

# Guideline for visits to Occupied Residences and Building Sites

## 1. Purpose

To provide guidance on preventing the spread of COVID-19 among employees, contractors and occupants.

To provide guidance to employees and contractors, collectively known as “On-Site Workers” in in this document.

This document covers Homotech requirements at COVID-19 Alerts Status Level 3 and below.

## 2. How is COVID 19 spread?

COVID-19, like the flu, can be spread from person to person. When a person who has COVID-19 coughs, sneezes or talks, they may spread droplets containing the virus a short distance which quickly settles on surrounding surfaces.

## 3. Overarching Guidelines in all Situations

### 3.1. On-Site Workers should not undertake site visits if:

- They have experienced cold or flu symptoms in the last 48 hours. If they have experienced any of these symptoms, they are required to contact Healthline on 0800 358 5453 and seek advice as to whether they should be tested for COVID-19;
- Symptoms of COVID-19 are:
  - Cough
  - High temperature (at least 38°C)
  - Shortness of breath.
  - Sore throat
  - Sneezing and runny nose
  - Temporary loss of smell
- Have been overseas in any country in the previous 14 days;

- Have been in close contact with a suspected, probable or confirmed case of COVID-19.

**3.2. At all times maintain physical distancing 2m or 1m minimum for identified tasks only)** Physical distancing of two metres outside home (including on public transport), or one metre in controlled environments like schools and workplaces.

### **3.3. Good hygiene practices**

#### **3.3.1. Wash your hands**

- Wash your hands before and after each home visit for at least 20 seconds with water and soap and dry them thoroughly.  
<https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/good-hygiene/hand-washing>
- If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer and wash with soap and water as soon as you can.
- **Always wash and dry your hands...**
  - Before:
    - Eating or preparing food.
    - Touching your face
  - After:
    - Sneezing, coughing or blowing your nose (or wiping children's noses)
    - Having contact with animals
    - Going to the toilet or changing nappies
    - Looking after sick people.

#### **3.3.2. Additional good Hygiene practices include**

- When you sneeze if you do not have a tissue then cough or sneeze into your elbow
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze - put the tissue in a bin
- Try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell

- Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean
- Avoid personal contact, such as kissing, sharing cups or food with sick people
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects, such as doorknobs
- Stay home if you feel unwell.

### **3.4. Use of PPE**

- Standard appropriate PPE gear must continue to be used (e.g. Steel cap boots, high vis clothing, and hard hat)
- If you can ensure more than 2-metres distance from people with potential COVID-19 symptoms and any surfaces or items they may touch - facemasks and gloves are not recommended. Appropriate worksite PPE gear is required to be used in its correct manner.
- If the nature of your job means you may touch surfaces or items also touched by people with potential COVID-19 symptoms, you may consider wearing gloves, however, facemasks are still not recommended.

## 4. Occupied Residences

### 4.1. Schedule an appointment to visit the site

- Proactive appointments will need to be made with every customer. The following questions are to be asked and recorded for later referral if required:
  1. Are you comfortable for a tradesperson to attend your property to complete work?
  2. Are you or anyone in your household currently self-isolating?
  3. Have you or anyone in your household returned from overseas in the past 14 days?
  4. Do you or does anyone in your household have a temperature, dry cough or difficulty breathing?
  5. Is anyone in your home over 70?
  6. Does anyone in your home have any of the following medical conditions: compromised immunity, asthma or other lung disease, hypertension, diabetes, heart disease, or under current cancer treatment?

*NOTE: If the customer is self-isolating at their own discretion rather than as required under the current COVID-19 Alert Status, are not experiencing any symptoms and the customer is happy for the work to proceed then apply safe working practices and proceed with the work.*

If the customer replies YES to any of the questions 2-4, please thank the customer and advise: At this time, we are unable to complete the requested work.

If they say yes to questions 5 and or 6 then ask the following question: As we are concerned about your health and safety, we want to confirm you are happy for us to attend your property during the level 3 period?

