NSW Health COVID-19 self-isolation guideline and support

Self-isolation is an important way to stop the spread of COVID-19. People who test positive to COVID-19 on a rapid antigen test or PCR test and their household contacts must self-isolate for 7 days.

This guideline helps explain the current Public Health (COVID-19 Self-Isolation) Order and should be read in conjunction with the fact sheets:

- Testing positive to COVID-19 and managing COVID-19 safely at home

- Information for people exposed to COVID-19

What is self-isolation?

Self-isolation is when you stay in your home or accommodation away from other people. It helps stop the spread of COVID-19 to the people around you.

Self-isolation means:

- not going to work or school

- not going to any public places (e.g. shops, parks, beaches)

- not using public transport

- not having any visitors in your home, unless they are providing healthcare, emergency maintenance or emergency services.

You are only allowed to leave self-isolation to:

- get a COVID-19 test

- seek urgent medical care

- avoid an emergency situation (including to avoid injury or escape the risk of harm from domestic violence).

How do I self-isolate from my household?

If you live with other people, you should stay separated from them during your self-isolation period.

Physically distance

This means:

- stay and sleep in a separate room

- use a separate bathroom if available, or clean a shared bathroom after use

- do not be in the same room as another person (even if they are also in isolation)

- do not share household items including dishes, cups, towels and bedding. After using these items, wash them thoroughly with soap.

Practice good hygiene

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser:

    - before entering an area where other people may go

    - before touching things used by other people

    - after using the bathroom

    - after coughing or sneezing

- before putting on, and after removing face masks
- before eating or drinking.
- Cover coughs and sneezes
- Regularly clean all surfaces you touch as much as possible (such as tabletops, doorknobs and bathroom fixtures) by using household disinfectant or diluted bleach solution
- Wear a mask in shared areas or when caring for other members of your household
- Take extra care to remain separate from any members of your household who are elderly, immunocompromised or have medical conditions such as heart, lung or kidney problems.

What if I need to travel to my place of isolation?

If you need to travel, for example to your home or accommodation, you must do so in a private vehicle, cycle or walk. If you have been exposed to COVID-19 and do not have your own vehicle, you may use a taxi or ride share service. If you have tested positive to COVID-19, you must not use taxis or ride share services. Do not use public transport or fly. You should wear a face mask and stay 1.5 metres away from other people.

Simple steps to reduce the risk to others:

- Map the most direct route and identify safe rest break areas before you leave
- When you need to take a break avoid crowded areas and wear a mask.

When travelling by vehicle with others, you should:

- Sit in the back seat with the windows open (preferably in the passenger rear left seat)
- All wear a face mask that covers your nose and mouth at all times
- Sanitise your hands before you get into the vehicle.

What if I have shared care arrangements?

Moving between households, even for shared caring arrangements, is not recommended. People should only move to another household after they have completed their self-isolation period.

What if I am self-isolating in a multi unit dwelling (eg. apartment building or hotel)?

If you are self-isolating in a building with other people in it, you will need to take extra steps to protect the other people:

- You must remain inside your own unit/room. Avoid shared laundry facilities, or any other common areas, such as a gym, pool or shared outdoor area
- Where there are shared corridors, do not open your door without wearing a mask
- Open windows if possible/safe to maximise fresh air and natural ventilation
- Arrange for someone to pick up rubbish from outside your door. The person collecting your rubbish should wear gloves and a surgical mask while doing this, and thoroughly wash their hands afterwards
- Wash your clothes inside your own unit: other people should not do your laundry
- If you are receiving deliveries including food, request that it is left outside your door. Do not open the door until the delivery person has left and the corridor is empty

Staying in a hotel / accomodation

If you are a guest in a hotel/accommodation, please follow these additional precautions:

- If you cannot safely stay in your current temporary accommodation and separate from all other people, you must seek your own alternative accommodation
- You should tell the accommodation provider that you have tested positive for COVID-19 and must remain inside your room/unit for the isolation period. Tell them that staff should not enter the room.

What support is available while I am in self-isolation?

- If you get a positive result, see the [Testing positive to COVID-19 and managing COVID-19 safely at home](#) for further advice.
- If you have been exposed to COVID-19, see the [Information for people exposed to COVID-19](#) for further advice.
- If you have questions about self-isolation contact NSW Health Isolation Support Line on 1800 943 553 or call Service NSW on 13 77 88.

Food and other essential supplies

If you need food or other essential supplies (e.g. medication) during self-isolation:

- Ask family or friends to pick up supplies as needed and leave them at your door
- Order supplies online
- If you have no other way of obtaining food or other essentials call the NSW Health Isolation Support Line on 1800 943 553 and you will be directed to Service NSW for assistance.

Other supports available

Mental health support

- NSW Mental Health Line – 1800 011 511
- Beyond Blue helpline – 1800 512 348
- Lifeline – 13 11 14
- Kids Helpline - 1800 55 1800
- Service NSW [mental wellbeing resources](#)

Domestic violence support

- National sexual assault and domestic violence helpline on 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732)

Visit [NSW Health website](#) for the latest advice.

NSW Health has partnered with [Sonder](#) which provides a personal wellbeing service with 24/7 access to multilingual chat and phone access to a range of mental health, medical and wellbeing support services.

Help in your language

For free help in your language, call the **Interpreter Service on 13 14 50**.