



Dear All,

The increasing number of COVID-19 cases being reported daily by the Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) continues to be a concern. There were 75 new reported cases yesterday and 49 the day before. The Victorian Chief Health Officer expects this trend to continue in coming days and says 'it will get worse before it gets better'.

One of our colleagues who is based at Flinders St Station has also tested positive. We thank our colleague for doing the right thing when they felt unwell. They stayed home and took a COVID-19 test. Metro has processes in place to manage these cases and any outbreaks that includes identifying and talking to those staff members who may have been in close contact. For privacy considerations, we do not disclose details of impacted staff members.

As advised by DHHS, 'close contact' means having face-to-face contact for more than 15 minutes with someone who has a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) or alternatively sharing a closed space with them for more than two hours. You will find this information in the attached FAQ.

We are monitoring this situation closely, making sure we have all the necessary precautions in place and addressing your concerns in as timely a way as possible. We should all stay calm and continue to follow DHHS's recommendations. Your safety and wellbeing is critical to us and we will continue to ensure we apply social distancing rules, appropriate to the work of individual areas.

The Victorian Government's testing blitz continues to focus on the suburbs with the highest number of active cases.

- We must all continue to maintain good hand hygiene, cough or sneeze into your elbow and practice appropriate distancing from others, if we can.
- We are following the advice of DHHS and at this time, the advice on mask wearing has not changed. If you are well, you do not need to wear a mask. We will keep you informed should that change.
- **It is important that you stay at home if you feel unwell.** An employee, who believes that they are required to self-isolate should contact their manager immediately to discuss and seek direction. Your manager will provide direction as to whether the self-isolation is approved or not and where it is, may ask the employee to attend a medical practitioner or centre for assessment and/or testing. If in doubt, an employee should seek medical advice to determine if testing is recommended.

The Metro Epidemic and Pandemic People Policy provides staff access to additional leave in relation to COVID-19. If self-isolation has been discussed and approved by your manager, you may be able to access Early Intervention leave for the purpose of medical assessment and/or testing. You may also be able to access the Epidemic/Pandemic Special Leave. Click [here](#) for details of the Metro Epidemic and Pandemic People Policy.

Metro operates an essential service. Our work practices have not changed and we are continuing to work as normal. For those people who can work from home, they continue to work from home.

This is the current DHHS advice on how to stay safe and well.

## What you need to keep doing

- practice good hygiene
- maintain physical distancing, keep at least 1.5 metres away from others
- understand the risk and symptoms
- help continue to slow the spread of COVID-19 by getting tested, even if you have mild symptoms
- stay home and avoid contact if you're feeling unwell
- take care wherever you go, assume others may be carrying the virus

Visit the [DHHS website](#) for more information on testing. Translated resources are available from here. A FAQ is also attached. You can also get information from the Metro Coronavirus [webpage](#).

During this challenging time, please remember that our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a free and confidential service available to Metro employees and their immediate families. To access the EAP service, simply call 1800 808 374 or text 0439 449 876.

We're in this together so please continue to look after yourself and others.

Stay safe

**Rob**

**Robert Duvel**  
Executive Director Zero Harm





# Frequently Asked Questions

## Coronavirus (COVID-19)

**Q What should I do if I think a colleague is showing symptoms similar to COVID-19 and he/she is at work?**

We should be sensitive in raising this matter with our colleagues. They may already have been cleared of the virus. You should inform your manager immediately of your concerns.

**Q In what circumstances would a manager request a colleague to leave the workplace and seek medical advice for consideration of testing?**

The circumstances where a manager might request a colleague to leave the workplace and seek medical advice for consideration of testing are currently as follows:

- If your colleague has casual contact with someone who has tested positive to COVID-19 and he/she is symptomatic.
- If your colleague has been in close contact of a confirmed case and has not completed the required self-quarantine period.

