



## COVID-19 Response Checklist *Abattoirs and Meat Processing Facilities*

This checklist has been developed to support abattoirs and meat processing facilities to respond to COVID-19 cases.

Abattoirs and meat processing facilities are considered high risk environments for COVID-19 transmission due to tasks, such as processing lines, that require close interaction between employees. In addition, employees may live in shared accommodation. Translated resources should be utilised where indicated and are available at [HealthyWA](#).

Facility operators must take all possible steps to prepare for and [manage COVID-19 in the workplace](#). Facilities should follow advice and actions below in response to being notified of a COVID-19 positive person in their workplace. Translated resources should be utilised where indicated and are available at [HealthyWA](#).

### 1. Inform and activate plans

- Report positive case to WA Health by emailing [ncovcontact@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:ncovcontact@health.wa.gov.au). Include name and location of facility, number of staff, type of facility and animal processed.
- Ensure any positive WA Health, Rapid Antigen Testing (RAT) results must be reported to [WA Health online](#) (in addition to reporting to WA Health as above by email). An SMS survey will be sent after registration, which should be completed indicating the case works in [critical infrastructure facility](#).
- Activate facility outbreak management and business continuity plans, including workforce contingency, and any communications plans.
- Inform the relevant regulatory and safety authorities and industry representatives e.g. DPIRD.
- Remind staff to monitor for COVID-19 [symptoms](#) and [facilitate testing if symptoms develop](#).

### 2. Isolate and support cases

- Cases must isolate – see guidance at [HealthyWA](#) and section 4 below.
- Provide case with the [What to do when you test positive for COVID-19](#) factsheet and advise them to follow the [I have tested positive for COVID-19 protocol](#), isolating for a minimum of seven full days.
- People with COVID-19 should have access to a General Practitioner (telehealth appointments can be arranged). People with risk factors can register for the [WA COVID Care at Home](#) program.

### 3. Identify and manage close contacts

- Unless a workplace has a residential setting (for example shared living facilities for staff), workplaces are unlikely to have close contacts.
- See [HealthyWA](#) for the current close contact definition.

### 4. Safe isolation of cases and close contacts

- If an employee resides in shared accommodation provided by the employer (or other workforce management company) the company should facilitate access to suitable premises for isolation.
- [Guidance for safe isolation for cases and close contacts in congregate living facilities and large households](#) and a [congregate living facilities checklist](#) is available to guide management of this shared accommodation.

## □ 5. Implement additional controls in the workplace

- **Physical distancing:** maintain at least 1.5m between people wherever possible, including on the factory floor, at entry and exit points, in bathrooms and change rooms, in break/dining and smoking areas, and in meetings. This may include using partitions, splitting shifts, staggering shifts and breaks, and modifying workstations so employees do not face each other.
- **Infection prevention and control:** ensure thorough cleaning and disinfection of the workplace in keeping with [infection prevention and control guidance](#); ensure alcohol-based hand rub or hand-washing facilities with soap and water are available.
- **PPE use:** including facemasks (subject to Occupational Health and Safety obligations).
- **Ventilation:** review [building ventilation](#) if not previously considered.
- Send [clear communications to employees](#), which are [translated into languages other than English](#) where indicated. This should include advice for employees to get tested and stay home if symptomatic. See resources at [HealthyWA](#) (if translation of resources for a specific language group is required, contact [ncovcontact@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:ncovcontact@health.wa.gov.au))

## □ 6. Workforce capacity and operations

- Ensure [adequate supplies](#) of PPE and RAT kits are available.
- Ensure animal welfare is managed and escalate any animal welfare issues as per usual processes.
- Advise Public Health Operations and request additional support if workforce is likely to be impacted such that operations will be reduced or the facility will be closed (for advice on when cases and close contacts can return to work), or if there are other urgent concerns (email [ncovcontact@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:ncovcontact@health.wa.gov.au) or call 13 26843).
- Ensure Employee Assistance Program (EAP) information is readily available and staff are aware of their leave entitlements and other [financial supports](#).

## □ 7. Ongoing management and escalation

- The facility should identify a person responsible for being the primary contact between the facility and WA Health's Public Health Operations team ([ncovcontact@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:ncovcontact@health.wa.gov.au)) if assistance with outbreak management as required.

## □ 8. Return to work

- Employees who have tested positive for COVID-19 can return to work when they have completed their [required isolation period](#) and symptoms have resolved. A negative test or clearance from WA Health is not required.
- Employees who are close contacts must follow the appropriate isolation protocols ([I am a close contact and have no symptoms](#) or [I am a close contact with symptoms](#)). See [COVID-19 close contacts](#) for further information.
  - Employees who are **close contacts and have no symptoms** may leave their place of isolation and attend work if they take a negative RAT each day before leaving home, wear a mask and avoid high-risk settings (including aged care facilities, disability care residential facilities, mental health residential facilities, health care settings and correctional facilities).
  - Employees who are **close contacts and have symptoms** must not attend work (see [I am a close contact with symptoms](#)).
- Employers should support staff returning to work and ensure workplace discrimination does not occur (see [Social stigma and COVID-19 at HealthyWA](#) for ways to address social stigma).

Last updated 6 May 2022, SHICC PHAB

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with disability.

© Department of Health 2022

Copyright to this material is vested in the State of Western Australia unless otherwise indicated. Apart from any fair dealing for the purposes of private study, research, criticism or review, as permitted under the provisions of the *Copyright Act 1968*, no part may be reproduced or re-used for any purposes whatsoever without written permission of the State of Western Australia.