

## 1 INTRODUCTION

This toolbox talk is about what to do as the Coronavirus (COVID-19) spreads through New Zealand and what you can do to protect yourself, your family and the people around you.

The most up-to-date information for New Zealand is at the Ministry of Health website:  
<https://www.health.govt.nz>

## 2 THE DISEASE

COVID-19 is a new contagious illness that can affect the lungs and airways; it is caused by a type of coronavirus. Experience of COVID-19 to date shows that all people are at risk of contracting the virus, however some people are at higher risk at getting very sick from this illness. This includes older adults and people who have medical conditions like heart disease, lung disease, asthma and diabetes.

It spreads through tiny droplets of saliva or body fluids spread by such things as talking, sneezing, kissing and coughing. The disease can survive on surfaces such as benchtops and door handles for a number of hours and can then be picked up from there which is why washing your hands is very important.

## 3 SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

Some people get a very mild form of the disease but it can kill some people quite quickly, especially if they have diabetes or heart disease.

The signs and symptoms are:



**A HIGH TEMPERATURE (AT LEAST 38°)**



**COUGHING**



**BREATHING PROBLEMS**

Milder symptoms can be helped with normal medicines, but if there is trouble breathing people may need to go to hospital.

If you have these symptoms call the Ministry of Health's special COVID-19 number on **0800 358 5453 at any time**. Or call your doctor, but don't go in without warning them. We can't have doctors getting infected as they will have to go into isolation.

Most of the deaths are from fluid building up in the lungs so people can't breathe. Only about one in 100 people are dying but because it is so easy to spread, this could amount to a lot of people throughout the whole country.

## 4

### PREVENTION

There is no cure or vaccine yet so preventing the spread is the best defence.



A face mask won't stop the virus but if fitted correctly, it does help stop people touching their face to avoid any virus on their hands, going into their mouths or eyes.



Because it attacks the lungs, if you smoke, stop now. There's never been a better time!



Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces such as doorknobs and railings.



Wash your hands. Ordinary soap is even better than expensive hand sanitisers. A 20 second wash with soap will dissolve the virus's protective coating. Ensure that hands are thoroughly dried. Keep plenty of soap, water and disposable hand-towels on-site.



Stay home if you are sick. The Ministry of Health wants people suspected of having the virus to stay home and quarantine themselves for 14 days so make sure you have enough supplies to last that long. If one of your team is sick, send them home.



Cough into your elbow, not your hands, this helps stop the spread.



If you have been in contact with someone who has the disease, assume you may have it and stay home. Stopping the spread is our best weapon to stop our medical systems getting swamped.



Follow the physical distancing and hygiene protocol. Staying one metre away from others whenever possible as this is an effective measure to stop the spread.

## 5

### SELF-ISOLATION

If you are showing signs of being unwell or have recently arrived or returned from overseas (or have been in contact with someone who has) you may be required to self-isolate. Follow the Personal Health Flowchart [https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/resources/PPE/COVID-19\\_PPE\\_Essential-non-health\\_A4\\_Poster.pdf](https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/resources/PPE/COVID-19_PPE_Essential-non-health_A4_Poster.pdf) and take appropriate actions.

The situation is evolving so please visit the Ministry of Health's website <https://www.health.govt.nz> for the most up-to-date information.

## 6

### COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

Industry protocols are in place for protecting workers against the risks of COVID-19. The procedures cover the 5 steps for operating a site including Before arriving on-site.

The protocols are in addition to the normal health and safety obligations and include some useful guides and resources to assist with implementing the protocols on-site. For more information and advice about COVID-19 visit Unite Against COVID-19 <https://covid19.govt.nz>

