



Information for hotels and hotel staff

If you have returned from anywhere overseas, or have been in close contact with someone diagnosed with coronavirus, in the last 14 days, you need to self-isolate.

This information sheet should be read in conjunction with the 'Isolation guidance' information sheet at www.health.gov.au

Go to www.health.gov.au for more information.

Can I go to work?

Hotel staff **cannot** work in hotels if they are self-isolating.

If you develop the following symptoms; fever, cough, sore throat, tiredness and shortness of breath, you should seek urgent medical care. 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.

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 coronavirus 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 in the 24 hours before developing symptoms.

What is this virus?

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 is called 'novel' because it is new. It has not been detected before this outbreak.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms include (but are not limited to) fever, cough, sore throat, tiredness and shortness of breath.

How is the virus spread?

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

- close contact with a person whilst they are infectious in the 24 hours before symptoms appeared
- close contact with droplets when a person with a confirmed infection coughs or sneezes
- touching objects or surfaces (such as door handles or tables) contaminated from a cough or sneeze from a person with a confirmed infection, and then touching your mouth or face.

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 (e.g. cancer)
- elderly people
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, as they have higher rates of chronic illness
- people with diagnosed chronic medical conditions
- very young children and babies*
- people in group residential settings
- people in detention facilities.

*At this stage the risk to children and babies, and the role children play in the transmission of COVID-19, is not clear. However, there has so far been a low rate of confirmed COVID-19 cases among children relative to the broader population.

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 overseas, or had contact with a confirmed case, and isolate yourself for the remainder of the 14 day period.

If you go on to develop symptoms:

- Immediately isolate yourself from others in your home.
- Call your usual doctor or local hospital and tell them you may have coronavirus.
- When you get to the doctor's clinic or hospital, tell them again that you may have coronavirus.
- As soon as possible, please call your employer to notify them that you have developed symptoms.

If you have serious symptoms such as difficulty breathing:

- call **000** and ask for an ambulance; and
- tell the ambulance officers that you may have coronavirus.

Your doctor will decide if you need to be tested for coronavirus and provide advice on your care. You may 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 and sneeze/cough hygiene is the best defence against most viruses. You should:

- wash your hands frequently with soap and water, before and after eating, and after going to the toilet
- cover your cough and sneeze, dispose of tissues, and wash your hands
- avoid contact with others (stay more than 1.5 meters from people).

What if hotel patrons need to self-isolate?

If hotel patrons need to self-isolate in a hotel, it is important 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 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, 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.

More information

For the latest advice, information and resources, go to www.health.gov.au

Call the National Coronavirus Help Line on 1800 020 080. It operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If you require translating or interpreting services, call 131 450.

The phone number of your state or territory public health agency is available at www.health.gov.au/state-territory-contacts

If you have concerns about your health, speak to your doctor.