

Version 1.2 | Updated 11 April 2022

# New Zealand COVID-19 Respiratory Illnesses Guidance

New Zealand's COVID-19 Protection Framework specifies public health and social measures to be taken against COVID-19. We recognise that we must work together and implement workplace control measures to minimise risk to workers.

These protocols and attachments should be read in conjunction with requirements found on the New Zealand government COVID-19 official website [www.covid19.govt.nz](http://www.covid19.govt.nz) and reflect construction industry guidance as to how best to work in an endemic covid-19 environment.

## OUR COMMITMENT AS AN INDUSTRY:

- We are committed to working alongside Government to manage the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses that may impact the construction workplace and put pressure on New Zealand's health system.
- As an industry, we are united against COVID-19 and will do our utmost to protect our workers, the wider community and New Zealand.
- We know that we're in this together – this means trusting those we work with will keep us safe and that we'll do the same for them.
- We are committed to supporting a culture of good mental health and positive wellbeing for our construction community

## Updates in version 1.2

- ▶ Updates to Site Operations under Red, Orange and Green.
- ▶ Replaced COVID-19 Risk Assessment tool with Respiratory Illness Risk Assessment Guide



For information on what COVID-19 is, what the symptoms are, and how it spreads, visit [www.covid19.govt.nz](http://www.covid19.govt.nz)

RED

ORANGE

GREEN

Site operations under Alert levels

			SITE ENTRY
			Introduce staggered start, finish and break times where possible to avoid extensive intermingling to reduce potential of exposure.
			Monitor site access points to enable physical distancing when entering site and interfacing with the public – you may need to change the number of access points, increase to reduce congestion or decrease to enable monitoring.
			Keep a record of who is on site, and when, every day as you may be required to track back for contact tracing.
			<b>Facemasks:</b> Follow Government requirement for face coverings
			Provide hygiene stations at entrances and require all workers and visitors to wash or sanitise their hands before entering and leaving the site.
			Workers to stay at home if unwell

			SITE OPERATIONS
			Where possible, apply a one-way system in high-traffic areas, such as lifts, stairwells and scaffolds.
			Keep team sizes as small as possible or separated work ‘bubbles’ to minimise the operational impact of COVID-19 and other illnesses on your wider team..
			<b>Facemasks:</b> Face masks to be worn in uncontrolled indoor environments, e.g. when interacting with the public. Face masks may be required on some projects as a site-specific requirement
			Maximise ventilation of shared work spaces (open windows/doors)
			All waste and disposable PPE must be removed from site and appropriately disposed of.
			A response plan should be available on site for managing the transmission and impact of respiratory illnesses at work.
			Additional hygiene and sanitary measures are to be implemented on site to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other illnesses e.g. hand washing stations, provision of additional hand sanitizer, provision of disinfectant wiping products.
			Greater focus on cleaning processes
			Implement Business Continuity Planning to limit impact respiratory illness on wider operations

**All sites should regularly assess the risk of COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses (e.g. RSV, seasonal flu) on their sites to ensure that the health of their workers is maintained and site operations are not compromised.**

## EXAMPLE RESPIRATORY ILLNESS RISK ASSESSMENT TOOL.

This is a [risk assessment](#) which has been developed for the construction industry as guidance, it may be added to or adjusted on a case by case basis considering the nature of the business or work.

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Where a risk assessment has been carried out and there is a heightened risk of ill health or business impact from respiratory illness then additional controls may be recommended.

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# Additional controls

## GOOD PRACTICE FOR MANAGING RESPIRATORY ILLNESS IN HIGH RISK ENVIRONMENTS

These are Suggested controls to assist in managing transmission of respiratory illness on site.

DEPENDING ON LEVEL, THESE CONTROLS COULD INCLUDE:

### SITE OPERATIONS



Physical Distancing



Maintain work bubbles



Requirement of face mask on site



Limit visitors to site

### MONITORING AND TESTING



Increased surveillance of symptoms



Targeted testing for symptomatic workers



Surveillance testing while working near high risk individuals

### SITE MEETINGS AND INDUCTIONS



Meeting held via teleconferencing or videoconferencing



Only absolutely necessary participants should attend Face-to-face meetings and records kept



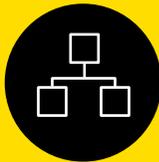
Rooms should be well ventilated / windows open, or held in open areas

# Supporting Resources

## SUPPORTING RESOURCES TO HELP IMPLEMENT THIS GUIDANCE ON SITE:



[Respiratory Illness Risk Assessment Guide](#)



[MoH guidance for a positive case in your business](#)



[Government travel guide and boundary restrictions](#)



[MATES in Construction Manager Guides](#)



[Posters and Signage](#)



[Sign-in register](#)



[COVID-19 Contact Type Definitions and Actions](#)



[Cleaning and Hygiene Guide](#)



[Returning home after work guide](#)



[Mates in Construction Mental Health Guides](#)



[Safe practices when using face masks on site](#)



[Safe practices when using gloves on site](#)

