

|  |
| --- |
| **Coronavirus (COVID-19)** |
| Fact Sheet for Secure Care Services |

## What is Coronavirus (COVID-19)?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that may cause illness in animals or humans. Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a new virus that can cause an infection in people, including a severe respiratory illness.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) spreads through close contact with an infected person; mostly face-to-face or within a household. Close contact means greater than 15 minutes face-to-face or the sharing of a closed space for more than two hours with a confirmed case.

## What are the symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19)?

Many people who contract coronavirus (COVID–19) will suffer only mild symptoms. However early indications are that the elderly and people with pre-existing medical conditions are more at risk of experiencing severe symptoms. The most common symptoms reported include:

* [Fever](https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/fever)
* Breathing difficulties such as breathlessness
* Cough
* Sore throat
* [Fatigue](https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/fatigue) or tiredness

## What are the risks?

Coronavirus (COVID-19) may cause severe illness in some people, and the elderly or those with pre-existing health conditions are at particular risk.

However, it is important to remember that most people in good health will only experience mild symptoms.

If you are over 65 or have a health complaint – particularly with lower immunity levels – you should discuss moving to working from home now for an extended period with your manager.

## What is the treatment?

As it is a virus the only treatment required is symptomatic relief, rest and fluids.

## How can we help prevent the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19)?

1. **Wash** hands often with soap and running water, for at least 20 seconds. Dry with paper towel or hand dryer.
2. **Try** not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth.
3. **Cover** your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don’t have a tissue cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow.
4. **Stay** at home if you feel sick. If you take medication make sure you have enough.
5. **Phone** your doctor on the hotline – 1800 675 398 if you need medical attention. They will tell you what to do.
6. **Continue** healthy habits: exercise, drink water, get plenty of sleep.
7. **Wearing** a face mask is not necessary if you are well.
8. **Buy** an alcohol-based hand sanitiser with over 60 per cent alcohol.

Remember to be aware of and continue to assess your own health by using the department’s self-assessment tool: <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/self-assessment-risk-coronavirus-covid-19>

A poster is available for display: <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/victorian-public-coronavirus-disease-covid-19>

## What if I have recently been overseas?

If you have been overseas please refer to: <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/victorian-public-coronavirus-disease-covid-19> for the latest guidance.

If you begin to feel unwell and develop a fever or shortness of breath, a cough or respiratory illness, you should call the dedicated hotline on 1800 675 398 for advice. This number is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

## Screening of young people upon admission

All young people must be screened for Coronavirus (COVID-19) at reception. Staff should ask the following questions:

* Have you, or a close family member/ friend, travelled overseas in the past 14 days?
* Have you been in close contact with a person who has a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) in past 14 days?
* Are you experiencing any of the following symptoms?
  + fever and cough
  + sore throat, or
  + shortness of breath.

If the answer to any of these questions is **yes**, isolate the young person immediately and contact the Secure Care Service healthcare team and your line manager.

In addition to the screening questions, the young person is to remain in the admission room until health service staff arrive. Health service staff are to conduct a COVID-19 screen, including body temperature, for every young person admitted to Secure Care Services.

## Staff screening

If you or another staff member meets any of the following criteria, they are to go home immediately, get tested and self-isolate.

* Have, or a close family member/ friend has, travelled overseas in the past 14 days
* Have been in close contact with a person who has a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) in past 14 days
* Are experiencing any of the following symptoms
  + fever and cough
  + sore throat, or
  + shortness of breath.

If a staff member tests positive, all other staff and clients who had prolonged contact with that staff member must get tested and self-isolate.

## Screening of visitors

All visitors should be screened external to the building and any visitors that fit the following criteria should be asked to leave the site immediately:

* the visitor (or a close family member/ friend) travelled from overseas in the past 14 days
* the visitor has been in close contact with a person who has a confirmed or suspected case of Coronavirus (COVID-19) in past 14 days; and/or
* the visitor has Coronavirus (COVID-19).

Where possible, interaction with visitors is to occur online or via phone (this includes 48 hour meetings etc). Only essential visitations are to occur in person (e.g. health and AoD appointments).

Deliveries to the service are to be left at the door.

