



# What to do if you have been in close contact with a positive coronavirus (COVID-19) case

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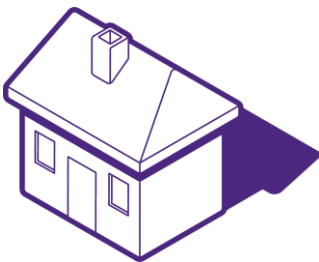
You or someone close to you has had contact with coronavirus (COVID-19).

**To keep the community safe from catching coronavirus (COVID-19) you must now stay in quarantine (stay at home) for 14 days. You can stay in your home or we can help you organise other accommodation to do this.**

Please read this carefully. For more information, call the coronavirus (COVID-19) hotline on **1800 675 398** (24 hours, 7 days a week).

If you call the hotline, choose option zero (0) to speak to an interpreter. For any other calls, if you need an interpreter, call the translation service TIS National on **131 450** first.

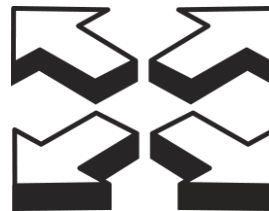
It is important that you do these four things during the next two weeks (14 days) to stay safe and reduce the risk to you and those around you.



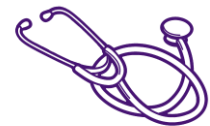
**Stay at home**



**Wash your hands and cover coughs and sneezes**



**Stay away from everyone as much as possible, including people you live with. Wear a fitted face mask where possible.**



**If you need medical help, call your doctor or the coronavirus (COVID-19) hotline on 1800 675 398**

## What does a close contact mean?

There is a high chance that people who have been close to someone with coronavirus (COVID-19) will have the virus and can spread it to other people. The best way to protect yourself, your family and the community is to stay at home and stay away from other people as much as possible.

## How do we define close contacts?

We sort close contacts into two groups. Close contacts are either a primary close contact or a secondary close contact.

## Primary close contact

A **primary close contact** is usually someone who has had face-to-face contact for 15 minutes or who has spent over two hours over the course of a week in an indoor or enclosed space with someone who has coronavirus (COVID-19) and is considered to be infectious when the contact occurred.

This might have happened through living in the same home, at a workplace or being indoors with someone who has coronavirus (COVID-19). The Department of Health and Human Services will tell someone if they are a primary close contact.

The Victorian Chief Health Officer or Deputy Chief Health Officer may also decide someone is a primary close contact as part of a risk assessment of an outbreak or complex setting.

If you are a primary close contact, you must not leave your home or accommodation for any reason other than medical care, to get tested for coronavirus (COVID-19) or an emergency, like fire or family violence. Because there is a high chance of spreading the virus if you leave home, you may be fined up to \$4,957 if you go out.

Primary close contacts must get tested for coronavirus (COVID-19) on or after day 11 of your quarantine (stay at home) period. You can leave your home or accommodation for this reason.

Thank you for your help in keeping everyone safe by staying home and keeping physical distance from those you live with.

## Secondary close contact

A **secondary close contact** is usually someone who has had face-to-face contact for 15 minutes with a primary close contact. They could also have shared an enclosed space with a primary close contact for more than two hours. In both cases, they have spent time with the primary close contact within a couple of days of them being exposed to coronavirus (COVID-19). The Department of Health and Human Services will tell someone if they are a secondary close contact.

The Victorian Chief Health Officer or Deputy Chief Health Officer may also decide someone is a secondary close contact as part of a risk assessment of an outbreak or complex setting.

If you are a secondary close contact, you must not leave your home or accommodation for any reason other than medical care, to get tested for coronavirus (COVID-19) or an emergency, like fire or family violence.

Because there is a high chance of spreading the virus if you leave home, you may be fined up to \$4,957 if you go out.

Secondary close contacts must get tested for coronavirus (COVID-19) if you develop any symptoms. You can leave your home or accommodation for this reason.

Thank you for your help in keeping everyone safe by staying home and keeping physical distance from those you live with.

## You need to quarantine at home or other suitable accommodation if you are a primary or secondary close contact

You must immediately go to the place where you will spend your quarantine (stay at home) period. You must not make any stops along the way. For most people, this is usually your own home, but if you cannot stay at home, accommodation will be arranged for you.

The coronavirus (COVID-19) hotline on **1800 675 398** (24 hours, 7 days a week) can help organise food or medicine if you need it during quarantine.

## Who do I need to tell?

Once you have been told that you are a close contact, you should tell your employer. Your employer cannot disclose your identity to anyone without your permission, but they may need to inform other workers there is a case of coronavirus in the workplace. You should also tell the people you live with that you are a close contact. This is to help keep them safe too, by being informed.

## Support packages are available

A one-off \$1,500 payment is available to support eligible Victorian workers who have been diagnosed with coronavirus (COVID-19) or are a close contact of a confirmed case.

