



COVID-19

Managing Health & Safety in the Workplace

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What we're going to cover

- Some information about COVID-19
- The importance of sourcing factual information
- What is expected of retailers – duty of care to workers and customers
- Where to start & what to consider – risk & control measures
- What information retailers should rely on to guide them in their actions
- Top common questions from retailers on managing risks from COVID-19 in the workplace
- Examples of COVID-19 control measures in retail workplaces



Some information about COVID-19

- COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus. This new virus and disease were unknown before the outbreak began in Wuhan, China, in December 2019.
- The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, tiredness, and dry cough. Some patients may have aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat or diarrhea. These symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually. Some people become infected but don't develop any symptoms and don't feel unwell.
- People can catch COVID-19 from others who have the virus. The disease can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth which are spread when a person with COVID-19 coughs or exhales. These droplets land on objects and surfaces around the person. Other people then catch COVID-19 by touching these objects or surfaces, then touching their eyes, nose or mouth. People can also catch COVID-19 if they breathe in droplets from a person with COVID-19 who coughs out or exhales droplets. This is why it is important to stay more than 1 meter (3 feet) away from a person who is sick.

Some information about COVID-19

- The risk of catching COVID-19 from someone with no symptoms at all is very low.
- While WHO are still learning about how COVID-2019 affects people, older persons and persons with pre-existing medical conditions (such as high blood pressure, heart disease, lung disease, cancer or diabetes) appear to develop serious illness more often than others.
- Public health measures, such as good hand hygiene and good respiratory etiquette are important actions all can take to prevent infection.

Some facts about COVID-19

- It is not certain how long the virus that causes COVID-19 survives on surfaces, but it seems to behave like other coronaviruses. Studies suggest that coronaviruses (including preliminary information on the COVID-19 virus) may persist on surfaces for a few hours or up to several days. This may vary under different conditions (e.g. type of surface, temperature or humidity of the environment).
- If you think a surface may be infected, clean it with simple disinfectant to kill the virus and protect yourself and others. Clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water. Avoid touching your eyes, mouth, or nose.



*Workplace vs. Coronavirus:
No One Has a Playbook for This*

- The New York Times, March 6, 2020



Australian
Retailers
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Duty of Care

COVID-19 is a potential risk to a person's health and safety.

Retailers as employers/PCBUs under OHS/WHS law must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of workers and others at the workplace.

- *Psychological health & safety*
- *Physical health & safety*



Primary duty of care.

- Safe & healthy work environment
- Safe plant and structures
- Safe systems of work
- Safe use, handling and storage of plant, structures and substances
- Adequate facilities for the welfare of workers
- Information, instruction, training & supervision
- Monitoring of workers health and the conditions of the workplace





Where to start & What to consider

reasonably practicable.

What could reasonably be done at a particular time to ensure health and safety measures are in place. In determining what is reasonably practicable, there is a requirement to weigh up all relevant matters including:



the likelihood of a hazard or risk occurring (in essence the probability of a person being exposed to harm)



the degree of harm that might result if the hazard or risk occurred (in essence the potential seriousness of injury or harm)



what the person concerned knows, or ought to reasonably know, about the hazard or risk and ways of eliminating or minimising it



the availability of suitable ways to eliminate or minimise the hazard or risk, and



the cost of eliminating or minimising the hazard or risk. Costs may only be considered after assessing the extent of the risk and the available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk.

Managing WHS risks

Risk management is a proactive process that helps you respond to change and facilitate continuous improvement in your business.

It should be:

- planned
- systematic
- cover all reasonably foreseeable hazards and associated risks



step-by-step approach

- Step 1 – Identify the hazard
 - What is the hazard?
 - What harm can it cause to health?
- Step 2 – consider risks (L x C)
 - Understand the nature of the harm that could be caused by the hazard, how serious the harm could be and the likelihood of it happening.
- Step 3 – Control risks
 - Implement the most effective control measure that is reasonably practicable in the circumstances and ensure that it remains effective over time.
- Step 4 – Review control measures
 - Review the control measures to ensure they are working as planned



RISK
MANAGEMENT



What information should we rely on

"Just as the number of people and countries affected by this new virus have spread, so have conspiracy theories and unfounded claims about it."