**Q How do you define 'close contact'?**

As advised by DHHS, 'close contact' means having face-to-face contact for more than 15 minutes with someone who has a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) – or alternatively sharing a closed space with them for more than two hours.

Close contact can happen in many ways, but examples include:

- living in the same household or household-like setting (for example, a boarding school or hostel)
- direct contact with the body fluids or laboratory specimens of a confirmed case
- being in the same room or office for two hours or more
- face-to-face contact for more than 15 minutes in some other setting such as in a car or a lift or sitting next to them on public transport.

**Q Should I let other staff members know if someone in the workplace is being tested for COVID-19?**

Normal privacy considerations should be applied by everyone when your colleague is unwell. It is not recommended that you tell other team members if someone in the workplace is being tested for COVID-19, unless this is instigated by your colleague being tested.

**Q What if a colleague near you has self-isolated and you are asked to also self-isolate as a precaution?**

Consult your doctor by phone for advice if you need to be tested for COVID-19.

During the 14-day self-isolation period, you can work from home if that is possible. Please discuss options with your manager if you are unable to work from home or need appropriate equipment like a laptop to do so.



**Q What additional train cleaning is Metro doing?**

Increased cleaning measures have been introduced to protect all passengers on Victoria's public transport based on advice from the Department of Health and Human Services.

Metro trains will undergo nightly sanitation, with all touch surfaces wiped down and entire carriages sprayed with disinfectant. Touch surfaces will also be wiped down at the end of lines during the day, and intense sanitisation will take place after all major internal cleans.

Up to 1,371 carriages are disinfected nightly.

**Q Are we cleaning the train stations as well?**

We do touch-point cleaning at Stations - escalator handrails, myki machines, lift buttons and ticket office counters and windows will be cleaned regularly.

**Q What about cleaning of train cabs?**

Cab cleaning together with train cleaning and disinfecting are conducted nightly. There are 17 terminating locations across the network where cabs will be cleaned during the day as well.

The Train Services management team is working with Rolling Stock and our cleaning contractor TransClean to provide support auditing and feedback on the quality of cleaning.

**Q How are we managing the cleaning of desks and shared desks?**

If you can work from home, you should work from home.

If you are normally at your desk, look at how you usually clean your equipment and desk space.

**Q What entitlements are provided by the Epidemic/Pandemic Special Leave?**

The Policy (LO-CEO-POL-060(1)) and Procedure (LO-HMR-PRO-068(1)) available in the "Advice for Metro Employees" section of our website at [www.metrotrains.com.au/coronavirus/](http://www.metrotrains.com.au/coronavirus/).

Broadly, this policy provides:

- Up to 5 working days of paid Early Intervention Special Leave for employees who are unable to work from home and have been directed to self-isolate  
  
This time will allow employees to seek medical advice and any appropriate testing as required.
- Up to 10 working days of paid Epidemic/Pandemic Special Leave for employees who are unable to work from home, have used their existing personal or carers leave and annual leave entitlements above 20 days, and:
  - Have a confirmed case of the infectious disease (in this case, COVID-19); or
  - Are required to care for an immediate family or household member who has the infectious disease, is required to self-isolate or as a result of school, or care centre closures.

**Q How do I apply for the special leave?**

As with all leave types, applications for leave must be submitted in the usual pay system (such as MetroMe or RosterOn). If this is not possible, please complete the Special Leave Application Form also



available on the webpage. The completed form will need to be submitted to your manager for approval.

**Q Where can I find more information to my questions on the special leave?**

You can find this guidance document and a set of FAQs about the special leave on our website at [www.metrotrains.com.au/coronavirus/](http://www.metrotrains.com.au/coronavirus/) in the Support for Metro Employees page.

