
Guidance for construction sites

MANAGING A POSITIVE COVID-19 CASE

Introduction

The NSW Ministry of Health has published [Contact risk assessment for community and workplace settings](#). The Guidelines will help construction sites to self-assess and identify close and casual contacts on site.

The factors that determine the level of contact risk are:

- Vaccination status
- Proximity of interaction
- Were people inside or outside?
- If indoors, the size of the indoor space
- Duration of interaction
- Was everyone wearing a mask?

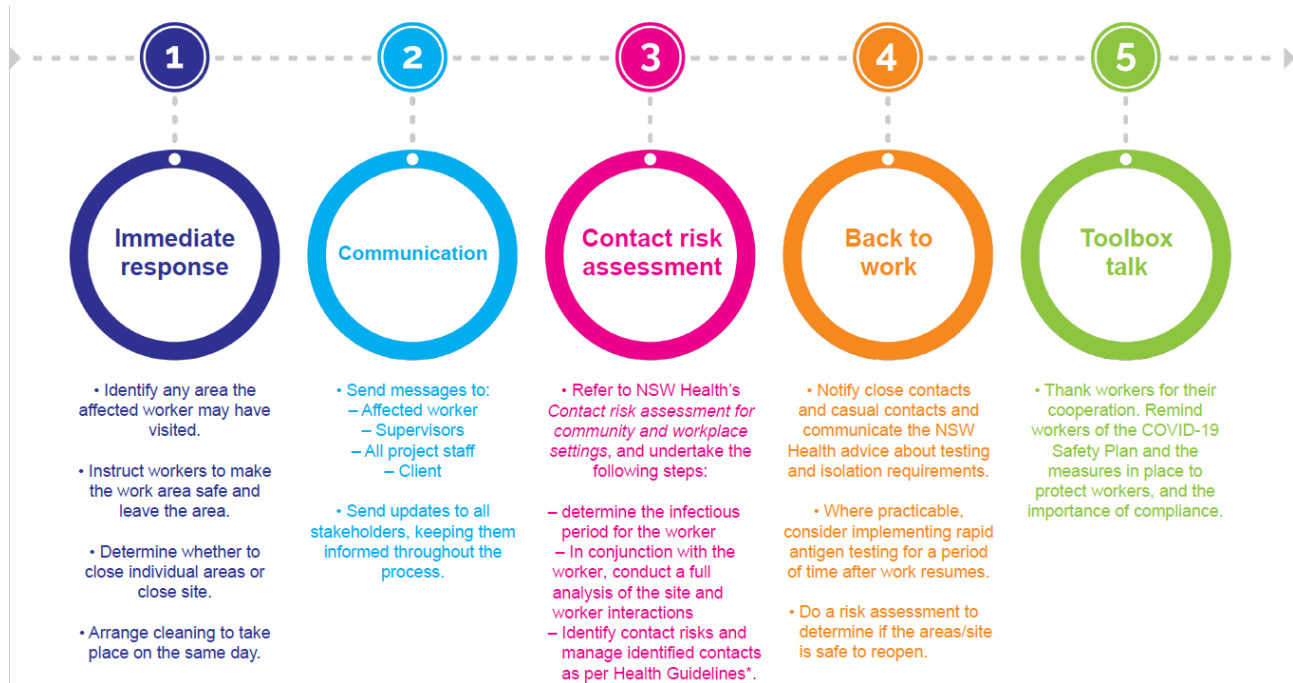
The more that sites can do to reduce the contact between workers and ensure that workers are wearing masks and are vaccinated, the safer their sites and their employees will be from catching COVID-19. This will give sites the best chance to remain open in the event they do experience a positive case on site.

How to prepare

- Implement systems to help workers to do the right thing, consistent with COVID-19 safety plans, and ensure everyone knows the rules and sticks to them.
- As much as possible, give yourself the contact-mapping tools to understand who may have been in contact with who (e.g. contact-tracing tools, CCTV footage, site plans to demonstrate how people move around the site supplemented by interview processes).
- Keep records of workers' names, contact details and vaccination status up to date and accessible 24/7.
- Prepare communication materials ready for use, including ready access to NSW Health guidance on contacts.
- Keep contact lists for professional cleaners handy and set up contractual arrangements.
- Consider investigating and procuring rapid antigen testing for use in the days following an on-site infection.
- Develop criteria for resumption of operations.
- Articulate your site-specific requirements and process as part of the site Mitigation Plan

What to do if you have a positive COVID-19 case on site

Workers should notify the site controller if they test positive to COVID-19. A single positive COVID-19 case, as confirmed by a PCR test, triggers an assessment of the risk.



*[NSW Health fact Sheet for COVID-19 close contacts](#) and [NSW Health fact sheet for COVID-19 casual contacts](#)

Arms-length decision-making

Contact risk assessments should be made without reference to the consequences for the project. Contractor and client buy-in before sites experience a case will ensure support for decision-making that puts safety of workers first.

Every site is different, but you should consider the following:

- Establish a dedicated COVID Response Team for your site or your business.
- Who is best placed to do contact-risk assessments and make decisions about closing/reopening: on site HSE Teams or a centralised offline team?
- Document your processes and decision-making and adapt them based on what worked and what didn't, consider long term management of site and changing site conditions.