

Preventative guidelines for hire operations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The following guidelines are general in nature and may vary as the COVID-19 pandemic progresses. The Association recommends you follow and implement government advice within your business. For industry specific guidelines, such as building and construction, delivery drivers, warehousing and logistics, office workers and several other categories, Safe Work Australia have produced comprehensive guidelines for each industry sector – visit the [Safe Work Australia website](#) .

Factors to address at your workplace include -

- Employees and customers should be reminded to wash their hands for 20 seconds, more frequently than normal.
- Frequently clean and disinfect objects and surfaces that are touched regularly.
- Ensure spaces in the workplace are optimised to allow social distancing to occur, wherever possible
- Ensure signs are visible in the workplace, reminding employees not to attend work if they have a fever or cough and to avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
- Ensure employees are provided with hand sanitiser for frequent use and regular breaks to allow them to wash their hands for 20 seconds
- Limit physical interactions between workers and other persons.
 - Workers who can work from home (e.g. office staff) should work from home.
 - Review tasks and processes that usually require close interaction and identify ways to modify these to increase physical distancing between workers where practical and safe to do so.
 - Postpone non-essential gatherings or meetings.
 - For essential gatherings, conduct in spaces that enable workers to keep the required social distance of at least 1.5 metres, ideally outdoor spaces.
 - Split workers' shifts to reduce the number of workers onsite at any given time.
 - Allow additional time between shifts to limit staff interaction and enable time for cleaning.
 - Use methods such as mobile phone or radio to communicate.
 - Reduce the number of workers utilising common areas at a given time (eg by staggering meal breaks and start times and encouraging workers to eat and take breaks outside where possible).
 - Spread out furniture in common areas.

- Put policies in place to eliminate close contact between delivery workers, customers and warehouse and logistics (e.g. contactless collections and deliveries, using email or photographs instead of requiring signatures for acceptance of collections and delivery)
- Eliminate or limit visitors. Conduct meetings by photo or video conference where required.
- Limit worker numbers.
- Reduce the number of tasks to be completed each day.
- Postpone non-essential work.
- Place signage about social distancing around the workplace.
- Consider if plant can be used to reduce the number of workers interacting.

Nominate responsible persons to make sure your workers are following the rules for social distancing.

If physical distancing measures introduce new health and safety *risks* (e.g. because they impact communication), you need to manage those *risks* too.

Operational activities inevitably require regular touching of objects and surfaces. This means that usual cleaning schedules on will need to be increased.

- Frequently touched surfaces, including any plant, equipment, lifts, hoists, handrails and doors, should be cleaned frequently using appropriate detergent or disinfectant solutions.
- Site amenities, including lunchrooms, site offices, change rooms, toilets, showers, drink fountains and vending machines, should be cleaned and the frequency of this cleaning should increase.

To minimise the risk of exposure to COVID-19, the person cleaning should wear gloves and use alcohol-based hand sanitiser before and after wearing gloves. Gloves and alcohol-based hand sanitiser should be made available throughout the workplace. Workers should be trained to clean down plant or equipment immediately after use.

Employees should ensure they-

- Clean and sanitise areas of plant and equipment being touched e.g. controls, guardrails, tools and equipment.
- Wash hands regularly for 20 seconds and use a sanitiser.
- Avoid touching your face, eyes, nose and lips.
- Wear appropriate personal protection equipment (PPE) as identified by your risk assessment. This may include disposable gloves, coveralls, respiratory protective equipment, face shield or eye protection.

Workplaces should consider limiting or reducing recirculated air-conditioning in common areas.

Avoid visiting customer's sites where possible. Should a site visit be required, request that the equipment needing attention be isolated to an area where technicians can access it without compromising the 1.5 m social distance restriction. This restriction also applies to transition on the site from the entry gate to the machine. Staff should avoid crowded areas like hoists, lifts or any other areas where people may congregate.

In order to protect staff and customers, whilst allowing deliveries and pickups to continue, look at using systems so that delivery drivers and staff no longer require a handwritten signature to verify the delivery of the equipment, pickups and/or returns. Where possible use electronic alternatives that can capture signatures and record the name of the recipient. Video is also a method that could be used to capture the physical equipment and the people accepting delivery, picking up or returning equipment.

Boom Lifts – ensure only one person is in the platform unless unavoidable, and the task can't be done by one person. Consider the hire of a second boom lift which may be necessary for an additional worker to assist in performing the task whilst adhering to social distancing.

Scissors and vertical lifts – many of these machines fall into the one person only lift, particularly if they are being used outdoors. Where the platform on a scissor lift is not greater than 4m², apply the 1.5 m separation rule, or consider the hire of a second scissor lift for an additional worker.

Ensure all operators are fully trained and familiar with the equipment they are operating; risk assessments and safe work method statements have been carried out for the tasks they are performing; the appropriate machine has been selected for the task; an emergency retrieval plan is in place and that the work is being supervised. For detailed information about the safe use of EWPs, see the [EWPA's Good Practice Guide](#)

Health checks and quarantine

Monitor your workers for key symptoms of COVID-19, such as fever.

- Direct all workers (whether they are at the workplace or not) to report to you if:
 - they are experiencing any symptoms
 - they have been, or have potentially been, exposed to a person who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or is suspected to have COVID-19 (even if the person who is suspected to have COVID-19 has not yet been tested), or
 - they have undertaken, or are planning to undertake, any travel.
- Encourage workers to report if they observe another worker is displaying any symptoms.
- Prohibit workers working if they are displaying symptoms.
- Prohibit workers who have contracted COVID-19 from returning to the workplace until they provide evidence they are clear of the virus.