To apply for the payment or find out more, see [Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment](https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/pandemic-leave-disaster-payment) <<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/pandemic-leave-disaster-payment>>.

If you need assistance due to your age, disability or a chronic health condition then a service provider, carer, family member or friend can help. You should tell them that you are in quarantine before they visit so they can prepare for a safe visit.

Emergency relief packages with food and personal items are also available if you cannot get help from friends or family. For information on support and emergency relief packages or help getting groceries, visit [DHHS.vic. – Quarantine and isolation](https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/self-quarantine-coronavirus-covid-19) <<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/self-quarantine-coronavirus-covid-19>> or call the coronavirus (COVID-19) hotline on **1800 675 398** (24 hours, 7 days a week).

## There are important things you can do to keep yourself and people you live with safe during this time

You must not leave your home or accommodation, except to seek medical care or in an emergency, like fire or family violence.

- Stay in a separate room if possible and try to limit the amount of time you spend with others in your home.
- Keep a window open if possible, to encourage air flow from outside, and the door to the room closed.
- Use a separate bathroom. We understand this is not possible for everyone.
- If you must leave the room you are staying in, wear a fitted face mask and keep 1.5 metres apart from other people. Only go into other areas of the home for a short time and only if it is needed – this means you cannot watch TV or eat meals with other people in your home.
- If you do need to use a shared room within your home such as a kitchen or bathroom, clean and sanitise using a disinfectant, such as bleach, on all surfaces touched during this time. Don't forget the door, taps, light switches and cupboard handles, as well as bathroom surfaces such as the toilet seat.
- Do not have people visit you inside your home or quarantine accommodation.
- If you live in a private house or apartment you can go to your garden or your balcony. If you need to go through other parts of your home or accommodation to get to private outdoor areas, wear a fitted face mask.
- Wash your hands regularly and cover your coughs and sneezes using a tissue or your elbow.
- Have a set of household items (like plates, cups and cutlery) just for you to use during this time.
- Wash laundry often, but only if you can do so in your home. You cannot go to a laundromat while you are in quarantine (stay at home).

- If you have any, wear disposable gloves while touching dirty items and always wash your hands after taking off gloves.
- Throw out used items like gloves and masks in a lined waste bin.
- Ask friends or family, who do not need to quarantine to get food or other necessities for you or the coronavirus (COVID-19) hotline on **1800 675 398** (24 hours, 7 days a week) can help if there is no one you can ask. Friends and family should drop these goods off to your door/entry to your accommodation – they should not enter your home or place of accommodation.

## Check your symptoms

If you have any of the symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) during your quarantine period, or at any time afterwards, you should get tested and then return home immediately. You are allowed to leave your home for this reason.

- You must wear a fitted face mask if you leave home to get tested. Do not use public transport, taxi or rideshare services. If you need to get tested and do not have your own car, in-home testing can be arranged by calling 1300 651 160. After you have been tested, you must immediately go back to the place where you are in quarantine. You must not make any stops on the way back to your home.

The coronavirus (COVID-19) test is free for everyone. This includes people without a Medicare card, such as visitors from overseas, migrant workers and asylum seekers. Your details are safe and will not be shared with anyone for tax or immigration purposes.

These are the symptoms to look out for:

- cough
- sore throat
- shortness of breath
- runny nose
- loss or change in sense of smell or taste
- fever
- chills or sweats.

## Do I need to get tested for coronavirus (COVID-19)?

If you have any of the symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), you should get tested and then return home immediately.

**Primary close contacts** must have a negative result on or after day 11 of quarantine to be able to leave quarantine by day 14. To keep the community safe, if you do not complete a day 11 test, you will be required to quarantine for an extra 10 days or until you receive a negative test result. You will be required to do this test, even if you're feeling well.

**Secondary close contacts** should get tested if you have any symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) or if the Department of Health and Human Services asks you to get tested. However, even if you don't have a test you must still quarantine (stay at home) until the Department of Health and Human Services tells you that you can leave quarantine. The amount of time for your quarantine is linked to when the primary close contact was exposed to a case and to their test results. It will not be longer than 14 days.

## How long do I need to quarantine for?

**Primary close contacts** must quarantine for 14 days after their last contact with an infectious positive coronavirus (COVID-19) case. If you do become infected, this is most likely to happen within 14 days of your contact with the person with coronavirus (COVID-19).

You will need to get tested for coronavirus (COVID-19) on or after day 11 of your quarantine (stay at home) period. If you receive a negative result after you are tested on day 11, you will be cleared to leave

quarantine after day 14. If you refuse to take a test on day 11, you will be required to quarantine (stay at home) for up to an extra 10 days.

Even if you feel well or you get a negative test result on day 11, you **must still quarantine (stay at home) for the full 14 days and cannot finish your quarantine until you have been told it is safe to do so by the Department of Health and Human Services.**

**Secondary close contacts** may need to quarantine (stay at home) for up to 14 days from the time their primary close contact was exposed to a case, even if you feel well. This is in case the primary close contact has already passed on the infection to you. Assume your quarantine period will be 14 days and plan for this. The Department of Health and Human Services will tell you when you can leave quarantine.

