an isolation period of 14 days for return travellers from Hubei Province, China, and for contacts of confirmed cases.

Who is most at risk of a serious illness?

Some people who are infected may not get sick at all, some will get mild symptoms from which they will recover easily, and others may become very ill, very quickly.

From previous experience with other coronaviruses, the people at most risk of serious infection are:

- people with compromised immune systems;
- elderly people;
- very young children and babies;
- people with diagnosed heart and lung conditions; and
- Aboriginal and Torres-Strait Islander people.

What if I have already returned to work but should have been isolated?

You should inform your employer as soon as possible that you have recently travelled to Hubei province or had contact with a confirmed case, and isolate yourself for the remainder of the 14 day period.

If you go on to develop mild symptoms:

- immediately isolate yourself from others in your home;
- call your usual doctor or local hospital and tell them you may have novel coronavirus infection; and
- when you get to the doctor's clinic or hospital, tell them again that you may have novel coronavirus infection; and
- as soon as possible, please call your employer to notify them that you have developed symptoms and will be tested for the novel coronavirus.

If you have serious symptoms such as difficulty breathing:

- call **000** and ask for an ambulance;
- tell the ambulance officers that you may have novel coronavirus infection; and
- as soon as possible, please call your employer to notify them that you have developed symptoms and will be tested for the novel coronavirus.

Your doctor will test you for 2019-nCoV and provide advice on your care. You will also be contacted by Public Health officers who will provide you with more information and who will coordinate with your employer as needed.

How can we help prevent the spread of the virus?

Practising good hand hygiene and sneeze/cough hygiene is the best defence:

- wash your hands often with soap and water, or alcohol-based hand gel, before and after eating as well as after attending the toilet;
- avoid contact with others; and
- cough and sneeze into your elbow.

Can hotel patrons bring in the virus?

The risk of hotel patrons who may be infected staying in hotel settings is currently extremely low. It is important that the hotel provides patrons with information about novel coronavirus to prevent spread upon their arrival to the hotel.

What if hotel patrons need to self-isolate?

If hotel patrons need to self-isolate in a hotel, it is important that staff take precautions to prevent the spread of the virus. The risk to staff should be low if they wash their hands well and the patrons do not have symptoms. Staff should avoid close contact with these guests but it is safe to be in the same room (at a distance) without protective equipment when delivering food, which we recommend that the guests have in their room.

Is it safe to clean?

Cleaning staff should avoid close contact with guests who have self-isolated. They should wear gloves while cleaning, and use alcohol hand rub before and after wearing gloves. As an added precaution, your cleaning staff may wish to wear a surgical mask while cleaning the room. Before entering the room, cleaning staff may inquire if people are well, and ask them to put on a surgical mask.

What if a patron becomes ill?

If a person who has self-isolated develops symptoms, they should be seen urgently by a doctor at a hospital and the relevant state or territory Public Health authority should be contacted. It is important to phone ahead to the hospital or doctor to get advice. Staff should

avoid contact with guests who become unwell and seek appropriate medical advice if this occurs.

Where can I get more information?

Visit the Australian Government Department of Health homepage at www.health.gov.au.

Call the Public Health Information Line on 1800 004 599.

Contact your state or territory Public Health Authority:

- ACT call 02 5124 9213 during business hours or (02) 9962 4155 after hours
- NSW call 1300 066 055
- NT call 08 8922 8044.
- Qld call 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84)
- SA call 1300 232 272
- Tas call 1800 671 738
- Vic call 1300 651 160
- WA call 08 9328 0553 or or call your local [public health unit](#)