

COVID-19

Self-isolation requirements

15 June 2020

Why am I being isolated?

If you have been asked to isolate yourself in your own home, residence, hotel or other accommodation it is because you have or may have COVID-19 and your clinician thinks it necessary. You are being isolated to help reduce the spread of this virus to other people.

If you are confirmed as having COVID-19, you have been assessed as being well enough to be self-caring and able to seek medical attention if your symptoms become worse.

What do I need to do?

Stay indoors

You are advised not to leave your home, residence, hotel or accommodation except to seek or receive medical care. If you do need to leave your home for a medical appointment, wear a face mask and do not use public transport. Private transport is the preferred transport option.

Monitor your symptoms

Seek medical attention if you believe your illness is worsening. Call ahead to advise that you are in self-isolation because you have or may have COVID-19. Your healthcare provider will advise you of the steps you need to take when you attend your appointment to prevent others from becoming ill. If you have serious symptoms such as difficulty breathing, call 000, ask for an ambulance and notify the officers why you are in home-isolation.

Reduce the chance of spread to others in your household

- Stay away from others

Only people who are essential for caring for you should stay in the home, residence, hotel or accommodation. Restrict visits from other people who do not need to be in your home. Elderly people and those with compromised immune systems or chronic illnesses such as asthma or diabetes, are at greater risk of more serious illness with COVID-19 and should stay elsewhere if they are able to.

As much as possible, you should stay in a room away from others and sleep in a separate room. Use a separate bathroom if it is possible. Avoid shared or communal areas. While unwell, avoid close contact with others, including touching, kissing, hugging and other intimate contact.

If it is not possible for you to live separately to others in the household while you are infectious with COVID-19, your household members may need to continue to quarantine after you are well.

- Pay attention to hygiene

Always cover your mouth when you sneeze or cough, preferably with a tissue or your sleeve when you don't have a tissue. Dispose of any used tissues immediately in a rubbish bin. It is very important to wash your



hands with soap and running water for at least 20 seconds after you cough, sneeze, blow your nose or take off gloves and masks. You can use alcohol-based hand rub if your hands are not visibly dirty.

- **Do not share household items**

You should not share cups, glasses, plates, utensils, towels or bedding with others in your home. These items should not be used by others until they are cleaned thoroughly with detergent and water or in a dishwasher or washing machine. See below for further advice about household cleaning.

- **Wear a mask**

If you have COVID-19, you should avoid being in the same room with others. If you do need to be in the same room, always wear a face mask (if available). Where a mask is not available it is important to keep a distance of at least 1.5 metres away from other household members. Always wash your hands with soap and running water and dry your hands thoroughly or use alcohol-based hand sanitiser before and after fitting your face mask.

What do care givers and household members need to know?

- Frequent hand cleaning with soap and running water or using an alcohol-based hand rub when hands are not visibly soiled is the most important measure carers of a sick person can do to avoid getting infected.
- Maintain a distance of at least 1.5 metres from the sick person as much as possible, noting that this may not always be possible when caring for sick children or distressed persons.
- When able, open doors and windows to ensure there is good airflow in shared areas.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces such as table tops, doorknobs, taps, sinks, phones, keyboards, remote controls and bedside tables every day with a normal household cleaning product. Pay particular attention to the kitchen, laundry and bathroom.
- Thoroughly clean any surfaces that have blood, body fluid and or secretions on them immediately.
- Wear disposable gloves when dealing with any body fluids (especially sputum [phlegm], mucous and other respiratory secretions) of a home-isolated person. Dispose of the gloves immediately after each use into a separate plastic bag and place it in the bin. Hands should be washed immediately after removing and disposing of the gloves.
- Always follow the safety advice and instructions for dilutions or preparation of cleaning products and disinfectants.
- When the isolated person's laundry is washed, use the warmest recommended cycle for the item of clothing, bedding or towels. Disposable gloves should be worn when handling these dirty items. The gloves should be disposed of immediately after use, and then hands washed.

Do carers or household members of a confirmed case need to be isolated as well?

The people you live with and other close contacts may need to remain at home (this is called self-quarantine). They will be assessed by the local public health unit and advised if and how long they need to remain in quarantine.

Do carers or household members of someone who is waiting on a test result need to be isolated?

If you are waiting on a test result, the people you live with and other close contacts do not need to be in quarantine unless specifically advised by the local public health unit but should stay away from the sick person as much as possible. If the test result is positive, they may be assessed as a close contact and then need to be in quarantine.

When will I be able to be released from isolation after being confirmed with COVID-19?

Your health care provider will advise you when you are no longer infectious and can come out of isolation.

It is important to note that there are additional requirements for healthcare and aged care workers.

Suspected cases who test negative to COVID-19

If you were being tested to see if you have COVID-19 and your test is negative, you can resume your usual activities, in accordance with the current government directions.

If you were in self-quarantine because you were issued with a quarantine notice, you must remain in self-quarantine until the end date written on the notice regardless of the negative result. This is because you may still develop COVID-19 infection.

You need to continue good hygiene practices to help stay free of illness and follow the physical distancing advice for the general community.

If you are or become unwell, you need to seek medical advice.

What support is available if I need to be in self-isolation?

People who are in isolation and not able to look after themselves and/or wanting to arrange daily wellbeing checks from the Red Cross can call the Community Recovery Hotline on 1800 173 349.

Further information

If you require further information, please contact your health provider or 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84).

If you or anybody in the household is experiencing a medical emergency, call 000 and notify the officers that you are currently isolated because you have or may have COVID-19.

Visit the Queensland Health website www.health.qld.gov.au/coronavirus for latest updates on COVID-19.

Information about community support is available at www.qld.gov.au/community/disasters-emergencies/queensland-disasters/novel-coronavirus-covid-19