- Robert H. Shmerling, MD, Harvard Health Publishing



Reputable Sources of Information



- [Australian Government Department of Health](#)
- [Local state and territory health departments](#)
- [Ministry of Health NZ](#)
- [World Health Organisation](#)
- [Safe Work Australia](#)
- Local state and territory health and safety regulators

What duty of care looks like in practice for retail



Consult, cooperate and coordinate



Emergency & contingency planning



Ensure a safe workplace



Provision of adequate facilities



Provision of adequate information, instruction and training

1. Know the risks by closely monitoring official Government sources for current information
2. Consult with the workforce – regular meetings reviewing information and plan
3. Consult, cooperate and coordinate with other duty holders you share a duty with (building management)
4. Review and promote your organisations policies and measures for:
 - Infection control
 - Travel (eliminate or minimise international work travel, in line with the travel advice on Australian Government's Smartraveller website and NZ Government's Safetravel website)
 - Events & meetings
 - Mental health
 - Code of conduct
 - Bullying, harassment, discrimination & violence
 - Remote work

Note: This list is not exhaustive

4. Ensure a safe workplace
 - Make sure your workplace is clean and hygienic
5. Provision of adequate facilities
 - Sufficient supplies and materials (washbasins, soap, sanitiser, tissues, closed bins, masks (in case someone develops illness while at work))
6. Provision of adequate information, instruction and training
 - Induction
 - Ensure workers are aware of the isolation/quarantine periods in accordance with advice from the Australian Government Department of Health and the Ministry of Health NZ. This includes information on when staff should not attend work
 - Promote regular and thorough hand-washing by workers and visitors
 - Promote good respiratory hygiene in the workplace
 - Inform workers of travel authorisation process, including national travel advice before going on business trips
 - Display posters about isolation
 - Inform workers of events and meeting protocol



Top common questions ARA



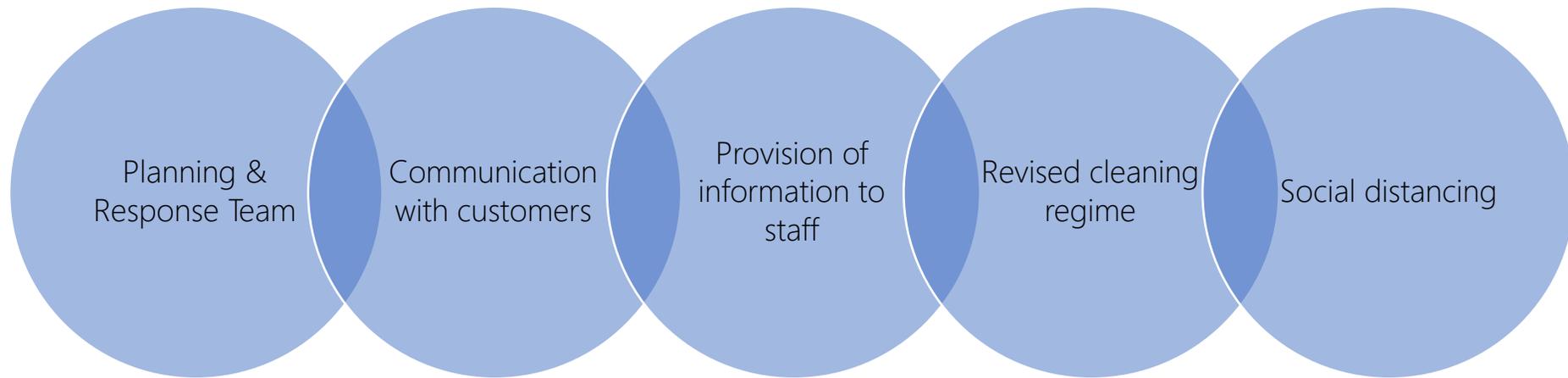
- What should be the process for cleaning?
- How do we manage working from home?
- What is expected of us if our people do work away from the work premises?
- What do we do if we are notified of a confirmed COVID-19 case

Top common questions HBIA



- Is it safe applying masks around the nose, mouth and eye area?
- Is it safe to do a cut throat shave and beard trim around nose mouth area?
- What services are safe and not safe to offer?

Examples of COVID-19 control measures in retail workplaces



Now is the time to prepare for COVID-19. Simple precautions and planning can make a big difference. Action now will help protect your employees and your business.

- World Health Organisation

