



**COVID-19**

## Frequently Asked Questions

### COVID-19: Officer safety and management

#### **IMPORTANT NOTE**

The COVID-19 situation changes rapidly.

These FAQs and other published staff information and guides are subject to frequent change. Each FAQ is dated to assist with determining currency.

Staff should refer to the most current information and advice published online by the [QCS COVID-19 State Corrections Operations Centre \(SCOC\)](https://intranet.dcs.qld.gov.au/COVID-19-SCOC) at <https://intranet.dcs.qld.gov.au/COVID-19-SCOC>.

If in doubt, please speak with your manager or HR officer.

(Version 17: 18 December 2021)

COVID-19 State Corrections Operations Centre (SCOC) - People  
[COVID19HR@corrections.qld.gov.au](mailto:COVID19HR@corrections.qld.gov.au)



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## A: Health and Safety - Personal

These questions address health and safety concerns relevant to all QCS staff.

More complex situations are likely to arise. These should be referred to your manager in the first instance.

### QUESTION A1

REVIEWED 18.12.2021

#### What happens if I am confirmed as testing positive with COVID-19?

##### RESPONSE

You should advise your manager as soon as possible and follow all health directions from your treating doctor or public health unit. This will include isolation procedures and will usually involve hospitalisation but will depend on the circumstances.

Please keep in mind that managing a COVID-19 positive diagnosis for a QCS employee (and QCS workplaces) may be different when compared to others in the community. This is because of the higher risks and implications associated with an outbreak in a QCS workplace. In these circumstances, specific advice for affected QCS employees will be provided by QHealth and/or through QCS.

Your QCS manager is required to report the matter as a priority using the accepted communication procedures as advised by the QCS [COVID-19 State Corrections Operations Centre \(SCOC\)](#).

Your QCS manager will also require you to provide health certification or other verification when you are cleared to return to duty. QHealth may determine specific conditions that must be met before the employee can return to the workplace.

If you do not have a signed medical clearance certificate or other signed QHealth or doctor's/clinic's advice to clear you for work, you may use the [QCS Form 3 'Clearance Form for Staff to Return to Work'](#) for this purpose. Please note that evidence of appropriate health clearance is still required.

### QUESTION A2

REVIEWED 17.12.2021

#### What happens when a QCS officer tests positive and has had contact with other QCS officers?

##### RESPONSE

Public health management involves stringent [contact tracing](#) involving confirmed cases. Staff who have had close contact with a confirmed case will be assessed and managed by the relevant public health unit.

If an officer receives health advice that they have been identified as a close contact, they will be required to quarantine for 14 days from when they were last in contact with that confirmed positive case. If they become unwell during that time, they are to consult a doctor immediately.

During this time, the workplace may be able to implement working from home arrangements, depending on the nature of the work and providing the officer is well.

Protocols, such as incident management plans, should be available for your workplace which detail the arrangements in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak.



**How will I know whether I need to quarantine?**

## RESPONSE

QHealth determines the conditions under which people must quarantine. This advice is subject to frequent change and you are advised to consult QHealth's quarantine information for the most current advice.

QHealth has strict measures in place for quarantining based on COVID-19 health and public safety reasons. These measures include the imposition of fines and longer quarantine periods should people breach the requirements or restrictions.

**Can I choose to self-quarantine if I'm feeling unwell?**

## RESPONSE

QHealth strongly encourage anyone who has COVID-like symptoms, no matter how mild, to get tested. If you are tested, you need to follow the health directions given to you which may include a period of self-quarantine at least until you receive your tests results and you have no symptoms. If you are unwell, you should also remain away from the workplace in accordance with health advice.

If you are intending to self-quarantine, you should seek further advice from your GP or a medical practitioner.

**The decision to quarantine can only be made based on appropriate health advice.** If not, you may not be able to access approved leave entitlements.

Please refer to the section on '[Entitlements](#)' in these FAQs for more information.

**What should I do if I live with someone who is required to quarantine?**

## RESPONSE

Please refer to questions A3 and A4 of these FAQs for advice on when people must quarantine.

