

Case and Outbreak Management: Preparedness Checklist



LIVING IN A COVID-19 VACCINATED COMMUNITY

Version 2 | 14 April 2022

Checklist for use in high risk and priority settings - Prevention, Planning and Preparedness stage.

Prevention

- Encourage all staff to be up-to-date with COVID-19 vaccination; also encourage influenza vaccination when available, to help minimise the overall burden of illness in settings and workplaces.
- Optimise ventilation in your workplace; minimise recirculation of air and ensure the heating and air conditioning system is well-maintained (see Safe Work Australia information on indoor ventilation).
- Do not permit workers to enter the workplace if they have any symptoms of COVID-19, have tested positive for COVID-19 and are still in their isolation period, or if they are a close contact of a case (unless they receive exemption to work).
- Encourage all staff and visitors to abide by relevant directions under Section 16 the Public Health Act 1997, for example to maintain 1.5 metres distance between people at the workplace, when practicable.
- Ensure those who are required to wear a face mask in your setting to do so. It can be helpful to have a supply of masks available for people entering the premises.
Facilitate optimal hand hygiene and cleaning and maintain adequate hand hygiene and cleaning supplies, and a cleaning schedule that focuses on frequently touched surfaces.

Planning and preparedness


- Check the definition of a COVID-19 outbreak for your high-risk or priority setting and liaise with Public Health about how to track the number of active cases and identify potential outbreaks.
- Update your COVID-19 Safety Plan and, for priority, high-risk and large workplaces, your Outbreak Management Plan. This includes undertaking a mandatory risk assessment to determine the risk of COVID-19 in your workplace and the measures required to protect your staff; this may include requiring staff to be vaccinated or to continue wearing face masks.
- Maintain situational awareness; check www.coronavirus.tas.gov.au regularly for updates to Public Health advice.
- Identify who will coordinate the response in your setting and be the main contact person for Public Health - if required - and the membership, roles and responsibilities of your internal outbreak response team. Informing staff of their roles and the workplace outbreak plan.
- Consider the needs of diverse groups within the setting, including people at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 and people whose preferred language is not English.
- Review existing health screening processes (as necessary).
- Prepare for staff to work from home (if possible/ if appropriate).
- Consider having a supply of rapid antigen tests (RATs) available for staff, to enable rapid identification of cases.


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 Determine if your business meets the definition of a supplier of critical goods or services, which enables staff identified as close contacts to be exempt from quarantine (subject to conditions) if the workplace experiences a critical shortage of staff due to quarantine and isolation requirements.

 Consider how to continue business safely (or suspend activities) during outbreaks and high staff absenteeism; plan for absenteeism rates of 20-30 per cent over winter months when influenza and other respiratory illnesses may also be more prevalent, and minimise sole person dependency.

 If your business provides or supports accommodation for staff or customers, identify appropriate premises where cases can isolate and close contacts can quarantine according to the guidelines at the time.

Additional preparedness activities for residential care facilities: residential aged care, residential disability care, residential correctional facilities (prisons) and hospitals.

- Establish systems to identify people with symptoms of COVID-19 (and influenza) in your setting.
- Plan how resident cases and close contacts will be managed safely (isolation and quarantine).
- Have facility information (size, layout, staff and resident numbers) ready to provide to Public Health to support risk assessment, if requested.