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Office 0800 748 763



**Email Us**  
[support@sitesoft.com](mailto:support@sitesoft.com)

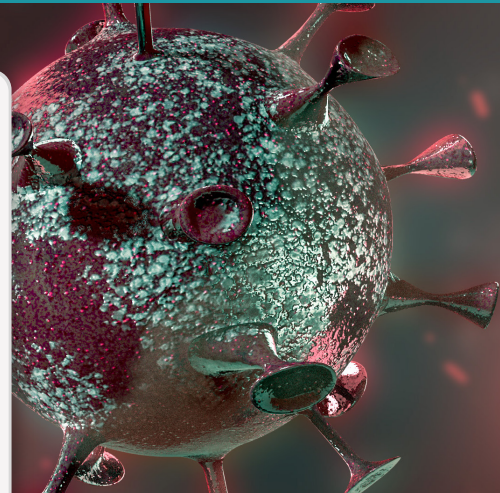
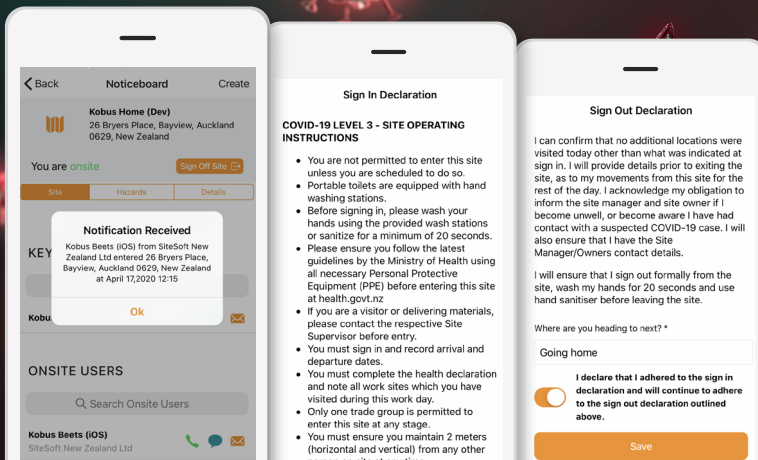


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## 1

### WHAT IS COVID-19?

The novel coronavirus, COVID-19 is one of seven types of known human coronaviruses. COVID-19, like the MERS and SARS coronaviruses, likely evolved from a virus previously found in animals. The remaining known coronaviruses cause a significant percentage of colds in adults and children, and these are not a serious threat for otherwise healthy adults.

Patients with confirmed COVID-19 infection have reportedly had mild to severe respiratory illness (lungs and airways) with symptoms such as fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Some people are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. This includes older adults and people who have serious chronic medical conditions like heart disease, lung disease and diabetes. It spreads through tiny droplets of saliva or body fluids spread by such things as talking, sneezing, kissing and coughing. The disease can survive on surfaces such as benchtops and door handles for a number of hours and can then be picked up from there which is why washing your hands is very important.

As yet there is no cure or vaccine so preventing the spread is the best defence. The most up-to-date information for New Zealand is at the Ministry of Health website <https://www.health.govt.nz>

## 2

### HOW IS COVID-19 SPREAD?

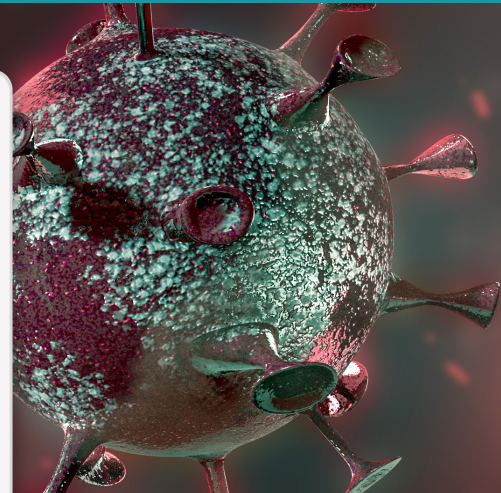
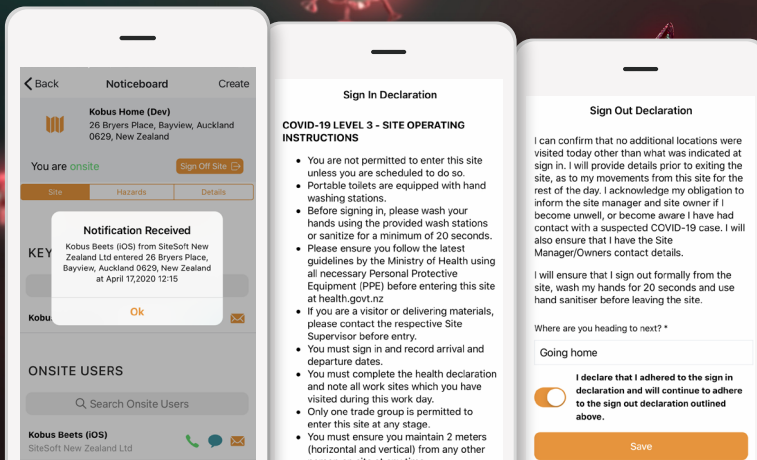
COVID-19, like other viruses, can spread between people. Infected people can spread COVID-19 through their respiratory secretions, especially when they cough or sneeze. According to the CDC, spread from person-to-person is most likely among close contacts (about 2m). Person-to-person spread is thought to occur mainly via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes, like how influenza and other respiratory pathogens spread. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. It is currently unclear if a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes.