QHealth determines the conditions under which people must quarantine. This advice is subject to frequent change and you are advised to consult [QHealth's quarantine information](#) for the most current advice.

If the person quarantining is suspected of having COVID-19, you may be classified as a close contact and may need to quarantine, but this decision is made based on health advice.

QHealth has advised those quarantining at home to stay in a separate room away from others, sleep in a separate bedroom and use a separate bathroom and don't allow visitors. Please ensure you are following the advice on the QHealth website, practising good hygiene, and maintaining social distancing wherever possible.

For practical tips on keeping yourself and others safe, visit the [QHealth website](#) for the most current advice



as this is subject to frequent change.

The [Australian Government Department of Health also has information](#) for those sharing a household with someone required to quarantine.

QUESTION A6

REVIEWED 17.12.2021

**I live in another State and travel to my QCS workplace. How do border restrictions affect me?**

RESPONSE

***All QCS staff, particularly those living or travelling across the Queensland border, are responsible for ensuring they are aware of the restrictions and obligations in place at the time of travel.***

The Chief Health Officer has exercised emergency powers and issued the [Border Restrictions Direction](#). Please also consult the most recent [SCOC Decision Support Tool](#).

QCS staff travelling or returning to Queensland, whether for work purposes or not, may be required to have a valid [Queensland Border Declaration Pass](#) prior to entering. If a place you have been in the last 14 days is [subsequently declared a hotspot](#) after you return, you should get tested for COVID-19 as soon as possible and then immediately self-quarantine.

QCS staff entering Queensland for the purpose of performing rostered duty are not exempt from these restrictions. In accordance with the directions and advice from QHealth and the [COVID-19 Emergency Declaration Directions](#), you may be subject to additional testing and/or self-isolation obligations if you have visited a COVID-19 hotspot, interstate area of concern, interstate place of concern, interstate exposure venue, named location, have been identified as a close contact and/or have been subject to a [Queensland Border Declaration Pass](#).

[Q&As on the Border Restrictions Direction](#) may also be of interest to staff travelling into Queensland for any reason.



## B: Health and Safety - Workplaces

These questions address health and safety concerns relevant to all QCS workplaces.

More complex situations are likely to arise. These should be referred to your manager in the first instance.

### QUESTION B1

REVIEWED 17.12.2021

**Are there things I can do in the workplace to help prevent the spread of infection?**

#### RESPONSE

QCS workplace COVID-Safe Plans are just one example of our continuing commitment to keeping our employees and workplaces as healthy and safe as possible. It remains every individual's responsibility to play their part in adhering to COVID Safe practices both on and off duty.

Ensure you are practicing COVID-safe measures when at a QCS workplace, including:

- Compliance with any mask requirement (see s.9 of the [QCS COVID-19 Emergency Declaration Directions](#) for details)
- Practise physical distancing where possible
- Maintain personal and workplace hygiene
- Regular cleaning and disinfecting of high-traffic areas and high-touch surfaces. [QCS SCOC's Fact Sheet on cleaning and disinfecting vehicles and surfaces](#)
- Ongoing provision of alcohol-based hand sanitiser and soap for handwashing
- Stay home if you have concerns that you show symptoms of COVID-19 and get tested

### QUESTION B2

REVIEWED 17.12.2021

**QCS has health and temperature screening in place in correctional centres. Are they being introduced to other QCS workplaces?**

#### RESPONSE

Refer to [Temperature checks and screening](#) and [COVID-19 State Corrections Operations Centre](#).

The links provided in the Resources page give step by step guidelines for QCS staff who are required to check the temperature of an officer or prisoner and the associated protocols and criteria.

### QUESTION B3

REVIEWED 17.12.2021

**I'm a recruit, how can I limit my exposure and practise social distancing during training?**

#### RESPONSE

QCSA is conducting recruit training from a revised risk-based approach for operational safety training.

The processes to manage the risks to staff and training participants will be explained to you by your Custodial Officer Entry Program (COEP) Instructor at the QCSA. This will ensure that you are being provided with the most up to date and current processes put in place by the Commissioner and the General Manager of the QCSA to ensure your safety and wellbeing.