**Q How does coronavirus (COVID-19) spread?**

Health authorities around the world believe the virus is spread from close contact with an infected person, mostly through face-to-face or between members of the same household. People may also pick up coronavirus (COVID-19) from surfaces contaminated by a person with the infection.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is spread by people with symptoms when they cough or sneeze. That's why the best way to protect others is to practise physical distancing (keep at least 1.5 metres between yourself and others) and good personal hygiene (wash hands often and cough or sneeze into an elbow or tissue).

**Q Does coronavirus (COVID-19) survive on surfaces?**

Studies suggest that coronavirus (COVID-19) may persist on surfaces for a few hours or up to several days. This may vary under different conditions such as the type of surface, temperature or humidity of the environment.

If you think a surface may be infected, clean it with a common household disinfectant.

Clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water often. Avoid touching your eyes, mouth, or nose.

**Q What is the difference between coronavirus (COVID-19) and the flu?**

Coronavirus (COVID-19) causes a more severe disease than seasonal influenza. While many people globally have built up immunity to seasonal flu strains, coronavirus (COVID-19) is a new virus to which no one has immunity. That means more people are susceptible to infection, and some will suffer severe disease. Globally, about 3.4% of reported coronavirus (COVID-19) cases have died. By comparison, seasonal flu generally kills far fewer than 1% of those infected.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) and influenza (flu) are different viruses. They have different treatments, but similar symptoms.

You can prevent catching both by keeping at least 1.5 metres between yourself and others, reducing exposure, wash your hands often and cough or sneeze into your elbow or tissue. Read more ways you can slow the spread.

Key differences:

- Flu symptoms will appear faster, so it can spread faster in the community than coronavirus (COVID-19).
- There are currently more people who need critical care in hospital for coronavirus (COVID-19).
- The flu shot is available at your local GP or community immunisation session. Many accredited pharmacies can also provide the flu shot, as well as advice about the virus. We suggest calling ahead to your local immunisation provider to ensure they have stock available and to book your appointment.



**Q What is the treatment for coronavirus (COVID-19)?**

There are currently no vaccines that protect against coronavirus (COVID-19).

While there are no specific pharmaceutical treatments for coronavirus (COVID-19), early diagnosis and general supportive care are important.

There are no current recommendations to treat patients with mild or moderate coronavirus (COVID-19) illness, or their close contacts, with hydroxychloroquine or anti-viral agents.

Treatment of coronavirus (COVID-19) with antivirals is considered experimental and should only be considered within the context of controlled interventional trials.

Most of the time, symptoms will resolve on their own. People who have serious disease with complications can be cared for in hospital.

**Q Who should get tested?**

If you have any of the symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), however mild, you should seek advice and get tested.

**Q Why should I get tested?**

Diagnosing coronavirus (COVID-19) early, even when symptoms are mild, helps us to slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). Testing helps us track the spread of the virus and plan for the gradual easing of restrictions in Victoria.

Getting tested means that you can take informed action to protect yourself and your loved ones. You will be doing your bit to protect all Victorians.

**Q I have symptoms. How do I go out for testing?**

If you have any symptoms, you should put on a mask (if you have one) when you go to get tested. This will help prevent spreading the infection to others. If you need one, you will be given a mask to wear by your doctor when you are tested. Avoid using public transport, taxi or rideshare services.

A suspected case is someone who has symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) and who has been tested but has not yet found out the results of the test.

If you have symptoms and are advised by a doctor or healthcare worker, you should return home immediately after the test. There is a risk that you could have coronavirus (COVID-19) and could spread the virus to other people. You must remain in self-quarantine at home until you find out your test result.

**Q What should I do after getting tested?**

If you have symptoms, you should return home immediately after the test. Please do not make any stops on your way. There is a risk that you could have coronavirus (COVID-19) and could spread the virus to other people. You must remain in self-isolation at home until you find out your test result.

There is no need for others in the house to quarantine unless you are confirmed to have coronavirus (COVID-19).

As always, we encourage anyone with symptoms to get tested, so if anyone you live experiences symptoms they should get tested too.



