

COVID-19 Health and Safety Protocols for New Zealand Residential Construction Sites

**Version 1
16 April 2020**

PURPOSE

The COVID-19 Health and Safety Protocols for Residential Construction Sites outlines the minimum standards to be implemented at residential construction sites to manage risk of COVID-19 transmission on site. These Protocols apply at Alert Level 3 and 2. These Protocols supplement the *COVID-19 Standard for Operating New Zealand Construction Sites* developed by CHASNZ.

OUR COMMITMENT AS AN INDUSTRY:

- We are committed to working alongside Government to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- As an industry, we are united against COVID-19 and will do our outmost to protect our workers, the wider community, and New Zealand.
- We know that we're in this together – this means trusting those we work with will keep us safe and that we'll do the same for them.
- We recognise that we must work together to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of everyone in the supply chain.

DEVELOPED BY:



With Support from



1. COVID-19 CONTROLS PLAN

Each construction site operating at Alert Level 3 or 2 needs to have in place a COVID-19 Controls Plan. This plan will guide how the principal or main contractor and contractors will manage work on site and the controls they will use to minimise the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

The COVID-19 controls are over and above the existing health and safety plan requirements for residential construction sites. It is the responsibility of the Site owner (the party responsible for overall site co-ordination) to ensure this plan is in place. The site owner may be a client (e.g. in the case of a self-managed renovation); a group home builder; a project manager; or a small builder / contractor. There must always be a nominated person onsite when work is occurring who is responsible for administering the COVID-19 management plan. This can be shared among multiple people from different contractors for an individual site if required.

These protocols apply only to site-based work. Businesses will need to form a separate view about how and when office-based or sales activity recommences and what controls and contact tracing approach are appropriate given their specific circumstances.

These protocols are separated into four sections:

- a. **Before Arriving on Site**
- b. **Site Entry**
- c. **Site Operations (including deliveries & visitors)**
- d. **Leaving Site**

a) BEFORE ARRIVING ON SITE

- Each contractor must provide to the site owner a COVID-19 Plan detailing the steps they will take to mitigate risks, including those present with COVID-19. The details of the plan should be communicated to workers before they start work. The plan must include at a minimum:
 - List of all potential situations where workers will be required to work closer than the 2m from another worker to complete tasks safely. As additional situations come up workers must be encouraged to identify these and have them added to the plan and ensure they are managed appropriately.
 - Resourcing plan to ensure those who do work within 2m of each other always work together and maintain a “bubble” that does not expose them to others.

- Confirmation that no high-risk staff return to site at Alert Level 3 (e.g. over 70 or those who are immune compromised).
- Consideration of whether physical distancing measures introduce new health and safety risks (e.g. because they impact communication). Engage with workers to develop appropriate controls to mitigate the risk.
- Establishment of communication channel for workers to raise any concerns about the effectiveness of COVID-19 controls or identify improvement opportunities.
- All builder companies and workers must complete a re-induction to the site with the COVID-19 Controls Plan protocols before coming on site. This should include the a COVID-19 Toolbox talk (to be completed via video conference / app-based approach etc).
- All workers should follow the Personal Health Guidelines in Appendix 1 to confirm they are safe to be on site.

b) SITE ENTRY

- All sites to have clear entry / exit points and have clear signage (and fencing where appropriate) to prevent members of the public from accessing site. All non-essential visitors to be stopped from visiting site.
- Each site must be set up with:
 - I. A sign in register at entry point that includes: name, full contact details, time in, which unit (if multi-unit) worker is accessing, and health declaration. Note this can be completed through a software / app-based system so long as all visitors are captured. This should also gather where the person has come from and when leaving their next destination.
 - II. Wash stations with anti-bacterial soap / hand sanitiser (minimum 60% alcohol).
 - III. If appropriate the PPE required for the work undertaken. Note in relation to gloves and masks: present Ministry of Health recommendation as at 8 April 2020:

Workers where people can maintain more than 1 metre contact distance from people with potential COVID-19 symptoms but work in an environment where they are touching surfaces or items touched by others – they may consider wearing gloves. Facemasks are not recommended.
 - IV. Signage installed at sign-in point and throughout the site outlining the commitment of the site to maintaining COVID-19 controls. Ensure a clear contact

person is nominated with phone number provided for any COVID-19 concerns at the site.