**I'm a CCO and am due for control and restraint (C&R) / First Aid refresher training, will this still occur?**

## RESPONSE

Officers due to undertake annual refresher training during COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions may be granted extensions to their competency and considered competent for the purpose of maintaining operational readiness.

QCSA has recommended C&R refresher training for current staff with adjustments made in accordance with QCSA COVID Safe Plans. First Aid and CPR refresher training within centres is continuing, with adjustments made for CPR.

Communicate with your Staff Training Co-ordinator (STC) and watch for training announcements for more information.

**Is it safe for me to be at work during the pandemic if I'm pregnant or breastfeeding?**

## RESPONSE

Information about COVID-19, knowledge of the impacts of the virus on pregnancy and breastfeeding is developing. Staff concerned about their health and possible impacts for the pregnancy or baby should seek advice from the obstetrician or paediatrician and are encouraged to discuss their health with their manager.

The principles applied to managing at-risk workers may also be considered for application to managing pregnant and breastfeeding workers. If risks cannot be sufficiently mitigated, leave options may apply.

Staff may also find the following resources of assistance:

- QHealth's [Pregnant and breastfeeding women website](#)
- HealthDirect's [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) and pregnancy website](#)
- The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG) provide an [Information Hub](#) for pregnant women

**Do we need to evacuate and lock down the workplace for cleaning following notification that an employee is being tested for COVID-19?**

## RESPONSE

The Queensland Government Accommodation Office (QGAO) determines the cleaning protocols in response to a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 in a Government owned or leased building with Government tenants. These [Qld Government Incident Cleaning Protocols](#) must also take into account any specific public health directions given by QHealth.





It is important to understand that a 'suspected' case does not include every instance where an employee is merely undergoing testing. A suspected case is a person who meets both epidemiological (e.g. has travelled through a COVID-19 hotspot) *and* clinical criteria (e.g. has a fever of 37.5 degrees or over). The doctor, nurse or fever clinic will advise if the employee is a suspected case.

#### QUESTION B7

REVIEWED 17.12.21

**What additional processes are in place to for at risk staff?**

#### RESPONSE

Refer to [QCS COVID-19 SCOC - Vulnerable workers](#) for more information regarding the processes put in place to protect at risk staff. This policy applies to all QCS employees, including full-time, part-time and casual employees, considered to be at higher risk of severe COVID-19 illness.

#### QUESTION B8

REVIEWED 17.12.21

**How does the workplace manage a QCS officer testing positive?**

#### RESPONSE

[COVID-19 State Corrections Operations Centre](#) has emergency management plans and protocols in place to ensure essential business continuity and safe operations can continue should a QCS employee test positive for COVID-19. The Commissioners directions as per the [QCS COVID-19 Emergency Declaration Directions](#) are to be followed accordingly.

The [QHealth Contact Tracing Information](#) is a critical activity to contain an outbreak and to ensure that a QCS employee seeks medical treatment as a priority.

All QCS employees are expected to fully cooperate with QCS and QHealth throughout this process. All QCS employees have been requested to **ensure that their personal contact details; mobile and personal email address is updated in AURION, the QCS staff phonebook and advised to their local management.**

#### QUESTION B9

REVIEWED 17.12.21

**Can workers lodge a claim for Workers Compensation, through WorkCover, for COVID-19?**

#### RESPONSE

As a Worker you can lodge a claim for any injury or illness that is work-related. WorkCover will determine any claim for compensation in accordance with the current legislation and its policies and practices, paying particular attention to whether or not employment was a significant contributing factor to the injury (as per section 32 of the *Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003*).

WorkCover has provided [FAQs on their website](#) to address questions regarding COVID-19 claims.



**Do I need to wear a face mask when I'm at work?**

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**RESPONSE**

All staff members and all visitors to any QCS location or workplace, whether or not that location of workplace is a correction services facility, must comply with any mask requirement as detailed in the current [QCS COVID-19 Emergency Declaration Directions](#).

Staff and visitors to other QCS locations not covered by this direction must comply with any requirement published on the [QHealth website](#) or directed by QHealth.

