COVID-19 Fact Sheet
Advice for businesses and organisations

This COVID-19 Fact Sheet provides information and advice for organisations, businesses, employees and volunteers about:

- > What is a close contact?
- > What should a person do if they come into contact with a person who has been identified as a 'close contact'?
- > Does a person need to notify their organisation if they are getting tested for COVID-19?
- > What does an organisation need to do if someone in the organisation is getting tested for COVID-19?
- > What happens if an employee has tested positive for COVID-19?
- > What cleaning practices should organisations be adopting?
- > How can we practise social distancing in the workplace?
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What is a close contact?

A close contact is someone who has had face-to-face contact for at least 15 minutes, or has been in the same closed space for at least 2 hours, as someone who has tested positive for the COVID-19 when that person was infectious.

Close contacts are advised by public health officials of the need to self-isolate.

What should a person do if they come into contact with a person who has been identified as a 'close contact'?

Contacts of people who are 'close contacts' of a COVID case **do not need to self-isolate unless instructed to do so by a health practitioner.**

However, contacts of 'close contacts,' like all people, must practise good hygiene and social distancing.

If a 'close contact' of a confirmed COVID case develops symptoms, the 'close contact' must self-isolate and seek medical advice from their GP or SA Health.

Public health authorities will determine who, if anyone, has been in close contact with them while they were infectious, and these people will also be directed to self-isolate.

Does a person need to notify their organisation if they are getting tested for COVID-19?

Employees/volunteers should refer to their own workplace/organisation Occupational Health & Safety (OH&S) policy and other relevant workplace policies in regards to notifying their employer if they are unwell.

COVID-19 is a notifiable disease in South Australia. People who test positive will be notified to SA Health by testing laboratories and doctors. People who are confirmed with COVID-19 will be interviewed by SA Health (for contact tracing purposes).

People who are under investigation or being tested for COVID-19 must not attend work and must remain in self-isolation in their place of residence until they receive a negative test, or for 14 days from date of last exposure with a confirmed case of COVID-19 (whichever is longer). In addition, there are requirements for self-isolation for 14 days for all people who have recently returned from interstate or overseas.

What does an organisation need to do if someone in the organisation is getting tested for COVID-19?

Organisations must ensure staff have access to hand hygiene facilities (either soap and running water, or alcohol-based hand sanitisers) and have information about how to limit the spread of COVID-19, which can be found on the Australian Government Department of Health website.

The organisation should ensure that regular cleaning and disinfection of the workplace is undertaken as routine.

What happens if an employee has tested positive for COVID-19?

If an employee has tested positive for COVID-19, a public health official will conduct a detailed interview to determine who that person has come into contact with while infectious with COVID-19, and determine who is considered to be a casual or close contact.

In some instances additional cleaning and disinfection of the workplace may be indicated if the person returns a positive test.

The organisation and close contacts of the confirmed case must follow the advice of public health officials.

The organisation must also follow the Australian Government Department for Health Environmental cleaning and disinfection principles for COVID-19.

Do employees/volunteers need a clearance certificate to return to work?

No. If they do not have any symptoms there is no testing that can be done to predict whether or not a person will become unwell. It is not appropriate to issue a 'medical clearance certificate.'

Once 14 days of self-isolation have passed, a person has passed the time in which you would become sick if you were exposed to COVID-19.

GPs have reported large numbers of people requesting clearance certificates or to be tested for COVID-19 before returning to work. This testing is using GP appointments and testing resources unnecessarily and will reduce the number of swabs and appointments that could be taken by other members of the population who have a genuine need for medical review and testing.

What cleaning practices should organisations be adopting?

Recent evidence suggests that COVID-19 may survive for hours up to several days on surfaces, especially in the presence of organic material.

Cleaning and disinfection is strongly recommended.

It is good practice to routinely clean surfaces as follows:

> Clean frequently touched surfaces (such as door handles, tabletops, lift buttons, light switches, taps) with detergent solution.
> Clean general surfaces and fittings when visibly soiled and immediately after any spillage.

For further information visit the Australian Government Department for Health Environmental cleaning and disinfection principles for COVID-19.

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How can we practice social distancing in the workplace?

To reduce the spread of germs and infectious diseases, practise social distancing in the workplace:

> Stay at home if you are sick

> Stop handshaking as a greeting

> Hold meetings via video conferencing or phone call

> Defer meetings where possible

> Hold essential meetings outside in the open air if possible

> Promote good hand and sneeze/cough hygiene and provide hand sanitisers for all staff and workers

> Take lunch at your desk or outside rather than in the lunch room

> Clean and disinfect high touch surfaces regularly

> Consider opening windows and adjusting air conditioning for more ventilation

> Limit food handling and sharing of food in the workplace

> Cease non-essential business travel

> Promote strictest hygiene among food preparation (canteen) staff and their close contacts.

More information

For more information about reducing the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace, go to

> www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/getting-workplace-ready-for-covid-19.pdf

For the latest advice, information and resources, go to

> www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/COVID2019

> www.health.gov.au

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

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

For more information

Communicable Disease Control Branch
Department for Health and Wellbeing
SA Health
Telephone: 1300 232 272
www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/COVID2019

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Government of South Australia

SA Health