

Contact assessment and management guidance: workplaces, business and industry

COVID-19 Public Health Division

Intelligence, Case Contact and Outbreak Management

Version 4.1

19 January 2022

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OVERVIEW

This guidance is to support decision making following a COVID-19 exposure in workplaces, business and industry settings. This may include but is not limited to, offices, hospitality venues, supermarkets, warehouses, construction sites and public transport depots.

It is for businesses and members of the public to assess and manage situations where an infectious case has attended business, industry or workplace premises.

This guidance does not apply to exposures in households or sensitive settings, that is schools, healthcare (hospital and community-based), residential facilities including aged care, correctional centres or other settings where there are people at high risk of severe illness.

The guidance will be updated to reflect changes to policy and the public health response in Victoria.

This guidance is general. Specific risk assessment and tailored outbreak management by the Department of Health and Local Public Health Units may be required in some circumstances, where significant transmission events have occurred, or where there are other additional risks to workforce, operational continuity or community.

Workplace and employee obligations

Confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 must notify the operator of any work premises at which they ordinarily work if they are diagnosed with COVID-19, and if they attended an indoor space at the work premises during their infectious period (refer to the [Pandemic Workplace Order](#) and [Checklist for COVID cases](#)).

The operator of a workplace must take reasonable steps to notify employees and contractors who have been exposed to a confirmed or probable case, and to advise them of their testing obligations.

The operator of a workplace must collect, record and store a list of contacts and maintain a system to enable contact notification. Contact lists are managed by the workplace and are not provided to the Local Public Health Unit unless specifically requested.

The guidance is intended for workplace contact management and does not apply to household or social contacts.

For further information

[Information and advice for businesses who have a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the workplace](#)

[Exemption of Specific Workers – Contacts Conditions and Other Directions](#) and [Guidance for exemption from quarantine for specific workers who are close contacts](#)

Separate guidance is provided for [healthcare \(hospitals\)](#) and [primary care, community-based healthcare and emergency services](#).

CONTACT ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT MATRIX

Case = a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19.

Contact = any **staff member or contractor** who has contact with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 in a **non-household** setting.

EXPOSURE EVENT RISK ASSESSMENT

An exposure event is contact with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 during their infectious period.¹

1. The business conducts a risk assessment for each exposure event using the contact assessment and management matrix.
2. Individuals are identified as workplace contacts or low risk. 3. Individuals must follow the testing requirements for their assessed level of risk (low risk or contact).

Lower risk exposure scenario:

Contact with a case in their infectious period that is:

- face-to-face (<1.5m) and transient (<1 minute)

OR

- distanced (>1.5m) and any duration in a large (>100m²) indoor² or outdoors space

AND

- *does not meet the criteria for higher risk*

Higher-risk exposure scenario:

Contact with a case in their infectious period that is:

- face-to-face (<1.5m) and prolonged (>15 minutes)

OR

- direct physical contact (for example, shaking hands)

OR

- distanced (>1.5m) and very prolonged (>2 hours) in a small indoor space (<100m²)

Lower risk

Workplace contact

Masks correctly worn by the case and contact lowers the risk of exposure. Note: time periods are cumulative across a period of one day (for example, two separate 10-minute exposures should be assessed as a 'prolonged' (>15 min) exposure.

QUARANTINE AND TESTING REQUIREMENTS

Lower risk	Monitor for symptoms and do a rapid antigen (RA) test if symptoms develop (or PCR if RA not available).
Workplace contact	<p>A workplace contact must have a RA test if they have symptoms (or PCR if RA test not available) and isolate until a negative result is returned.</p> <p>Daily RA testing for 5 days after contact notification is strongly recommended. There are no quarantine requirements and contacts may return to work if they are asymptomatic and RA test (or PCR if RA test not available) is negative.</p> <p>If a RA test is positive, contacts must notify the department and isolate for 7 days. Contacts must also notify the workplace if they have been at work during their infectious period..</p>

THE PRESENCE OF SYMPTOMS ALWAYS REQUIRES TESTING

¹ A case's infectious period should be taken 48 hours before onset of symptoms until release from isolation. If a case is asymptomatic, they should be assumed to be infectious from 48 hours before the initial positive test (refer to the [Case, Contact and Outbreak Management Policy](#)).

² Indoor space means an area, room or premises substantially enclosed by a roof and walls that are floor-to-ceiling or at least 2.1 meters high, regardless of whether the roof or walls or any part of them are permanent or temporary, or open or closed.

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Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.

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