**Q How long does it take to get the results?**

It usually takes one to three days to get your results after being tested. Sometimes there are delays and it can take longer.

Victorian labs are working around the clock to process all the tests, but with so many coming in every day, sometimes it takes a little longer to confirm the results.

If you have questions about your results you should contact the clinic or hospital where you were tested. If you were tested at a drive-through testing site and have been waiting more than five days for your result, please call the dedicated Onsite Doctor Results Hotline on 03 8669 0255. This hotline opened on 18 May 2020 and operates 7 days a week, 9 am to 5 pm, for as long as there are drive-through testing sites operating.

**Q What happens if I test positive or negative?**

Your doctor or the clinic where you were tested will contact you by phone or SMS to tell you your results, regardless if it is positive or negative.

If you test positive, whether or not you have symptoms, you will need to immediately self-isolate – you should have already been isolating at home while waiting for these results. You will be contacted by a public health worker from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) for advice on the next steps.

If you test negative, your doctor or the clinic you were tested will tell you your result.

**Q What if I am unwell and haven't been tested for coronavirus (COVID-19)?**

If you have symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), seek medical advice and get tested. You should remain in isolation at home at least until you receive your test result. The more people we test, the more data we have about the prevalence of coronavirus (COVID-19) in our community. [Mobile testing](#) sites are operating around Melbourne, with additional testing sites across the state.

**Q What happens if I am confirmed as having coronavirus (COVID-19)?**

You will be regularly contacted by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) after your diagnosis. You cannot end isolation until you meet the relevant clearance requirements. The department will discuss these requirements with you. Further details can also be found on the dedicated coronavirus (COVID-19) hotline 1800 675 398 (24 hours, 7 days a week).

**Q What if my coronavirus (COVID-19) test was negative?**

If you are unwell, and your coronavirus (COVID-19) test was negative, you should still isolate at home until your symptoms have completely gone. Taking this precaution will stop you passing any illness on to others.

**Q What is the difference between quarantine and isolation?**

- Quarantine separates and restricts the movement of people who may have or have been exposed to coronavirus (COVID-19) to see if they later develop it. People returning from overseas are being directed to mandatory quarantine in a hotel. People who are living with a person diagnosed with coronavirus (COVID-19) or are a close contact of a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) are directed to quarantine at home.



- Isolation separates people with coronavirus (COVID-19) from people who do not have the virus. You should isolate at home or at another suitable location if you have tested positive for coronavirus, or have the symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) and are awaiting test results.
- If you are in quarantine or isolation at home, there are [steps you need to take to keep the people you live with healthy](#).

While Victorians are voluntarily complying with requests to quarantine or isolate, police do conduct random spot checks to ensure compliance and have strong powers to take enforcement actions as necessary.

## Isolation at home

### Q Who is required to isolate?

Everyone who has tested positive to coronavirus (COVID-19) must isolate after notification of the diagnosis. If the person is not at the premises where they will isolate, the person must immediately travel to those premises and begin isolation, without making any stops.

### Q Where do I isolate?

If you are in isolation you must remain at the same place that your isolation commenced until you receive a clearance from DHHS.

If you are about to commence isolation, you can isolate at a place of your choice such as your home, a hotel or another suitable location until a clearance from isolation is received from DHHS.

### Q When do I isolate?

When you are informed of a diagnosis of coronavirus (COVID-19) you must immediately and directly travel to the premises where you will isolate, without making any stops unless you are admitted to a hospital or other facility for medical care.

### Q Do I need to do anything else?

After you are diagnosed you must notify anyone else living at the premises where you will isolate that you have been diagnosed with coronavirus (COVID-19) and tell them that you have chosen to isolate at the premises. This is important as they will need to quarantine themselves.

You must notify DHHS of the address of the place you will isolate and provide the name of any other person who is residing at the premises.

### Q How long do I isolate?

You must isolate until a clearance from isolation is received from DHHS.