We encourage site owners to consider providing a visible 2m circle at the sign-in area (e.g. painted on ground) to help people set their personal “bubble” at the start of work each day.

- **All** people accessing site must sign in and sign out at each visit. This includes companies making deliveries, Council Inspectors, and clients. The sign in regime is critical to allowing contact tracing to occur in the event of a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19.
- Site owners should consider restricting site operating hours to ensure sign in station is prepared at start of day before any workers arrive at site.

c) SITE OPERATIONS

How we work on site

- Site Owner should coordinate works to ensure, unless unavoidable, that only one trade is operating on a single house site at any given time.
- Eliminate where possible face-to-face meetings.
- All common areas shall be closed unless absolutely necessary. If required to be utilised these must be cleaned daily using an industrial cleaning regime.
- Do not share tools. If tools are to be shared they need to be disinfected before passing between people. This may mean some tasks will need to be undertaken by one specified person (e.g. using drop saw).
- Consider opening windows for more ventilation.
- Workers to bring a drink bottle and lunch to work – no leaving site to pick up lunch during the day. All food / drink waste must be immediately disposed of in rubbish bins or taken away from site by the worker.
- Site Owners to review COVID-19 controls at least weekly with contractor companies and workers to seek their views on COVID-19 Controls. Workers must be encouraged to suggest improvements or raise concerns.
- Smoking should only occur in designated areas or off site and smokers must dispose of butts responsibly. Hands must be washed before and after smoking.

Cleaning Regime (Responsibility of Site Owner)

- Make alcohol-based hand sanitiser available throughout the construction site and show staff where their location.

- Daily cleaning of all high touch areas (e.g. door handles, scaffold handrails, sign in station)
- Toilets shall be spaced a minimum of 2 metres apart. Cleaning and maintaining of toilets should be completed daily.
- Utilise appropriate detergents or disinfectant solutions for all site, equipment, and amenity cleaning.
- See this link on the Ministry of Health website for more information about cleaning: <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-novel-coronavirus-information-specific-audiences/general-cleaning-information-covid-19>
- Consider reduced site work hours to ensure daily cleaning can be completed after construction work has finished.

Site Visitors (including council inspectors)

- All non-essential visitors to be denied entry to site.
- All visitors / inspectors shall follow the same processes as the site worker entry provisions detailed in section (a).
- All visitors / inspectors to maintain at least 2m physical distancing.
- Where the visitor must interact with someone on site that should be completed by one worker at site only.
- Visitors must be encouraged not to touch anything onsite unless absolutely necessary (e.g. for a Council inspection).

Deliveries

- Workers / site owners should attempt to arrange all deliveries / orders through phone / online systems rather than face to face visits to store.
- Site owners / contractors to ensure suppliers who will make deliveries to site have a COVID-19 plan and that Delivery Drivers will be trained in operation of the plan
- Delivery driver to follow same sign in and sign out processes as any other worker / visitor when arriving and leaving site.
- Do not take physical documentation from delivery driver. Utilise photographic proof of delivery.
- Maintain minimum 2m physical distancing from delivery team.

- Any two-person lifts required will require either a two-person delivery team, or two workers from a contractor bubble to complete the lift. This should not be completed in a way which breaches defined bubbles.

Builders working in client homes

- Completing renovation work on homes where clients are living presents additional challenges and careful consideration should be given to when such work restarts based on the specific nature of the work.
- All COVID-19 controls in this document should still apply and the client family members treated like a contracting company / visitor.
- Additional consideration would need to be given to toilets and kitchens which should not be shared between client family members and contractors.
- Take all practicable steps to separate the work site from the occupied area of the home.
- Consider appropriate daily cleaning regime for the nature of the site and areas being occupied.

d) LEAVING THE SITE

Sign out process:

- All contractors, visitors and those making deliveries to sign out before they leave the site.
- For multi-unit sites, confirm that the information provided at sign-in about which units would be visited remains accurate.
- Include next destination to assist with contact tracing in the event of a suspected COVID-19 case.
- Acknowledge obligation to inform manager and site owner if they become unwell or become aware they have had contact with a suspected COVID-19 case. Ensure they have Site Owner contact details.
- Sign out, wash hands and use hand sanitiser before leaving the site.

2. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROTOCOLS

Risk Identification

- Should any worker or site visitor become suspected of having contracted COVID-19, or become aware they have had contact with a suspected COVID-19 case this must immediately be reported to their contracting company and to the Site Owner.
- Site owner must immediately:
 - I. Shut site for minimum 3 days (unless confirmed not COVID-19) while investigation occurs.
 - II. notify Ministry of Health (Healthline Advice & Information line: 0800 358 5453)
 - III. begin contact tracing.

Contact Tracing:

- Site Owner must identify all sites that the worker / visitor in question has accessed and compile a list of all people that may have been in the same home within a period of 7 days.
- Site owner must inform all those workers and their contracting companies that there could have been an exposure, whilst protecting the privacy of the individual where practicable.
- Workers who may have had contact to stay at home until case and contacts are confirmed or not in conjunction with Ministry of Health.

Cleaning

- Before the sites in question can be opened again after 3 day closure a full sanitising clean should be completed
- Do not re-open site without specific approval from Ministry of Health.

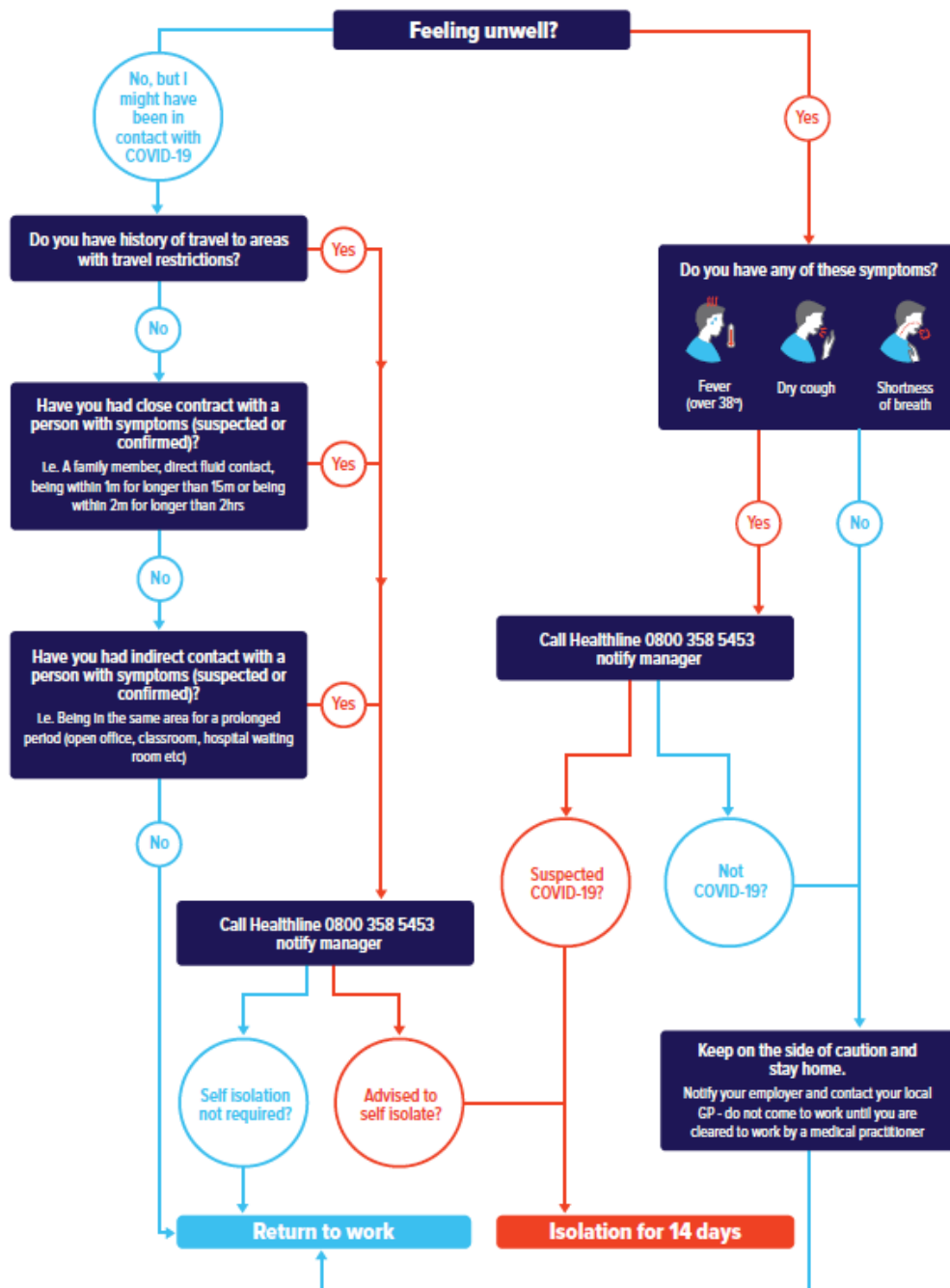
3. Monitoring / Enforcement

We encourage all sector participants to take a **zero tolerance** approach to any serious breaches of this controls plan by either individual workers or companies.

These controls will be shared with WorkSafe, Local Councils and MBIE / MOH. We expect that some / all of these entities will conduct audits against these controls.

APPENDIX 1: PERSONAL HEALTH GUIDELINES: how to identify if you should be at work or stay at home

Personal Health Guidelines



APPENDIX 2: EXAMPLE SITE SIGNAGE

COVID-19 LEVEL 3 - SITE OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

STOP



STEP ONE

If you are unwell or believe you may have been in contact with any person having COVID-19 stay at home - do not enter this site.



STEP TWO

Wash your hands before entering this site.



STEP THREE

Sign IN - Acknowledge hazards, health declaration and tracking.



STEP FOUR