**What happens if I am unable to wear a face mask at work due to a medical condition?**

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**RESPONSE**

All QCS staff are required to remain informed of the latest directions and must comply with any mask requirements.

Staff members unable to comply with a mask requirement, due to a diagnosed and documented medical condition, are to have their circumstances assessed to determine any appropriate reasonable adjustment, where practicable and operationally viable.

For further information contact your local OHSEC or HR Manager.



## C: Entitlements

These questions relate to the leave and pay entitlements and working arrangements which may be available to QCS staff under certain conditions.

More complex situations are likely to arise. These should be referred to your manager in the first instance.

### QUESTION D1

REVIEWED 17.12.21

#### What leave entitlements can I access for COVID-19?

##### RESPONSE

If you are:

- required to [self-quarantine in accordance with health advice](#) and are not sick, you may access flexible work arrangements (e.g. working from home) in the first instance where appropriate, or special leave;
- **absent due to illness**, you may access sick leave as per current entitlements; or
- required to provide care or support for a dependent based on health advice, you may access carer's leave (debited from sick leave) as per current entitlements.

Special Leave applications for self-quarantine purposes may also be made by casual employees with all applications from casuals considered on a case-by-case basis.

Submissions made under the [Special Leave Directive 05/17](#) are to be submitted through your management for consideration by the QCS Commissioner.

### QUESTION D2

REVIEWED 17.12.21

#### What happens if I have exhausted all my sick leave accruals?

##### RESPONSE

In addition to Special Leave, on 16 March 2020 the Minister for Industrial Relations, with the Public Service Commission Chief Executive, issued a revised Directive 01/20 *Employment Arrangements in the Event of a Health Pandemic* ([the Health Pandemic Directive](#)).

The Health Pandemic Directive balances the requirements of Government to continue to deliver essential services to Queenslanders with the wellbeing and legitimate personal, family and community responsibilities of employees during a health pandemic.

The Health Pandemic Directive provides enhanced leave arrangements for QCS staff. Staff can now access up to an additional 20 days paid Special Pandemic Leave now available to staff where sick leave accruals have been exhausted and you are unable to attend work and unable to perform work under flexible work arrangements because you:

- have an actual viral infection\*; and/or



- are required to care for immediate family or household member/s who have an actual or suspected viral infection\*; and/or
- are required to care for children as a result of school or childcare centre closures.

*\* Please note the Office of Industrial Relations has advised that the viral infection **does not** need to be COVID-19.*

The 20 days 'Special Pandemic Leave' is not pro rata for part-time employees, is applicable to eligible casual employees, and does not need to be taken consecutively.

'Special Pandemic Leave' is unable to be converted to an hourly basis or taken at half-pay.

Submissions made under the 01/20 Health Pandemic Directive are to be submitted through your management for consideration by the QCS Commissioner.

Once 'Special Pandemic Leave' has been exhausted, employees will be expected to access their existing recreation leave and then long service leave entitlements, or sick leave without pay.

#### QUESTION D3

REVIEWED 17.12.21

**In order to access Special Pandemic Leave my sick leave needs to be exhausted. What exactly does that mean?**

#### RESPONSE

If your sick leave balance is insufficient to cover an entire work engagement prior to you taking Special Pandemic Leave, you have two options:

- exhaust the remainder of your sick leave balance and take one full day of Special Pandemic Leave on the same day/engagement; or
- exhaust the remainder of your sick leave balance and take unpaid sick leave for the remainder of the day/work engagement. Special Pandemic Leave will then commence from the following day/work engagement.

#### QUESTION D4

REVIEWED 17.12.21

**What evidence do I need to apply for COVID-19 Special Leave or Special Pandemic Leave?**

#### RESPONSE

There is still a requirement for employees to provide supporting evidence for all periods of absence on Special Leave or Special Pandemic Leave. A medical certificate will be required to support your request for leave if you are unwell. If a medical certificate is not available, you may provide other health advice to confirm your circumstances.

To support an application for **special leave** for the purpose of self-quarantine, staff will need to submit supporting documentation that provides that they were required to self-quarantine, however otherwise fit for duty – therefore confirming their eligibility for the leave. A copy of your self-quarantine notice and the COVID-19 test result will also need to be provided.