## Management of individual young person(s) with Coronavirus (COVID-19)

* Any young person with confirmed Coronavirus (COVID-19) should be confined within his/her room (and a suitable secondary space) until 14 full days post symptom onset where possible. Young people are to be isolated as follows:
  + In the Young Women’s Unit - Room 3 and adjoining program room are to be used
  + In the Young Men’s Unit – Room 6 with Room 5 as a secondary lounge room are to be used
* These rooms are to be kept vacant in preparation for a young person requiring isolation.
* **The confining of a young person in a Secure Care Service to manage the containment of a communicable disease (such as Coronavirus (COVID-19) requires high level authorisation. Confining of a young person(s) should be as least restrictive as possible, providing the young person with access to their bedroom, a suitable secondary space and other activities such as school etc.**
* The following will apply to confined young people:
* Provided with access to alternative area, separate from non-infected young people.
* Will be accommodated in the same unit as other infected young people where possible to contain the spread of the virus, with only essential movements allowed.
* To wear a mask and gloves at all times outside his/her room or having contact with others and conduct stringent hand washing on leaving and returning to his/her room and on entering and leaving any other common areas.
* All staff MUST wear masks and gloves if in close proximity to an infected young person (within 1 metre).
* Staff MUST wear a mask, gloves, goggles and gown if needing to be in physical contact with the young person.
* If the young person is required to attend external appointments, precautions should be taken by the young person and staff to minimise the risk of transmission (wear masks, observe strict hand hygiene and cough etiquette).
* Contact with a young person’s legal representative should preferably be facilitated via phone, or other non-contact process.
* Videolink is preferred over transfer to court where possible (particularly where it can be facilitated in the same unit as the young person is accommodated). The Videolink room must be wiped down after use with a disinfectant. Where transfer to court is required, precautions should be taken by the young person and staff where possible to minimise the risk of transmission (wear masks, observe strict hand hygiene and cough etiquette).
* The Health Service Provider will manage the infected young person’s treatment as clinically appropriate.
* Young people are considered clear of the transmission period 14 days post the onset of their symptoms or 24 hours after their symptoms have ceased.

## Management where there are multiple cases in one unit

* The unit must be confined with no transfers in or out of the unit for any young person where possible. Court attendance and visits may be permitted in exceptional circumstances.
* Confining of the unit ends 14 full days after symptom onset in the last young person in the unit to have developed symptoms.
* In units with multiple young people with confirmed Coronavirus (COVID-19) the following will apply to young people who DO NOT have confirmed Coronavirus (COVID-19) (well young people):
* Can move within the common areas of the unit (except the secondary communal space).
* All other requirements related to management of individual young person(s) with confirmed Coronavirus (COVID-19) as above.
* Young people with existing health conditions should not be accommodated in confined units without prior consultation with the Health Service Provider, as they may be at risk of additional complications.

## Other requirements

* All staff MUST wear a mask and gloves when in close proximity to a young person with Coronavirus (COVID-19) or confirmed Coronavirus (COVID-19) (within 1 metre). Failure to do so should be treated like any other OH&S incident. Staff can also wear a mask and gloves when conducting routine business if they wish
* Stringent infection control practices MUST be maintained by all staff and young people, including regular hand washing with soap and water, cough etiquette and environmental cleaning. Appropriate signage should be in place and disinfectant wipes should be readily available to staff and young people where possible.
  + All keyboards, duress alarms, photocopier and telephones should be wiped down at least every 4 hours.
  + All door handles, keypads and finger scanners should be wiped down every 4 hours.
  + All communal areas should be wiped down after use or every 4 hours.
  + Every time a young person is discharged from the service their bedroom (including mattresses) should be cleaned before being used again.
* All young people and staff should be encouraged not to touch their faces unnecessarily, as this may transfer the virus to their hands and then to any surfaces they touch.
* Restrict access to non-essential contractors where possible.
* All staff, visitors and clients should be encouraged to maintain social distance at all times.
* Every time a visitor or staff member enters or leaves the building they should be asked to wash their hands, or use hand sanitiser where washing hands is not feasible.
* In the absence of confirmed cases of Coronavirus (COVID-19), the unit are to run as per normal; however, disinfectant wipes should be available where possible.
* Staff who develop Coronavirus (COVID-19) should report this to their manager immediately and be directed home. Staff should stay away from work for 14 days post symptom onset or until clearance from their GP.
* Staff movements between confined and non-confined units should be limited where possible to prevent transmission to unaffected units and avoid unnecessary staff exposure to the virus.
* Visitors with a confirmed or suspected case of Coronavirus (COVID-19), recent illness or recent contact with an unwell person should be advised not to enter the service.

Masks should be used according to manufacturer’s instructions to ensure effectiveness and should be changed at the frequency recommended by the manufacturer.

Finally, observe the basic habits of cough etiquette and wash or sanitise your hands regularly, and encourage young people at the service to do the same. Maintain social distancing whenever you are around others, including during meetings (limit the number of attendees and meet outside when feasible).

## Where can I get more information?

The department will provide updated information to frontline staff but please continue to visit the following for the latest advice.

* The department’s website at <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus>
* The DHHS Staff Hub at [https://dhhsvicgovau.sharepoint.com/sites/Covid19](https://dhhsvicgovau.sharepoint.com/sites/Covid19/)