

COVID-19 (NOVEL CORONAVIRUS) PANDEMIC FRAMEWORK

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COVID-19 spreads from person to person in a similar way to the flu:

- from close contact with an infected person
- from touching objects or surfaces contaminated by the sneeze or cough of an infected person and then touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

COVID-19 can cause symptoms like the flu, including fever, cough, sore throat, tiredness or shortness of breath. Most people who are infected experience mild illness from which they fully recover. However, some people may develop more serious illness with pneumonia. People at increased risk include the elderly and those with chronic medical conditions or a weakened immune system.

It is important to remember that most people who become ill with respiratory symptoms at work are likely suffering from a cold, the flu or other respiratory illness – not COVID-19.

Preventing the spread of infection at work:

Simple hygiene practices, like those used to protect against the flu, can help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory infections.

For workers:

- Clean your hands regularly with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitiser.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or bent elbow when coughing or sneezing, dispose of tissues immediately after use and wash your hands or apply hand sanitiser.
- Avoid touching your face, nose and mouth and shaking hands.
- Avoid close contact with anyone who is unwell. Try to stay 1.5 metres away from anyone coughing or sneezing.
- Stay home if you are unwell.

For employers:

- Provide hand washing facilities and make sure these are kept clean, properly stocked and in good working order.
- Provide alcohol-based hand sanitiser, tissues and cleaning supplies.
- Promote good hygiene practices, e.g. display hand hygiene posters.
- Keep the workplace clean and hygienic. Regularly cleaning high-touch surfaces such as door handles and workstations helps prevent contamination.
- Encourage workers who are sick with respiratory illness to stay home until they are recovered.
- If someone becomes ill with respiratory symptoms at work, isolate them by placing them in a room or an area away from others.
- Arrange for the person to be sent home or access medical assistance.
- If a worker is confirmed to have COVID-19, call 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84) for advice. Inform co-workers about possible exposure to a confirmed case of COVID-19 but maintain confidentiality. Advise workers to seek immediate medical advice if they develop symptoms or are concerned about their health.
- Follow advice from health authorities on social distancing and public gatherings.

For businesses where workers are at increased risk from contact with suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 (e.g. healthcare industry), additional infection prevention and control practices are required. Guidance for specific industries is available at www.health.gov.au

Self-quarantine:

Workers and others must self-quarantine if they have:

- travelled overseas in the past 14 days
- been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19.

Workers who need to self-quarantine should notify their employer and stay away from workplace. They should seek immediate medical attention if they become ill during the quarantine period and call ahead of arriving and mention their travel or contact history.

Employers should make appropriate arrangements so that workers who need to self-quarantine stay away from work. Where possible, the worker should be provided with flexible work arrangements such as working from home.

Personal protective equipment:

PPE should be worn by:

- people with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 as advised by their doctor or New South Wales Health.
- people with close contact with suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 (e.g. healthcare workers). PPE guidance for specific industries is available at www.health.gov.au

Surgical masks are helpful in preventing people with COVID-19 from spreading infection to others but are not currently recommended for healthy members of the public.

Pandemic Framework Approach

Colossus Fire Pty Ltd response to the COVID-19 pandemic has been developed based on the following framework which has been designed around the principles of the Australian Health Management Plan for Pandemic Influenza (2014).

Pandemic Alert Framework

Pandemic Alert Stage	Alert Sub-stages		Characteristics of disease
Prevention	1	Prevention	Emerging strain of disease under initial investigation – cases outside of Australia.
Preparedness	2	Preparedness	Emergence of cases in Australia.
Response	3A	Standby	Increased number of cases across Australia. Person to person transmission in New South Wales.
	3B	Initial Action	Widespread “community transmission” across New South Wales.
	3C	Targeted Action	Cases identified within the LSV community.
	3D	Stand Down	Virus no longer presents a major public health threat.
Recovery	4	Recovery	Virus no longer presents a major public health threat.

The risks to Colossus Fire business at each of the alert stages of the framework and the relevant mitigation strategies are described in the following sections of the document.

Approach

The key considerations in developing this Pandemic Framework include:

- the potential to apply this plan across the whole of Colossus Fire business.
- a flexible and scalable approach which is proportionate to the level of risk and appropriate to the level of impact the pandemic is likely to have on staff and the communities it serves.
- making use of existing emergency management frameworks within Australia and New South Wales.
- alignment with the recommendations of other relevant federal and state government agencies and health authorities.

The development of this plan has been informed by the:

- Australian Health Sector Emergency Response Plan for Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). Australian Government Department of Health. 07 February 2020.
- Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Outbreak. World Health Organisation.
- Exposure to coronavirus in workplaces. Worksafe. 31 January 2020.
- Novel Coronavirus and Food Safety. Food Standards Australia New Zealand. February 2020.
- Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) Guideline for health services and general practitioners, 24 February 2020.

APPENDIX 1 – RESOURCES

1. Australian Health Sector Emergency Response Plan for Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). Australian Government Department of Health. 07 February 2020.
<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/australian-health-sector-emergency-response-plan-for-novel-coronavirus-covid-19>
2. Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Outbreak. World Health Organisation.
<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>
3. Exposure to coronavirus in workplaces. Worksafe. 19 March 2020.
<https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/news/safework-public-notice/coronavirus>
4. Novel Coronavirus and Food Safety. Food Standards Australia New Zealand. February 2020. <https://www.foodstandards.gov.au/consumer/safety/Pages/NOVEL-CORONAVIRUS-AND-FOOD-SAFETY.aspx>