To support an application for **special pandemic leave**, staff will need to submit supporting documentation that confirms their eligibility by providing that:



- they were suffering from an actual viral infection; **or**
- they were required to care for an immediate family member who was suffering from an actual or suspected viral infection; **or**
- they were required to care for children as a result of school or childcare centre closure.

#### QUESTION D5

REVIEWED 17.12.21

#### **If I am approved to take special leave to quarantine for COVID-19, is this with pay?**

##### RESPONSE

If you have been approved to take special leave for COVID-19 quarantine purposes, while you are not sick, you will be entitled to take up to 14 days special leave with pay.

However, depending on the circumstances and the length of time you are absent from work, the Special Leave Directive gives the chief executive (QCS Commissioner, or his delegate) the authority to approve leave for any purpose, for any length of time, with or without pay.

Any conditions which may apply to your special leave will be advised in writing, by the QCS Commissioner (or his delegate).

#### QUESTION D6

REVIEWED 17.12.21

#### **If I am approved to take special leave to quarantine, when will the special leave be taken from?**

##### RESPONSE

If your application for special leave is approved, the commencement of the special leave will align with the requirement to self-quarantine in accordance with health advice.

#### QUESTION D7

REVIEWED 17.12.21

#### **If I need to take leave for COVID-19, will I be paid shift penalties or aggregated shift allowance?**

##### RESPONSE

If you are granted sick leave with pay, this will be in accordance with normal sick leave provisions and you will not be paid shift penalties or the aggregated shift allowance.

In accordance with the [Special Leave Directive 05/17](#), you may be granted special leave either on full pay or without pay. Special leave on full pay does not include the payment of shift penalties or the aggregated shift allowance.

Regular remuneration under the *Directive 01/20 Employment Arrangements in the Event of a Health Pandemic* is ordinary salary including work related allowances and payment based on a projected roster, where applicable. This means that the aggregated shift allowance will be paid on 'Special Pandemic Leave'.

Regular remuneration under the Health Pandemic Directive does **not** include payment of overtime.



**If I need to take leave for COVID-19, will I be paid my higher duties?**

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**RESPONSE**

During the health pandemic, if you are on higher duties you will be paid the higher duties amount during any form of paid leave taken during your higher duties relieving period.

This includes 'Special Pandemic Leave' and 'Special Leave'.

**What leave can I take if I'm not sick but prefer to self-quarantine just to be on the safe side?**

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**RESPONSE**

Employees are required to attend work unless they are sick, need to care for a sick family or household member or required to self-quarantine.

You should talk to your manager about your concerns. Depending on your role, work from home may be an option for you. You may also be able to apply to access your accrued recreation or long service leave if you are not performing an essential role.

If you choose not to attend work, and have not been granted leave, such an absence may be considered to be absent without leave and without reasonable excuse.

The same conditions apply if you wish to take your children out of school as a precautionary manner while schools remain open.

**If I have any of the symptoms of COVID-19 can I be denied access to my place of work? And if so, will I still be paid full remuneration for the period I am away from work?**

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**RESPONSE**

If you have any of the symptoms of COVID-19, please follow the instructions under the ['Health and Safety - Personal'](#) section of these FAQs, particularly about 'quarantining' and 'when to get tested'.

To maintain a safe and secure work environment, if you have presented to your workplace with symptoms of COVID-19 or other illness you may be directed from the workplace and asked to provide a medical certificate or undertake a medical assessment to confirm you are fit for duty. You may also be required to undertake COVID-19 testing under the testing criteria put in place by QHealth.

If you have been through a Temperature Check and Screening Station and have been asked not to enter the workplace, you will also be asked to seek advice from a medical practitioner at the earliest opportunity to confirm your fitness for duty. You will be able to return to work in accordance with the medical advice and documentation provided. Please see the [SCOC Intranet site – Resources](#) page for more information on these protocols.



These practices need to be enforced to stem the spread of the virus.

Please refer to the QCS [COVID-19 Policy: Employee Stand Down](#) for entitlements.

