

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19): WHS and workers' compensation

UPDATE

Working from Home checklist

Please see below a checklist of considerations for short-term working from home arrangements. This includes workers that enter the 14-day isolation period for COVID-19.

This checklist provides guidance for workers and Persons Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBUs to be referred to as 'employers'). Please note, the following considerations should be seen as minimum requirements only. Employers may have more detailed working from home guidance in their organisations that should be used in conjunction with this checklist.

Any physical activity required to be undertaken

- ☐ Take appropriate breaks to ensure repetitive actions are not continued for long periods.
- ☐ Breaks involve stretching and changing of posture, and possibly alternating activity.
- ☐ Check you have a comfortable posture.
- ☐ Make sure any lifting, pushing, or carrying type task is well within your physical capacity.
- ☐ Use trolleys or other mechanisms to move heavy and awkward items.

The work environment

- ☐ Check the level of illumination and location of lighting fixtures are suited to the activity. Lighting level should be sufficient for visual tasks to be completed without eye strain. Greater illumination is generally needed for very fine visual tasks. Natural and artificial light sources should not create glare via reflection on the computer screen or working surface.
- ☐ Check there are sufficient levels of ventilation and thermal comfort.
- ☐ Check the location, height and other physical characteristics of furniture and computer/s are suited to the task and take into consideration other factors, for example, egress routes, direction of light source.
- ☐ Check walkways are clear of clutter and trip hazards such as trailing electrical cords.
- ☐ Check there is no damaged flooring (uneven tiles, pulled up carpet).
- ☐ Check there is suitable storage for documents and books.
- ☐ Where possible, only use equipment that has been issued by your organisation and has recently been tagged and tested.

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Communication

- ☐ Make an agreement about a reasonable communication system between you and your manager (for example, call-in or email morning and night).
- ☐ Inform your manager if there is any change that may impact your health and safety or the health and safety of another worker (for example, a new pet, renovations or moving house).
- ☐ PCBU to ensure the agreed communications strategy with the worker is documented.

Work practices

- ☐ Take breaks every 30 minutes of keyboarding and stand at least once per hour.
- ☐ Keep wrists upright while typing and make sure they are not supported on any surface while typing.
- ☐ Sitting posture is upright or slightly reclined, maintaining slight hollow in lower back.
- ☐ Use your hand to hold telephone receiver or wear a headset (no cradling).
- ☐ Break up long periods of continuous computer use by performing other tasks.

Mental health

- ☐ Set up your workstation and establish boundaries around your work hours with your partner, children and/or house mates.
- ☐ Schedule regular meetings and catch ups with your manager, team and clients to help you maintain ongoing contact and foster positive working relationships.
- ☐ Stay connected via phone, email and/or online (via your organisation's videoconferencing, instant messaging platforms, etc) to keep you across latest developments with work, your team and organisation.
- ☐ Use outdoor spaces where possible when you take breaks and try to incorporate some exercise or other activity as part of your working day.
- ☐ Play music or listen to the radio to create a harmonious working environment.
- ☐ Identify any potential distractions and put strategies in place to minimise them, for example separating your workstation from the rest of the house.

For more information visit: www.comcare.gov.au/prevent-harm/coronavirus