

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.

Travelling for self-isolation

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).

If you need to travel to and from your home or accommodation, you must travel in a private vehicle, cycle or walk. If you do not have your own vehicle, you may use a taxi or ride share service. Do not use public transport. You should wear a face mask, stay 1.5 metres away from other people, and travel directly to and from where you need to go.

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 should the people I live with do?

If you are positive for COVID-19

You must tell your household members that you have COVID-19, and they must isolate for 7 days. They must have a rapid antigen test (RAT) as soon as possible and again on Day 6. If both tests are negative they can leave isolation after 7 days. They should also have another rapid antigen test if they develop symptoms at any time during their isolation period.

If you are isolating as a contact of someone who has COVID-19

If you are self-isolating as a contact of someone who has COVID-19 and you live with a person who you cannot keep separated from, they do not need to isolate with you.

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 and have received a negative test result.

What if I live in an apartment building?

If you have to self-isolate and live in an apartment building, you will need to follow some extra steps to protect other building residents from COVID-19:

- You must remain inside your own unit. You should not use shared laundry facilities, or any other common areas, such as a gym, pool or shared outdoor area.
- Wash your clothes inside your own unit. Neighbours or friends should not do your laundry.
- Ask a neighbour or contact your building manager about collecting your 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.
- If you are receiving deliveries including food to your home, please ask that it is left outside your door. Do not open the door to pick up the delivery until the corridor is empty.

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

Coping with self-isolation

Self-isolating can be difficult for you, your family and everyone living with you. Strategies to help you cope include:

- keep up a daily routine as much as possible
- keep in touch with family and friends via telephone, social media or email
- exercise inside your home, on your private balcony or in your backyard
- take care of yourself and try to eat healthy foods

Clinical support

If you need advice on managing your symptoms during self-isolation, you can call these support lines for advice:

- The NSW Health COVID-19 Care at Home Support Line on 1800 960 933 (8:30am-8:30pm)
- Your local GP
- Healthdirect on 1800 022 222
- The National Coronavirus Helpline on 1800 020 080 (24/7)

In an emergency call Triple Zero (000) for example if you are having trouble breathing or have pain in your chest. Ambulance services are for emergencies and are provided free of charge to people who are confirmed or suspected to have COVID-19. Hospital care for COVID-19 is free.

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.

Further support

For mental health support

- NSW Mental Health Line on 1800 011 511
- Beyond Blue helpline on 1800 512 348
- Lifeline on 13 11 14
- Or visit the Service NSW [Mental wellbeing resources](#)
- NSW Health has partnered with Sonder to provide a personal wellbeing service, available to help support you. The app provides access to 24/7 multilingual chat and phone access to a range of mental health, medical and wellbeing support services. You can [download the Sonder app](#) for free. Downloading the app is optional and Sonder do not retain or use your data for any other purpose than notifying you of this service.

For domestic violence support

- National sexual assault and domestic violence helpline on 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732)
- Kids Helpline on 1800 55 1800.

For help in your language

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