In accordance with the directions and advice from QHealth and the [COVID-19 Emergency Declaration Directions](#), you may be subject to additional testing and/or self-isolation obligations if you have visited a COVID-19 hotspot, interstate area of concern, interstate place of concern, interstate exposure venue, named location, have been identified as a close contact and/or have been subject to a [Queensland Border Declaration Pass](#).

#### QUESTION D11

REVIEWED 17.12.21

**If I am required to self-quarantine while on recreation leave, can I convert this to special leave?**

#### RESPONSE

Special leave, where granted, provides paid or unpaid leave for employees who would otherwise be at work.

[Special Leave Directive 05/17](#) also does not provide for the conversion of recreation leave to special leave.

If you are required to quarantine in accordance with health advice, and already have approved recreation leave during this period, you are unable to cancel this leave and instead access special leave.

If your recreation leave does not cover the entirety of your required quarantine period, you are however eligible to apply for special leave to cover the remainder of this period.

#### QUESTION D12

REVIEWED 17.12.21

**What leave and other entitlements am I eligible for if I am considered at risk of serious illness should I contract COVID-19 and cannot work within my usual workplace or perform my usual duties?**

#### RESPONSE

The Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) has issued its [statement on recommendations for managing of health risk as COVID-19 measures lift](#). This is a revised position on their earlier statement regarding the management of previously termed 'vulnerable workers'.

QHealth has also revised [their information](#) about those considered at higher risk and those in specific categories of case.

The Australian Government's [Living Well in the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) is a useful publication which provides practical tips on managing getting back to work, using public transport and returning to more social activities.

In light of the above, the updated QCS COVID-19 policy for [Managing 'at risk' employees](#) ensures we are better able to identify at risk workers, assess health risks and impacts, and put in place strategies to appropriately mitigate those risks of more serious illness.

Workers considered [most at risk](#) of serious illness if infected, are assessed in accordance with the [QCS](#)



[COVID-19 policy for Managing 'at risk' employees](#). Risk are assessed and mitigated giving consideration to:

1. the worker's health risk of severe illness should they contract COVID-19,
2. the work performed by the worker (inherent work requirements),
3. the nature of the workplace, and
4. environmental factors such as the rate of community transmission and mitigating strategies.

There are several work options, and combinations of options, which are to be considered before needing to work away from a QCS or Government workplace and without continuing to perform some form of work. These options are considered on the basis of appropriate health advice and a risk assessment having been undertaken.

Where risk mitigation options are not reasonable or practicable, and the employee has health advice that they should restrict themselves from the workplace, but it is unable to be facilitated, they may apply to be considered for special leave under [Directive 05/17 Special Leave](#).

If you do not fit the eligibility requirements for special leave, in certain circumstances, you may access other leave such as recreation, long service or sick leave.

See [FAQ B8](#) and [the policy](#) for further information.

#### QUESTION D 13

REVIEWED 17.12.21

**I am not sick but am required to be away from my workplace or high-risk work activities to protect a person with health risks, and who I live with, from exposure to COVID-19. What leave can I access?**

#### RESPONSE

There are a range of circumstances in which such situations may arise. A determination on what leave may apply in each case should be referred to the People Capability Command via email to [COVID19HR@corrections.qld.gov.au](mailto:COVID19HR@corrections.qld.gov.au).

Officers should familiarise themselves with the Queensland Government's [Guide to identifying and supporting vulnerable employees \(COVID-19\) webpage](#), particularly [Section 4: Employees who live with or care for a vulnerable person](#).

#### QUESTION D 14

REVIEWED 17.12.21

**I am experiencing increased financial pressure during this time due to my individual circumstances. Does QCS have any options for cashing out leave?**

#### RESPONSE

Staff can, under certain circumstances, cash out a portion of their Annual Recreation Leave (ARL) or apply to have all or part of their Long Service Leave (LSL) balance paid out.

The *Industrial Relations Act 2016* provides that an employee may cash out a portion of their annual leave by agreement between the employee and employer. Please see [Circular 02/17 Cashing out annual leave](#).

