

COVID-19

BEST PRACTICE GUIDE

for building & construction

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT
MBANSW.ASN.AU/COVID19

Please note this is a best practice guide only

v4_July 2021



**Master
Builders
Association**
New South Wales



COVID-19

the law

Under the model Work Health and Safety (WHS) laws employers have a duty of care for the health and safety of their workers and others at the workplace. This includes:

- Providing and maintaining a work environment without risk to health and safety, and
- Providing and maintaining adequate facilities for workers in carrying out their work.

As an employer / PCBU you must identify risks at the workplace (in consultation with all interested parties), and where possible eliminate or minimise those risks to as low as is reasonably practicable.

the risk

All persons in the building and construction industry are at risk of exposure to COVID-19.

As a PCBU, you must do what is reasonably practicable to keep your workers a safe distance apart.

Control measures need to be implemented that mitigate risks associated with exposure to COVID-19, even if that means delays or disruptions to the project schedule.

MANAGING THE RISK

Stay away

- No person with any symptoms should come to work or be allowed on site
- No person who has been a contact of a person with COVID should come to work or be allowed on site until NSW Health advice permits them to leave isolation

Travelling to site and arriving on site

- Do not share a car to get to work if it can be avoided.
- Do not congregate at arrival points.
- Confirm that each person arriving has no symptoms or contacts with a COVID case
- Every person arriving on site must check in with a QR code using the Service NSW App
- Processes for arrival on site should be done without causing congregation or close contact with a person undertaking checks. Social distancing should apply.

Keeping track of contacts

- If there is good information about interactions on site, NSW Health will be able to trace contacts and determine how a site can keep operating or reopen if there is a COVID case on site.
- QR codes for separate areas of a site can be useful, including meal areas, but mainly for indoor areas and only if it does not cause congregation at check-in points.
- Any other records of people and teams mixing or working separately can assist NSW Health.

COVID Testing

- Anybody who has had a COVID test because they have symptoms or a contact with a COVID case is required to isolate and cannot attend site until advised by NSW Health that they no longer need to isolate.
- From 17 July 2021, Government requires workers from Fairfield Local Government Area to undertake precautionary tests every 72 hours as a precondition for attending work at sites in Greater Sydney. Other areas may be added by the NSW Chief Health Officer. Any worker from Fairfield Local Government Area arriving at site on from midnight on 16 July 2021 will be required to have had a test.
- Workers can be required to provide proof of residential address and evidence of a COVID test (which may include an SMS text message or email from the testing organisation).
- People who have evidence of a precautionary test are permitted to attend site prior to getting test results, if they do not have symptoms or have a close contact.
- Note: While not required by the Public Health Order, it is preferable that, for the first test they are required to take, people from Fairfield LGA and any other designated affected area wait until they receive a negative test before attending site. This will reduce the risk of introducing an infection to a site.
- From 19 July 2021, Government also requires workers from Greater Sydney to undertake precautionary tests every 7 days as a precondition for attending work at sites more than 50km outside Greater Sydney. Any person from Greater Sydney arriving on a regional site from midnight on 18 July 2021 will require evidence of a test. People who have proof of residential address and evidence of a precautionary test can attend site prior to getting test results, as long as they do not have symptoms or have a close contact. However, it is preferable for these people to wait until they receive a negative test the first time they are required to be tested.
- Some sites may establish additional testing on site. In the case of an antigen rapid test, a person with a positive result should isolate immediately and get a standard COVID test with NSW Health.





Masks

- Masks are mandatory at all indoor workplaces.
- Masks are strongly recommended (best practice) when you are outdoors in areas of construction sites, except when an exemption applies such as when
 - wearing a face mask creates a safety issue or
 - there is a worksite emergency.
- Surgical style masks are acceptable if there are no other safety or PPE requirements for dust related diseases.

Mixing and segregating

- Construction is fortunate to be permitted to continue to work in groups but should do everything possible to keep sites COVID free and limit spread on sites.
- Wherever possible, create separate zones on sites and keep teams separate for the whole shift.
- Wherever possible, create split shifts and avoid overlap between teams.
- If split shifts are not possible, staggered start and finish times will allow separation at arrival points on site.

Meal areas

- Meal areas pose a particular risk as they are often indoors, bring many people together and masks cannot be worn while eating.
- Limit the number of people in a meal area at any time.
- Consider QR code check-in and check-out for indoor meal rooms.
- Wherever possible, create additional meal areas to reduce the number of people gathering.
- Additional meal areas should be in outdoor or fresh air environments wherever possible. This might include ground level areas, or on levels of buildings that are structurally sound and otherwise safe, but open to fresh air (without facades)



Hoists and Lifts

- Reduce the need to use hoists by assigning teams to particular floors or areas for their shift.
- As far as possible, do not mix between teams in hoists and lifts.
- Masks must be worn in hoists and lifts.
- Keep the number of people in lifts to a number that avoids close contact.

COVID Marshalls

- COVID Marshalls on site assist to ensure that good practices are followed, and sites stay open.
- Checking can happen across the site – not just at arrival points.
- Explain what to do if a person becomes unwell at work

Vaccinations

- Identify and communicate areas close to site where vaccinations can be booked.
- Keep a register of all staff and workers that have had 1st and 2nd shots.

Further Information

National Coronavirus Health Information line:
1800 020 080

NSW Health Website – COVID-19 (Coronavirus):
[NSW Department of Health – Coronavirus FAQ's](#)

Master Builders NSW COVID-19 Information webpage:
www.mbansw.asn.au/covid19



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