Toolbox talk - Ensure workplace distancing minimum 2 meters in any horizontal or vertical position at any stage, including ensuring all site hygiene standards are met.



STEP FIVE

Wash hands regularly and before site exit.



STEP SIX

Sign OUT - Acknowledge hazards and tracking.



STEP SEVEN

If you are unwell or believe you may have been in contact with any person having COVID-19 report this to the Site Supervisor - go home and do not return to site.

22 April 2020

COVID-19 LEVEL 3 - SITE OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

STOP BEFORE YOU ENTER THIS SITE

- You are not permitted to enter this site unless you are scheduled to do so.
- Portable toilets are equip with wash stations.
- Before signing in please wash your hands using the provided wash stations or sanitize for a minimum of 20 seconds.
- Please ensure you follow the latest guidelines by the Ministry of Health using all necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) before entering this site. (health.govt.nz)
- If you are a visitor or delivering materials, please contact the respective Site Supervisor before entry.
- You must sign in and record arrival and departure dates.
- You must complete the health declaration and note all work sites which you have visited during this work day.
- Only one trade group is permitted to enter this site at any stage.
- You must ensure you maintain 2 meters (horizontal and vertical) from any other person on site at any time.
- NO sharing of tools.
- Sneeze and cough into your sleeve and avoid touching your face.
- Complete the sign out procedure including acknowledgement of the COVID-19 daily updates.

STAY AT HOME IF YOU ARE UNWELL AND NOTIFY THE SITE SUPERVISOR IMMEDIATELY

This site is supervised by:

NAME:

CONTACT:

EMAIL:

22 April 2020

Unite
against
COVID-19

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- The Ministry of Health provides full information on the current state of CV19
- Ministry of Health: www.health.govt.nz
- The COVID-19 website is a government developed website with extensive tools and information on CV 19. Official COVID 19 website: www.covid.govt.nz
- The Site Safe website has tools specific for the construction industry. You can find toolboxes for all types of situations and general information on CV19. Site Safe: www.sitesafe.org.nz/news--events/covid-19/