## HELP SERVICES

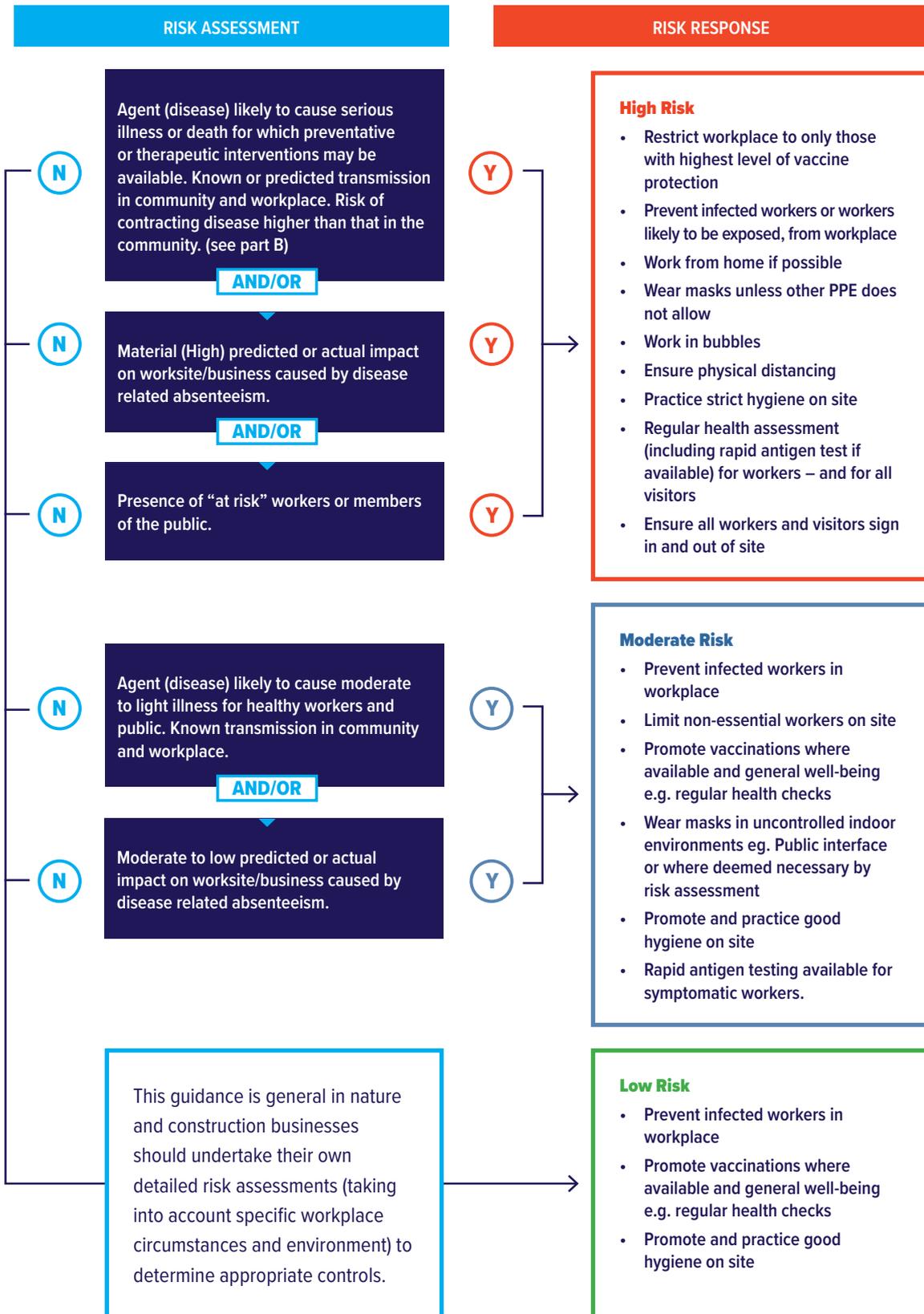
**Healthline**  
call 0800 358 5453  
[health.govt.nz](http://health.govt.nz)

**Unite Against COVID-19**  
[covid19.govt.nz](http://covid19.govt.nz)

**National Telehealth Service**  
[1737.org.nz](http://1737.org.nz)

**Mental Health Foundation**  
[mentalhealth.org.nz](http://mentalhealth.org.nz)

**MATES in Construction**  
0800 111 315  
[mates.net.nz](http://mates.net.nz)



There are several public health factors that employers should consider as part of their work health and safety risk assessment process, to help determine whether the risk in the workplace is higher than that in the community. For a particular role:

- Does the worker regularly, as part of their work, interact with people who are at greater risk of severe illness should they contract COVID-19?

This includes persons (workers or members of the public) with compromised health conditions such as in a health or aged care context.

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Does the worker work in a confined indoor space (of less than 100m<sup>2</sup>) and involve close and sustained interactions with others (i.e. closer than 1m distance, for periods of more than 15 continuous minutes)?

This could include shoulder to shoulder type construction and building work in a commercial or residential setting. It also includes scenarios where there is close contact in shared spaces such as lunchrooms that cannot be reasonably segregated.

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Is there a greater risk of the worker being exposed to new variants at work than they would be in the community?

Consider whether the construction worker is exposed to a wide variety and volume of people such as in a customer facing role or they are required to regularly use public transport for long periods – e.g., air travel.

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Does the worker regularly interact with people who are less likely to be vaccinated against COVID-19?

Consider uncontrolled work environments such as when tradespeople enter private dwellings and interact with people whose vaccination status is unknown.

For more guidance on risk assessments and workplace vaccinations please refer to WorkSafe and MBIE here. [COVID-19 controls at work - employer vaccination requirements and other measures | WorkSafe Vaccines and the workplace » Employment New Zealand](#)