To cash out a portion of your ARL, you must have at least four (4) weeks accrued leave remaining in your balance after cashing out the leave. If you wish to cash out your ARL, please complete the ['Cashing out](#)





[recreation leave](#)' form. Consideration will be given to the effects of cashing out, as opposed to taking the leave, inclusive of the impact on health and wellbeing and the requirement to have a sufficient break from work.

The *Industrial Relations Act 2016* also enables an employee to have all or part of their LSL paid out, instead of taking the leave, on compassionate grounds or for reasons of financial hardship. If you wish to make an application, please ensure you attach any documentation supporting your request for payment instead of taking LSL.

Custodial staff can complete and submit the '[Payment Instead of Taking LSL Form](#)' available on the QCS Intranet for consideration by the Assistant Commissioner, Organisational Capability.

Non-custodial staff should file a '[Form 13 – Application for payment instead of taking long service leave](#)' with the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission (QIRC).

#### QUESTION D 15

REVIEWED 17.12.21

**Provided that I am not travelling to an identified COVID-19 hotspot, can I access leave to travel to other parts of Australia?**

#### RESPONSE

Staff are encouraged to utilise their accrued recreational or long service leave to facilitate a break from work to rest, relax and recuperate.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic can have significant implications for anyone planning to travel. Many States, Territories and countries have introduced entry and movement restrictions. These are changing often and quickly.

Staff should be mindful that, as public servants and public safety employees, we have an obligation to not only consider our personal circumstances, but our responsibility to the Queensland public. This includes taking whatever precautions are necessary to protect our health and wellbeing.

If you are planning to travel, you should ensure that you refer to the current restrictions in place regarding [intrastate travel](#), [interstate travel](#) and international travel (both [incoming](#) and [outgoing](#)) for each location you are travelling to and/or from prior to booking any leave and during the course of your leave.

Staff should also be aware disruptions to personal travel may incur the need to access additional leave, with or without pay, including from their own leave balances.

#### QUESTION D 16

REVIEWED 17.12.21

**I have planned to or have undertaken travel to an area that has become subject to border restrictions and/or will require a period of quarantine. What entitlements can I access?**

#### RESPONSE

Employees should not be travelling against health advice.

Staff undertaking travel against health advice or to COVID-19 hotspots or high-risk areas for personal reasons should consider what this might mean for their health and implications for their family, friends, and co-workers upon their return.



Employees will be expected to explain why the travel is considered necessary and agree on expectations and entitlements for their return to the workplace.

Staff should not be travelling to a [COVID-19 hotspot](#), or undertaking travel that would require them to quarantine on their return.

If it is essential for you to travel to a COVID-19 hotspot, the start and end date of your leave request is to include any quarantine period. The full period of your leave, inclusive of any quarantine period, will be deducted from your personal leave balance. You will not be provided access to special leave if you choose to travel against Government direction or advice, and you become subject to a [mandatory quarantine period](#).

Any additional disruptions to personal travel may incur the need for staff to access additional leave, with or without pay, from their own leave balances.

QUESTION D17

REVIEWED 17.12.21

**I am having difficulty performing my usual work hours during the COVID-19 health pandemic. Are there any options available to me to allow for increased flexibility?**

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#### RESPONSE

In addition to flexible and remote working arrangements already available where practicable, and the '[Working Remotely Guideline](#)', the '[Update for non-custodial employees – Hours of work arrangements during COVID-19](#)' contains further available options for flexible working arrangements.

This update details the ability for non-custodial employees to work outside of the spread of hours and be compensated by TOIL. Further, it outlines the COVID-19 Hours of Work Arrangement which expands the spread of hours from 6am-6pm/7pm to 4am to 10pm, Monday to Friday, for eligible employees who choose to opt into a COVID-19 Work Agreement, with agreement from their manager.

For more information on these arrangements, please refer to the: '[Update for non-custodial employees – Hours of work arrangements during COVID-19](#)'.



# Resources

Our major COVID-19 information and health partners are:

- [Queensland Health \(or QHealth\)](#);
- [Queensland Government](#); and
- the [Australian Government Department of Health](#).

QHealth has a [comprehensive range of communication assets](#) which are freely available for download.

