

## COVID-19

### Work health and safety: Information for workers

Under the model Work Health and Safety laws, your employer has a duty of care for the health and safety of their workers and others at the workplace.

#### What do workers need to do?

You have a duty to take reasonable care of your own health and safety, and to not adversely affect the health and safety of others.

You need to follow any reasonable policies or directions your employer has put in place in response to COVID-19. This includes if you are working from another location, such as working from home.

#### What do employers need to do?

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

Risks from COVID-19 virus can be physical or psychosocial.

What your employer can do to manage the risk of exposure to the COVID-19 virus will depend on your workplace and the work you do. Your employer should talk to you about what they plan to do.

They could:

- put measures in place to avoid close contact between people – keep everyone in 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 use alcohol-based hand sanitiser
- provide access to personal protective equipment
- increase cleaning in the workplace
- limit access to the workplace by other people
- direct you to work from another location, such as your home – keep in mind this may change, increase or create work health and safety risks

#### What should I do if think I have COVID-19?

You should:

- [seek medical advice](#)
- do not go to work
- tell your employer as soon as possible and update them your if your situation changes, for example if it's confirmed you have the virus



### **Can I stop work if it is unsafe?**

If you have concerns about your safety, talk to your employer or Health and Safety Representative (HSR).

In some circumstances workers have the right to stop or refuse to carry out unsafe work. You have this right if there is a reasonable concern you would be exposed to a serious risk to your health and safety from an immediate or imminent hazard – this could include exposure to the COVID-19 virus.

If you stop work because it is unsafe, you need to tell your employer as soon as possible. You must also then be available to carry out suitable alternative work, such as working from home.

### **More information**

For information on work health and safety, go to the [Safe Work Australia website](#)

For information on your leave and pay, go to the [Fair Work Ombudsman](#)

For health information, go to [health.gov.au](http://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](#).