In assessing potential hazards, employers should consider whether their workers may encounter someone infected with COVID-19 in the course of their duties. Employers should also determine if workers could be exposed to environments (e.g., worksites) or materials (e.g., laboratory samples, waste) contaminated with the virus.

Depending on the work setting, employers may also rely on identification of sick individuals who have signs, symptoms, and/or a history of travel to COVID-19-affected areas that indicate potential infection with the virus, in order to help identify exposure risks for workers and implement appropriate control measures.

There is much more to learn about the transmissibility, severity, and other features associated with COVID-19, and investigations are ongoing.





This guidance is based on what we currently know about COVID-19 as provided by the Ministry of Health. The latest information updates can be viewed at [www.health.govt.nz](http://www.health.govt.nz)

**1 SYMPTOMS**  
Symptoms include fever, cough, and shortness of breath – similar to influenza or a bad cold.

**2 PREVENTION**

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol if soap and water is not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. If you do not have a tissue, cough into the inside of your elbow, covering your mouth and nose.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces e.g vehicle door handles – interior and exterior, steering wheel, indicator and light switches, window controls, gear shift etc
- If travelling in a vehicle with another person, maintain as much distance as practical and consider wearing a mask (keep masks in your vehicle).

**3 JOBSITE PROTOCOL**

- Ensure you have completed the job start up site checklist.
- Check that you have received all required documents related to COVID-19 plans from your contractors prior to them starting back on site.
- Limit all person to person contact, maintain a 2m distance where possible, minimum 1m.
- Avoid eating lunch in groups.
- Avoid in-person meetings if possible. In the case that an in-person meeting is unavoidable, make sure to have it in a well-ventilated area with sufficient space for attendees to distance themselves from one another. For meetings such as toolbox talks, consider breaking them up into smaller group meetings versus one large meeting.
- No visitors should be at the jobsites, unless fundamental to the execution of the work.
- If the jobsite closes, take the necessary steps to secure your jobsite.
- Monitor the sites on a regular basis to ensure Covid 19 protocols are being met.
- Collect and record all Covid 19 and site induction data at the end of each day. Follow up non-compliance and address these with the relevant parties.

## 4

### TRAVEL PROTOCOL

All employees are advised to discuss any travel plans with their manager prior to making any reservations. Employees will also need to consider the following restrictions on their ability to return to work should they travel for personal or business purposes.

## 5

### IF YOU BECOME SICK

If you are sick, we ask that you stay home. For the safety of all workers and clients - Please immediately communicate with your manager if you have fever, cough or difficulty breathing. In addition, if you have a co-worker displaying these symptoms, please alert your manager.

Managers & supervisors should immediately separate any worker displaying fever, cough or difficulty breathing from other worker, and then send that worker home.

- The affected person should seek medical care as appropriate and stay away from others.
- Workers will not return to our jobsites or offices until they show no signs of illness or fever, without the use of a fever reducing medicine, for 48 hours.
- If a worker has had close contact with an individual that has confirmed COVID-19, that worker will not be allowed to return to the office or jobsite until they have been symptom free for 14 days.

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Office 0800 748 763



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