

Managing coronavirus risk in the workplace - checklist

Recommendations for managing the risk of coronavirus in the workplace

1. Notify staff of health and safety requirements
2. Provide washing and waste disposal facilities
3. Provide a clean, well-ventilated workplace
4. Ensure protective gear if required
5. Organise workflow to reduce risk of infection
6. Monitor workplace health
7. What to do if there is suspected infection
8. Options for managing employee absences

1. Notify staff of health and safety requirements

- Place notices in entranceways, washrooms, lunchrooms, and public areas; use staff emails, intranet, newsletters, information in pay slips etc
- Health & safety requirements to include:
 - Regular hand washing (*'wash hands regularly, keep hands away from your face'*)
 - Hygienic coughing and sneezing (*'keep your distance from others when coughing or sneezing, cough or sneeze into tissues, dispose of used tissues in a covered bin'*)
 - Social distance (*'stay at least a metre away from others, avoid gatherings and meetings, use phone, email, videoconferencing instead'*)

2. Provide washing and waste disposal facilities

- Provide hand washing and drying facilities
- Provide covered bins for used tissues etc
- Set up system for disposing bin contents and disinfecting bins

3. Provide a clean, well-ventilated workplace

- Clean surfaces with detergent then disinfectant
- Ensure surfaces frequently touched by hands are cleaned daily
- Ensure cups, dishes and cutlery are washed with detergent and hot water
- Do not share cups, dishes or cutlery
- Remove magazines, newspapers etc from reception areas and lunchrooms

4. Provide protective gear if required

- Follow official advice on whether provision of protective gear such as face masks, disposable gloves, eye splash protection or disposable overalls is advised or required
- Inform staff about requirements to use protective gear and ensure they are trained how to use and dispose of it

5. Organise workflow to reduce risk of infection

- Ask staff to work from home, or introduce shifts
- Have one shift leave the workplace before the next arrives
- Thoroughly ventilate the workplace between shifts
- Stagger start, finish and break times so fewer people are together at once
- Deal with clients and suppliers by phone, email or messaging
- Cancel or postpone non-essential meetings, training sessions and other gatherings
- If face-to-face meetings are necessary, provide large rooms so people can be at least a metre away from each other

6. Monitor workplace health

- Set up a system for monitoring the health of staff members and visitors
- Set up a system for staff to report suspected cases of infection
- Ensure staff know how to use these systems

7. What to do if there is suspected infection

- A person with suspected infection should be told to leave work immediately and to contact a health professional
- Identify the people that person has been in contact with, tell them they have been in contact with suspected infection, and ask them to go home immediately and stay home until advised otherwise
- Thoroughly clean and disinfect the person's work area

8. Options for managing employee absences

Scenario	Option
Worker is sick	Sick leave as per Holidays Act and any additional contractual or policy provisions
Worker is not sick but must care for someone who is sick or confined at home (e.g. because school or childcare is closed)	Sick leave as per Holidays Act and any additional contractual or policy provisions
Worker is not sick but chooses to stay away from workplace because of risk of infection	Work from home (if workplace arrangements permit) Annual leave Sick leave
Worker is not sick but cannot attend workplace because of restrictions on transport especially public transport	Work from home (if workplace arrangements permit) Sick leave Annual leave If restrictions are the result of government regulation, consider seeking Government support for lost wages
Worker is not sick but is quarantined by health authorities	Work from home (if not quarantined in government facility) Sick leave Annual leave Consider seeking Government support for lost wages
Worker is not sick, but employer requires worker to stay away as a health & safety measure or employer closes workplace	Employer may require Annual leave to be taken if in accord with contractual provisions. If no such provisions, employer should pay.

**Drawn from WHO, MFAT and employment law advice*

We recommend the following websites for further information:

The [Ministry of Health](#) has the latest updates and developments, including current status, health and travel advice.

If you need information about pandemic preparedness you can find more [here](#).

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade – [China travel advice](#).

For an update on the global situation please visit the [World Health Organisation](#).

Under the [Health and Safety at Work Act 2015](#) employers have a legal duty to ensure the safety of employees while at work. This may mean taking measures to minimise the spread of [infectious diseases in the workplace](#).

If you would like updates from [Immigration NZ for visa applicants](#) and current visa holders.

[NZTE](#) has also launched an information page to help.

For more information and advice, please contact our Lawyers:

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