

COVID-19 Staff Guidance

V:13 – 9.5.23

I've tested positive to COVID-19 (either PCR or RAT):

Notify EH Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) of your positive test results via [redcaps survey](#). Also notify your manager directly.

You will receive an email with instructions from IPAC after submitting your notification. Please follow all instructions and do not attend a sensitive setting (this includes health care facilities and Residential Aged Care) for 7 days after testing positive.

Report your positive result to Department of Health [online](#) or by calling 1800 675 398.

Staff are eligible for COVID special leave for a period of 7 days after testing positive. If symptoms continue and further leave is required after the initial 7 day period, personal leave must be utilised.

I'm a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19:

A close contact is someone who lives with a positive case (household contact) or has spent more than four hours with a positive person in a house, accommodation or care facility setting during their infectious period.

Please notify EH Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) of your close contact status via [redcaps survey](#). Also notify your manager directly.

Whilst at work, please observe the following requirements for 7-days following the positive result of your contact:

- Leave work if symptoms develop
- Complete a RAT every day up to and including day 6 after the contact tested positive
- Wear a fit-tested N95 mask and eye protection at all times for seven days whilst on-site (unless eating and drinking)
- Do not enter shared break rooms and take breaks separately (and preferably outside) for seven days
- Make efforts to isolate away from the positive person in their household where possible

I'm a workplace contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19:

A workplace contact is considered an 'exposed person' under the following circumstances:

1. Face to face and unmasked contact for >15mins (e.g. in a tearoom)
2. Shared indoor space for 2 hours where N95 masks were not being used

There is no requirement for exposed persons to isolate but you must log your workplace exposure via REDCap as soon as you are notified. Please select 'workplace contact' when completing [redcaps survey](#).

Exposed persons must follow additional safety precautions for 7 days post exposure, including:

1. Wear an N95 mask (except while on breaks in an isolated space)
2. While in the workplace, do not enter shared break areas (where masks are removed)
3. Return a negative RAT on Day 1 (after being notified of possible workplace contact), and

4. Conduct daily RAT and return a negative result on each day prior to work at an eastern Health facility for 5 days after being notified of being a contact (e.g. Day 1 RAT + 4 subsequent RATs prior to each shift).
5. If you experience any symptoms, isolate immediately and test before returning to work.

If your test result is positive, notify EH Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) of your positive test results via [redcaps survey](#), selecting 'I have tested positive for COVID-19'. Also notify your manager directly.

I need a COVID-19 vaccine (primary dose or booster):

Check your eligibility for COVID-19 vaccine [here](#)

Find a local pharmacy or clinic offering vaccine appointments [here](#)

Where can I collect a box of Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs)?:

Boxes of RATs can be ordered through FMIS, purchased at your local pharmacy or collected free of charge at collection point near you. For more information, visit [Department of Health COVID-19 testing information](#)

Can I get a PCR test?

Access to PCR testing is via GP referral only, as per [Department of Health COVID-19 testing information](#)

I tested positive and have completed my 7 days away from sensitive settings.

Can I return to work?

Staff who have tested positive for COVID-19 may return to work after day 7 from the date their positive test was taken, provided all symptoms have resolved. Staff who were asymptomatic throughout may return after 7 days. Day 1 is considered the day the test is positive. If that is (for example) Monday, day 7 is the next Sunday, and staff may return to work (see below) on the following Monday at the earliest.

Staff who have persisting symptoms should wait until recovery before returning to work. There is NO need for clearance testing for positive staff.

For one week after return to work, staff recovering from COVID must wear an N95 mask at all times on-site, avoid spending time with patients or colleagues while unmasked, and take meal breaks alone.

Staff are considered 'immune' for 4 weeks after they recover from COVID. During this period, they should not undertake asymptomatic testing, and are not considered contacts after any new exposure.

How can I treat my symptoms at home?

[Resources](#) are available for those who are able to treat symptoms from home

What are some general measures/behaviours I should follow at work?

- Wear a mask (as per policy #244 [COVID-19 \(SARS-CoV-2\) – Infection Control aspects of management](#))

- Ensure regular hand hygiene
- Ensure COVID-19 vaccination is up to date (including booster doses)
- If unwell (COVID symptoms), do a RAT and stay home until recovered

What can I do about breaks at work?

Staff should be mindful that shared meal break rooms (tea rooms etc.) can present a risk for COVID-19 exposure.

To minimise potential exposure, staff may wish to take breaks alone and outside (weather permitting).

What are the current mask & eyewear settings?

Refer to policy #244 [COVID-19 \(SARS-CoV-2\) – Infection Control aspects of management](#)

I'm feeling anxiety surrounding the pandemic, where can I get help?

There is a range of free and confidential wellbeing services available. Visit the Wellbeing Page on the [Intranet](#) or [Workplace](#) for details.

Where can I find out more information about COVID-19?

For the latest news and vaccine information visit the [Department of Health Website](#).

Updated 09.05.2023