## Quarantine at home

### Q Who is required to quarantine?

The following groups are required to quarantine:

- international travellers - please see [international travellers](#) on this website
- people living with a diagnosed person
- people who have come into close contact with a person who is confirmed to have coronavirus (COVID-19).



**Q How long do I have to quarantine if I live with a diagnosed person?**

You should quarantine for 14 days from when the last coronavirus (COVID-19) diagnosed person isolating at the premises is given clearance from DHHS. This means that if you live with two or more people who have been diagnosed, the 14 days starts from when the last diagnosed person at the premises is given clearance from DHHS.

If you live with a diagnosed person and you are then diagnosed with coronavirus (COVID-19), you stop being in quarantine and you must go into isolation until you receive a clearance certificate from DHHS.

**Q Who is a close contact?**

A person is a close contact if DHHS gives them notice that they are a close contact of a person who is confirmed to have coronavirus (COVID-19). A close contact must quarantine at their usual home. If the person is not at their usual home when they receive a notice to quarantine, the person must immediately and directly travel to that premises (without making stops).

**Q For how long do I have to quarantine if I am a close contact?**

Until the date stated in the notice from DHHS. If you are diagnosed with coronavirus (COVID-19), you must isolate until you receive a clearance from DHHS.

**Q What if I live with someone who is in quarantine?**

If this person stays well, there is no need for you to also quarantine.

If they become unwell, they should seek medical advice and get tested for coronavirus (COVID-19).

If a person you live with tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), you will be treated as a close contact of a confirmed case and will be required to quarantine.

**Q What do I do if I feel well during quarantine?**

If, at the end of specified quarantine period, you remain well, you can leave quarantine. No medical certificate is required to enable you to return to other activities.

**Q What do I do if I feel unwell during quarantine?**

If you start to feel unwell, and especially if you develop any of the typical symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) during the quarantine period, you should either:

- call the dedicated coronavirus (COVID-19) hotline on 1800 675 398 (24 hours, 7 days a week) for advice
- call ahead to your GP before you arrive at the doctor's office so they can prepare appropriate infection control measures
- In either circumstances, you should mention any recent contact with a person confirmed to have coronavirus (COVID-19).

**Q How do we know people who have had coronavirus (COVID-19) are no longer infectious?**

People with a confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection stay in quarantine until they are no longer experiencing symptoms.

Before they are released from quarantine, their doctor or specialist care team assesses they are no longer infectious.



Once they are discharged, they have a follow up assessment by the medical team to make sure they remain well.

**Q Are we going to be distributing masks, disposal gloves and other precautionary items to all public facing staff?**

DHHS advice is that there is no need to wear a face mask if you are well - although anyone who wants to be cautious can of course choose to do so. There is also currently no need for any customer-facing staff to wear face masks.

If there is any change to this at the direction of the Chief Health Officer, your manager will inform you and support you to put in place any necessary precautions.

**Q Where can I get help if I'm getting anxious?**

We understand that the uncertainty and pace of this evolving situation impacts people in different ways. You can access our free and confidential EAP program on 1800 808 374.

**Q Where do I get the latest information?**

- DHHS is the best source of the most current information and advice for Victoria. Metro continues to take advice and work closely with DHHS and other relevant health authorities as well as our Chief Medical Officer.
- We encourage you to visit the DHHS website for the latest information and advice. Information changes daily so please check the links regularly for the latest information.
- DHHS website at <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/novelcoronavirus>.  
Call the DHHS hotline on: 1800 675 398 (a translator can be requested at the time of the call).
- Other official sources of information on social media
  - **Facebook** <https://www.facebook.com/VicGovDHHS>
  - **Twitter** [@VicGovDHHS](https://twitter.com/VicGovDHHS)
  - **Instagram** [@vicdhhs](https://instagram.com/vicdhhs)
  - **LinkedIn** <https://www.linkedin.com/company/163421/>