- [novel coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) – everything you need to know;
- [COVID-19 prevention](#);
- [specific guidelines to help stop the spread of COVID-19](#), including adhering to [current restrictions](#) and following [proper cleaning, disinfection and waste handling practices](#) when required.
- [testing and fever clinics](#);
- [quarantine](#): advice for those who have returned from any overseas travel, have arrived in Queensland from a COVID-19 hotspot, have been in contact with a confirmed case, or have COVID-19 symptoms; and
- [social distancing](#);

COVID-19 related restrictions affecting all Queenslanders may be sourced from the following sites:

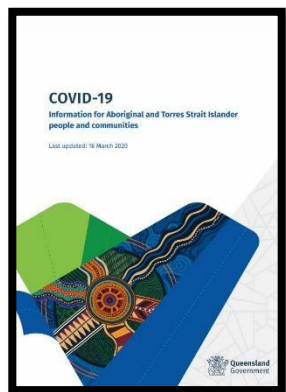
- [Chief Health Officer Public Health Directions](#) and the [QHealth Restrictions in Queensland webpages](#)
- [Queensland Government Unite and Recover website](#)
- [Queensland Government Media Statements](#)
- [Australian Government Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) news and updates service](#)
- [Smartraveller](#)
- [QCS COVID-19 State Corrections Operations Centre \(SCOC\)](#)



**SYMPTOMS OF novel coronavirus (COVID-19), a cold and the flu**

SYMPTOMS	COVID-19 (novel coronavirus)	COLD (common cold)	FLU (influenza)
Fever	Common	Rare	Common
Sneezing	Common	Common	Common
Sore throat	Sometimes	Common	Common
Stuffy nose	Sometimes	No	No
Headache	Sometimes	Sometimes	Common
Loss of taste	Sometimes	No	Common
Loss of smell	Sometimes	Common	Common
Blurred vision	Sometimes	Common	Sometimes
Diarrhoea	Rare	No	Sometimes
Stomach pain	No	Common	No

For more information, visit: [www.health.qld.gov.au/coronavirus](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/coronavirus)



## Contacts



COVID-19

# COVID-19 State Corrections Operations Centre (SCOC)

Website: [QCS COVID-19 State Corrections Operations Centre \(SCOC\)](#)

Email: [QCSCOVID-19StateOperationsCentre@corrections.qld.gov.au](mailto:QCSCOVID-19StateOperationsCentre@corrections.qld.gov.au)



[13 HEALTH](#): 13 432 584

[COVID-19 24-Hour National Hotline](#): 1800 020 080

[SMG Health](#) 24-Hour Helpline: 1800 ARE U OK (1800 273 865)



A [closed Facebook group](#) has been established by QCS Media and Communications, for all QCS officers to access the latest information on what's happening in QCS.



An [open QCS Yammer group](#), *COVID-19 Officer Safety and Management*, has been established by People Capability Command, for all QCS officers to share information and engage on officer health, safety, employee relations and HR.

As with most social media, you need to join [the 'parent' QCS network](#) first.

Email [COVID19HR@corrections.qld.gov.au](mailto:COVID19HR@corrections.qld.gov.au) for more info.



Follow the [Queensland Government's Unite and Recover website](#) for the latest information impacting all Queenslanders including updates on recovery planning, jobs, business, outings and restrictions such as border controls.

Use the [Coronavirus Australian app](#) (App Store or Google Play) to:



- stay up to date with the official information and advice
- important health advice to help stop the spread and stay healthy
- get a quick snapshot of the current official status across Australia
- check your symptoms if you are concerned about yourself or someone else
- find relevant contact information
- access updated information from the Australian Government
- receive push notifications of urgent information and updates

Download the Australian Government Department of Health [COVIDSafe app](#) (App Store or Google Play) to:



- help find close contacts of COVID-19 cases who may have been exposed
- speed up the manual process of finding close contacts so, if you have been exposed, you can be advised as soon as possible
- information can only be used to alert those needing quarantining or testing
- ☐ contact info is deleted on a 21-day rolling cycle, accounting for the COVID-19 incubation period and time taken for testing

