



# Have a COVID-19 Plan

## Checklist for businesses

COVID-19 could be with us for some time, so it's important that businesses have a plan to keep their workforce safe and virus free. Businesses need to develop safe work practices and consider how they can reconfigure their operations to adapt to ongoing restrictions.

### Have a plan

You should have a plan that sets out how you **prepare** your workplace to protect staff and customers to **prevent** infection, your **response** if there is COVID-19 case, and how you will **recover**. [SafeWork NSW](#) has advice to help you develop your plan.

### Prepare and Prevent

You need to keep yourself and your staff up to date on directions from the Department of Health about the latest restrictions including physical distancing and hygiene measures. The [Department of Health website](#) has regular updates and advice.

It's a good idea to nominate a person or team in your workplace to focus on infection control, to take a close look at your work environment, find potential areas of risk and come up with plans to address them. Safe Work Australia has a [checklist](#) which can help you plan and a range of [resources](#) on keeping workers safe and your obligations as an employer.

Different businesses will have different risks and need to implement specific measures to protect staff and customers from infection. Safe Work Australia has fact sheets for [specific industries](#) which can help you plan additional steps you may need to reduce risks in your workplace. They are updating these regularly.

Peak bodies and associations are also providing specific advice directly to members, so check in with them. Some examples include advice from the [Australian Council of Trade Unions](#), [Australian Industry Group](#) and [Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry](#).

### Respond

Your plan should set out the steps you will need to take if there is a COVID-19 infection in your workplace.

Safe Work Australia has [advice](#) on what you need to do including identifying and controlling infection hazards, assessing and controlling risks and who you need to notify. They have also created [an infographic](#) setting out the basic steps.

What needs to be done to meet your work health and safety duty will depend on your circumstances. You should contact your [state or territory WHS regulator](#) for specific advice on your situation.

### Recover

Your plan should include how you will clean your workplace and continue your business. This will depend on individual circumstances. The National Coronavirus Helpline on 1800 020 080 can provide advice.

Safe Work Australia has [advice](#) on cleaning workplaces after suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19.

Communication with staff and customers is also important, as well as a review of your prevention measures to consider if they need to be adapted.

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## Plan your business future

Plan now for how your business can adapt through the COVID-19 situation and be ready for recovery and when restrictions are eased.

[Business.gov.au](https://www.business.gov.au) has information on financial and regulatory support that can help you through COVID-19.

There is also [advice and tools](#) to help you plan your future business direction.

## Helpful links to advice and financial support

### Regulatory, cyber security and scam advice

Get advice on **your rights and obligations under the Fair Work Act**, including in relation to the JobKeeper Payment and other temporary changes to the industrial relations framework during COVID-19. Visit the [Fair Work Ombudsman website](#).

**Some states and territories in Australia have closed their borders** to non-essential travel due to COVID-19. Here's what you need to know. Each state or territory has their own entry requirements. Visit the [interstate quarantine site](#).

Get advice on how you can better protect yourself from **cyber attacks and disruptions** during COVID-19. Visit [Australian Cyber Security Centre](#).

**Scammers are using COVID-19** disruptions to take advantage of the community. Visit [Scam Watch](#) for reports of the latest scams.

### Find staff

The labour market has changed quickly. **If you need multiple employees** and would like to advertise your jobs, get in touch with the Department of Education, Skills and Employment by visiting their [Looking to hire](#) page.

## Financial assistance for employers

### JobKeeper payment

Businesses significantly impacted by COVID-19 will be able to access a subsidy from the Government to continue paying their employees. This **subsidy is for \$1,500/fortnight** per employee for up to six months and is also available for **sole traders**. For more information and to register for updates see the [ATO's advice](#).

### Boosting cash flow for employers

The Government is providing tax-free cash flow support of up to \$100,000 for eligible small and medium-sized businesses and not-for-profits (NFPs) with a minimum payment of \$20,000. Eligible businesses and NFPs do not need to apply – it will be automatically applied to eligible businesses when they lodge their activity statement for the relevant periods. See the [ATO's advice](#).

### Supporting apprentices and trainees

A wage subsidy of up to \$21,000 per apprentice or trainee is available. Talk to the Australian Apprenticeship Support Network (AASN) in your area. See the Department of Education, Skills and Employment's website for [advice](#).

Search for your local AASN at [australianapprenticeships.gov.au](https://australianapprenticeships.gov.au).

### Instant asset write-off

The Instant asset write-off threshold has been increased to \$150,000 and now includes larger businesses. Check your eligibility for the instant asset write-off on the [ATO's website](#).

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### Backing Business Investment

A time-limited 15 month investment incentive is available to support business investment and economic growth over the short-term, by accelerating depreciation deductions. See the [ATO's advice](#).

### Temporary relief for financially distressed businesses

Relief measures will be in place for six months, including:

- an increase to the threshold at which creditors can issue statutory demand, and extra time to respond
- relief from personal liability for trading while insolvent
- temporary flexibility in the Corporations Act 2001.

You don't need to apply. See [business.gov for advice](#).

### Supporting flow of credit

The Government will provide lenders with a guarantee for loans, to increase their willingness and ability to provide credit.

**Loans of up to \$250,000**, over and up to three years, are available, with an initial six month repayment holiday for small or medium sized businesses with turnover up to \$50 million. See [business.gov advice](#).

### Hold on evictions

The Government has announced a range of measures to help renters. This includes a **temporary hold on evictions** and a mandatory code of conduct for **commercial tenancies** to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) affected by coronavirus. See [business.gov advice](#)

## Looking after your employees

### Working from home

Get advice on supporting your **employees to work from home** and advice on **WHS requirements** by visiting [Safe Work Australia](#).

### Mental health

Get help to support your employees and your mental health by visiting [headtohealth.gov.au](#).