Under the model Work Health and Safety laws, your employer has a duty of care for the health and safety of their workers and others at the workplace.

What you need to do

You have a duty to take reasonable care of your own health and safety, and to not adversely affect the health and safety of others.

You need to follow any reasonable policies or directions your employer has put in place in response to COVID-19. This includes if you are working from another location, such as working from home.

What your employer needs to do

Your employer must identify risks to work health and safety from exposure to the COVID-19 virus, and wherever possible, put in place appropriate controls. They need to follow government directions, including implementing appropriate physical distancing – keeping everyone at the workplace at least 1.5 metres physically apart.

Risks from COVID-19 virus can be physical or psychosocial.

If you suspect or know you have the COVID-19 virus

You should:

- seek medical advice
- do not go to work
- tell your employer as soon as possible and update them your if your situation changes, for example if it’s confirmed you have the virus

If work is unsafe

In some circumstances workers have the right to stop or refuse to carry out unsafe work. You have this right if there is a reasonable concern you would be exposed to a serious risk to your health and safety from an immediate or imminent hazard – this could include exposure to the COVID-19 virus.

If you stop work because it is unsafe, you need to tell your employer as soon as possible. You must also then be available to carry out suitable alternative work, such as working from home.

More information

- For information about COVID-19 and work health and safety, go to swa.gov.au
- For information on your leave and pay go to fairwork.gov.au/coronavirus
- For health information, go to health.gov.au

Please note the model WHS laws have been implemented in all jurisdictions except Victoria and Western Australia. For information specific to your location of work, please contact the relevant WHS regulator in your state or territory.