If they are still happy to please book in a time to attend, if not make a time to book once Level 3 is over.

### 4.2. Adhere to Health & Safety requirements during any face to face customer interaction

The following actions are to be undertaken where no COVID-19 risk factors have been identified. Even if you have contacted the customer before visiting the property take the following actions:

- Knock on the door, step back and maintain at least a 2m distance.
- When answered by the customer/family greet the person, introduce yourself and state the purpose of the visit. Confirm that there is no language barrier present.
- Explain to the customer, given the Coronavirus outbreak you are required to complete a questionnaire prior to entering their home and completing any work.

#### **Questionnaire:**

1. Are you comfortable for a tradesperson to attend your property to complete work?
2. Are you or anyone in your household currently self-isolating?
3. Have you or anyone in your household returned from overseas in the past 14 days?
4. Do you or does anyone in your household have a temperature, dry cough or difficulty breathing?
5. Is anyone in your home over 70?
6. Does anyone in your home have any of the following medical conditions: compromised immunity, asthma or other lung disease, hypertension, diabetes, heart disease, or under current cancer treatment?
7. What are the name(s) of all that are on site or at the home during the entire job process (for contact tracing purposes)?

*NOTE: If the customer is self-isolating at their own discretion rather than as required under the current COVID-19 Alert Status, are not experiencing any symptoms and the customer is happy for the work to proceed then apply safe working practices and proceed with the work.*

If the customer replies YES to any of the questions 2-4, please thank the customer and advise: At this time, we are unable to complete the requested work.

If they say yes to questions 5 and or 6 then ask the following question: As we are concerned about your health and safety, we want to confirm you are happy for us to attend your property during the level 3 period?

If they are still happy to please proceed with work advise the customer that you will be practicing physical distancing to protect your health and theirs. Proceed with completing the work.

If not make a time to book once Level 3 is over.

If the customer replies NO to all questions 2-4 advise the customer that you will be practicing physical distancing to protect your health and theirs. Proceed with completing the work.

#### **4.3.Record who is working at each address every day**

Records of who has attended each address

- These need to be recorded & ready to report on if required.
- A record of where each person has been during that day also needs to be recorded.

## 5. Building Sites

### 5.1. Background

Working at any building site comes with its heightened level of hazards and it is important that these remain front of mind while taking further steps to protect yourself & others from the spread of COVID-19. 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. If there is no plan present on site then refrain from working and contact the appropriate Project Manager for the job for them to communicate no work will be completed until the plan is in place.

This COVID-19 focus is 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.

Workers are required to travel to and from site in their own vehicle to allow safe travel,

Those that have a company vehicle are to use it exclusively, or if need to be shared a clean and sanitation will need to take place between drivers.

### 5.2. Adhere to Health & Safety Requirements of the Site

The following protocols apply only to site-based work. At COVID-19 Alert Status Level 3 all office-based work should still be completed from home.

**These protocols are separated into four sections:**

- 1. Before Arriving on Site**
- 2. Site Entry**
- 3. Site Operations**

## 4. Leaving Site

### 5.2.1. 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:
  - SSSP has been completed & covers Task Analysis & SWMS accounting for increased risk due to COVID-19
  - List of all potential situations where workers will be required to work closer than the 2m from another worker to complete tasks safely.
  - 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 COVID-19 Toolbox talk (to be completed via video conference / app-based approach etc).
  - Complete Toolbox meeting (see below)
  - All workers should follow the personal health guidelines to confirm they are safe to be on site. (see flow chart below)
  - Download & register any site-specific health & safety app (e.g. *Classic Safe* at Classic Builders sites)

### 5.2.2. 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.



- Each site must be set up with:
  - 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.
  - wash stations with anti-bacterial soap. If running water is not available use hand sanitiser (minimum 60% alcohol) and wash hands using soap as soon as possible.
  - If appropriate the PPE required. Note: present Ministry of Health recommendation as at 17th 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.*
  - Signage installed at sign-in point and throughout the site outlining the commitments 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.
- All people accessing site must sign in 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.

