COVID-19 work, health and safety guidance for NSW Construction sites

This guidance information has been developed to inform the construction industry and the broader supply chain of measures that can be put in place to protect workers and the community from COVID-19.

This guidance information is intended to reinforce and operate concurrently with the public health arrangements as they are put in place by Australian Commonwealth and State Governments to manage and address the impacts of COVID-19.

As is the case with other health and safety risks, COVID-19 is best managed by those best placed to control the risk, which in this case are our Principal Contractors who are in control of our construction sites. It's important to note that whilst COVID-19 is a new and emerging hazard, Principal Contractors and the broader supply chain must continue to proactively manage their existing health & safety risks.

An increased focus should be placed on the mental health and wellbeing of the construction workforce. Engagement of specialist providers such as Employee Assistance Program, Mates in Construction, Mental First Aid training and other programs are vital during this time.

Travel to Site	*Options to consider in addition to government directives and guidance*
Arrangements that support workers to travel to site alone using their own transport	• Providing access to car parking facilities • Travel during non-peak periods
Site Access and New Starters	*Options to consider in addition to government directives and guidance*
Enhance site access protocols	• All non-essential personnel and visitors should be restricted from entering site • Introduce staggered start and finish times to reduce congestion and contact • Monitor entry and exit points to maintain social distancing and prevent over-crowding, including provision of supervision, line marking, clear signage, video communications/doorbell.
All new personnel attending site undertake a COVID-19 Self-Assessment	• Includes a declaration that to their knowledge they don't have symptoms of COVID-19. • Health screening and testing may be an option (subject to consultation and expert medical advice) • Put in place a process to deal with vulnerable persons (in line with government medical advice by virtue of age, health condition and/or pregnancy)
Site Inductions	• Inductions utilise online and videoconferencing delivery • Inductions should be updated to incorporate COVID-19 management requirements
Social Distancing and Segregation	*Options to consider in addition to government directives and guidance*
Segregating the workforce and teams	• Facilities and arrangements are put in place to provide the appropriate distancing for pre-start briefings, Toolbox Meetings and other site based meetings, break periods and meals • Work crews segregated into identifiable groups
Access and egress	• Arrangements are in place for general access and egress including stairways, lifts, hoists, evacuation routes and muster points
Deliveries	• Delivery protocols are in place: ○ Delivery drivers remain in their vehicles while being unloaded where possible

08 April 2020

	○ Delivery drivers sanitise their hands before manually unloading goods and materials
Use of site vehicles, plant and equipment	• Site vehicles and plant are operated by a designated operator (i.e. not shared) and should be regularly cleaned. • Regularly clean the inside of vehicle cabs and between use by different operators (if unavoidable shared use).
Staggering work activities	• Options include staggered start and finish times by seeking extensions to the site approved operating hours, reducing non-essential works • Work activities where social distancing is problematic should not proceed. Where activities are considered essential for safety or other reasons there should be clearly documented process of control and approval
Promote awareness and understanding	*Options to consider in addition to government directives and guidance*
Awareness, training and consultation	• A program to provide regular, well informed training and advice to the workforce in relation to personal hygiene, updated infection control practices and the adherence to COVID-19 control requirements
Monitoring	• Review the existing levels of supervision required to engage, monitor and instruct the compliance to COVID-19 guidelines and directives
Enhanced Health and Hygiene	*Options to consider in addition to government directives and guidance*
Personal hygiene practices	• Require all workers to wash or clean their hands before entering or leaving the site and provide hand cleaning facilities near entrances and exits • Wear the required personal protective equipment including gloves and glasses which are known to provide additional protection.
General cleaning requirements	• Maintain prescribed standards for daily cleaning and sanitation across the worksite including toilet, eating, change and shower facilities • Enhance cleaning protocols in communal areas such as reception, delivery areas, turnstiles, entrance points, lifts, hoists, printers, plant and machinery controls, handrails, taps and washing facilities • Rubbish collection and storage points should be increased and emptied regularly throughout and at the end of each day.
First Aid Personnel	• Consider the appointment of occupational paramedic or occupational nurse to provide medical coverage. Where this is not possible then ensure First aid personnel are provided adequate training and PPE (commensurate to COVID-19 exposure management) for any actual of close contact with normal construction first aid patients
Becoming unwell	• Ensure clear protocols are in place, in line with government directives, for the isolation, quarantine, transport, support and reinstatement of persons that become unwell in relation to COVID-19 • Where possible use gates and swipe cards to identify when individual workers enter and exit the site to aid in tracing their attendance; or toolbox talks or other methods or recording individual worker attendance at a site.