## Look after your wellbeing during quarantine

Being in quarantine can be difficult, particularly for children. These steps can help you maintain your wellbeing during this time.

- Remember at the end of quarantine you'll know that it is safe to spend time with other people.
- Focus on how you are helping to keep our community safe from coronavirus (COVID-19).
- Keep in touch with family and friends via telephone, email or social media.
- Staying aware about coronavirus (COVID-19) can help reduce worries but be mindful of information overload.
- If you usually travel to work, speak with your employer about whether it is possible to work from home. A \$1,500 support payment is available for eligible Victorian workers. See [Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment](https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/pandemic-leave-disaster-payment) <<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/pandemic-leave-disaster-payment>>
- If your child is in quarantine, support their learning from home. Access online resources that are easily available and speak to your child's school to get help.
- Stick to routines where possible – they're good for mental health. Try to go to sleep and wake up at the same time, eat at regular times, shower and change your clothes as you would in ordinary circumstances. This will help you to manage your days and adjust when life starts to go back to normal.
- Try to maintain levels of physical activity that do not pose a health or safety risk to you, or others, such as exercising indoors or in the backyard if you have one.
- Manage your stress levels, and if needed, increase your coping strategies (for example, listening to music, watching your favourite shows, practise meditation or exercise).
- If you have a health condition, keep taking any prescribed medication, continue with your treatment plan and monitor any new symptoms.
- Access resources online – including advice on sleep, wellbeing and exercising at home. Videos are available at [Wellbeing Victoria](https://www.together.vic.gov.au/wellbeing-victoria) <<https://www.together.vic.gov.au/wellbeing-victoria>>.
- Seek professional support early if you're having difficulties. If things feel a bit tough, or you need someone to talk to, contact your doctor to access mental health support or contact the counsellors on these free services
  - [Lifeline Australia](https://www.lifeline.org.au/) <<https://www.lifeline.org.au/>>, phone: 13 11 14  
A crisis support service that provides support at any time.

- **Beyond Blue** <<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/>>, phone: 1300 224 636  
Providing specialist help for people in isolation.
- **Kids Helpline** <<https://www.kidshelpline.com.au/>>, phone: 1800 551 800  
A free and confidential counselling service for young people.

## Information for caregivers and other household members

If you are looking after a family member there are some important things you should do to keep everyone in your home safe:

- Make sure the person in quarantine remains in one room, away from other people.
- Keep their door closed and windows open for ventilation where possible.
- Do not have visitors to the home.
- Keep the number of carers and people interacting with them to a minimum.
- Always wash your hands with soap and water or use a hand sanitiser before and after entering the room. Wear a fitted face mask.
- Keep the quarantined person's dishes and cutlery separate from the rest of the household.
- Wear a fitted face mask when you are in the quarantined person's room.
- Wear a mask and gloves when touching dirty laundry and wash only at the highest heat setting.
- Clean and disinfect communal household surfaces (tabletops, doors, keyboards, taps and handles) after they have been touched by the person in quarantine and often during the day.
- Dispose of tissues and masks in a sealed plastic bag. Wear gloves when touching these items and always wash your hands after taking the gloves off.

### Monitor their symptoms

If the person you are caring for develops serious symptoms such as difficulty breathing, call triple zero (000) and ask for an ambulance.

If anyone else has any symptoms they should get tested and immediately return home.

If the person you're caring for starts to feel unwell, call the Department of Health and Human Services Public Health Division on **1300 651 160** for advice.

If you need to see a doctor, call ahead so they can prepare for you or arrange a telehealth appointment.

If you are unable to quarantine from the confirmed case, such as parents living with young children or carers living in the same house, your quarantine period will be extended for an additional 14 days. This will likely commence only after the Department of Health and Human Services has told the confirmed case they have completed isolation. The Department of Health and Human Services will tell you when you can leave quarantine.

To find out more information about coronavirus (COVID-19) and how to stay safe visit [DHHS.vic – coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus) <<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus>>

If you need an interpreter, call TIS National on 131 450

For information in other languages, scan the QR code or visit

[DHHS.vic –Translated resources - coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/translated-resources-coronavirus-disease-covid-19)

<<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/translated-resources-coronavirus-disease-covid-19>>



For any questions

**Coronavirus hotline 1800 675 398 (24 hours)**

Please keep Triple Zero (000) for emergencies only

To receive this document in another format [email the Department of Health and Human Services](mailto:COVID-19@dhhs.vic.gov.au) <[COVID-19@dhhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:COVID-19@dhhs.vic.gov.au)>.

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Available at [DHHS.vic –Translated resources - coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/translated-resources-coronavirus-disease-covid-19)

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