### **5.2.3. Site operations**

#### **How we work**

- Site Owner should consider the coordination of works and ensure, unless unavoidable, that only one trade is operating on a single house site at any given time.
- Eliminate face-to-face meetings where possible.

- 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. While observing physical distancing protocols

#### **Cleaning Regime (Responsibility of Site Owner)**

- Make alcohol-based hand sanitiser available throughout the construction site and show staff its 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 toilets shall be daily.
- Utilise appropriate detergents or disinfectant solutions for all site, equipment, and amenity cleaning.
- See link 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.

#### **5.2.4. Leaving the site protocols**

##### **Sign out process:**

- All contractors, visitors and those making deliveries to sign out before they leave the site.
- Confirm no additional homes visited than was indicated at sign in
- 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 for 20 seconds and use hand sanitiser before leaving the site.

## **6. Emergency Management Protocols**

### **6.1. 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:
  - Shut site for minimum 3 days (unless confirmed not COVID-19) while investigation occurs;
  - notify Ministry of Health (Healthline Advise & Information line: 0800 358 5453);
  - begin contact tracing.

### **6.2. 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.

### **6.3. 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.

### **6.4. Monitoring / Enforcement**

- We encourage all sector participants to take a zero-tolerance approach to any 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 these entities will conduct audits against these controls.
- We know it's a stressful time, but taking these measures will help protect you, your family and all of New Zealand from COVID-19 and other common infectious diseases. For support with grief, anxiety, distress or mental wellbeing, you can call or text 1737, or if you need to talk free call 1737 any time with a trained counsellor for free, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

## **7. Health and Wellbeing resources**

[COVID-19 - Managing your mental wellbeing | Ministry of Health NZ](#)

[Looking after your Mental Health and Wellbeing during COVID-19 | Mental Health Foundation](#)

<https://mates.net.nz/get-help/covid-19-support/>

**For COVID-19 health advice and information, contact the Healthline team (for free) 0800 358 5453**

## 8. Covid-19 Toolbox Talk to Be Completed Prior to Starting Work

Everybody at a site has a duty to utilise practical steps to minimise, as best as possible, exposure to COVID-19 or spreading it to others.

These simple requirements are not new to a post Covid19 environment, however, form a personal commitment by all workers on site to look after themselves, and their co-workers. As such, they should form part of a revised induction briefing to all workers post returning from lockdown.

- Wash your body, hair, and clothes thoroughly every day.
- Wash hands and wrists thoroughly with soap before preparing and/or eating food and after going to the toilet, and at regular intervals during the day.
- Put cigarette butts in the bin.
- Always refrain from spitting.
- Turn away from other people and cover the nose and mouth with a tissue or the arm when coughing or sneezing. If this is not done, droplets of liquid containing germs from the nose and mouth can spread in the air and other people can breathe them in, or the droplets can get onto food.
- Avoid handshakes or any other close physical contact.
- Avoid touching your face with your hands.
- Adhering to physical distancing principles - not making physical contact with another person.
- Keeping two metres from those around you always.
- Refrain from sharing tools
- Any site-specific App needs to have been downloaded, registered on it, and actively using it.

If you are sick (with any cold, flu, coughing or sneezing-type symptoms) or may have been in contact with someone who has COVID-19, Do not come to work. Immediately notify the NZ Healthline and listen to their advice.

If you have travelled outside of New Zealand, you will be advised to Self-quarantine for a period of 14 days. This must be strictly observed.

If you have come in to contact with someone who is known to have contracted COVID-19 and you develop symptoms, immediately notify the NZ Healthline and listen to their advice. Do not attend work until confirmatory results are known and you are instructed by your GP that you can recommence work.

## 9. Personal Health Guidelines

### Personal Health Guidelines

