



**Queensland First Aid Volunteers**

**Return to Work Guidelines post COVID-19**

Queensland First Aid Volunteers Inc (QFAV) is taking every necessary precaution to protect members from exposure and spread of COVID-19 and all infectious diseases whilst in the workplace as far as is reasonably practicable.

Members also have a duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety, as well as the health and safety of others in the workplace.

Therefore, QFAV have put in place a member return to work plan in response to COVID-19. These guidelines are based on Government recommendations and current public health measures. All member information provided to QFAV for the purpose of COVID-19 or any other infectious disease will be treated confidentially.

For any questions, feedback or queries regarding these guidelines or other return to work information, please contact Queensland First Aid Volunteers via [secretary@firstaidvolunteers.com](mailto:secretary@firstaidvolunteers.com).

## Definitions

In this document, the following terms may be used.

**Queensland First Aid Volunteers/QFAV:** This may mean QFAV as an individual group, or QFAV as the group of First Aid Volunteer Groups.

**Workplace:** Any place where any QFAV members attend on behalf of, or doing duties for, QFAV or their volunteer group.

**Member:** Volunteer member of QFAV or an individual group.

## Basics of COVID-19

COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus which causes respiratory infection. It is a highly contagious virus that can present with mild cold or flu symptoms, and in some cases can cause serious respiratory illness.

## How it is spread

COVID-19 is transmitted from infected persons through small droplets from the nose or mouth, when an infected person coughs, sneezes or speaks. If you breathe in these droplets you are at risk of catching COVID-19. You can also become infected by touching surfaces that the droplets have fallen on, then touching your face. Infected persons may not show any symptoms (asymptomatic) of the virus. Therefore it is important to remain 1.5m away from others and practice good hand hygiene.

## Symptoms

The main symptoms of COVID-19 are:



Fever



Coughing



Sore throat



Shortness of  
breath



Fatigue

Other symptoms of COVID-19 can include:

- Headaches;
- Muscle / body aches;
- Diarrhoea;
- Loss of taste and/or smell; and
- Nasal congestion.

## Who is at Risk?

People of any age can catch COVID-19, however these groups are more at risk;

- Aged 70 years or over;
- Aged 65 years or over and have a chronic medical condition;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander's over 50 years who have a chronic medical condition;
- Persons who are significantly immunocompromised;
- Taking Biological DMARDs, immunosuppressive drugs or medical treatment; and
- Have a chronic medical condition (renal failure, heart disease or heart failure, lung disease (severe asthma, cystic fibrosis, bronchiectasis, supportive lung disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, chronic emphysema), diabetes, hypertension).

## Treatment

There is currently no known treatment for COVID-19. The most effective way to prevent yourself against COVID- 19 is to;

- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly, or use hand sanitiser if you are unable to wash your hands;
- Avoid touching your face, in particular your eyes, mouth and nose;
- Cover your cough with the bend of your elbow or tissue. If a tissue is used, discard it immediately in the rubbish and wash your hands; and
- Maintain a distance of at least 1.5 metres from others.

## QFAV COVID-19 Roles & Responsibilities

| ROLES                                   | MANAGEMENT | MEMBERS | PATIENTS |
|-----------------------------------------|------------|---------|----------|
| RESPONSIBILITIES                        |            |         |          |
| Preventing spread of COVID-19           | X          | X       | X        |
| Physical distancing                     | X          | X       | X        |
| Respiratory hygiene                     | X          | X       | X        |
| Hand hygiene                            | X          | X       | X        |
| Communication                           | X          | X       | X        |
| Return to work training                 | X          | X       |          |
| Suspected COVID-19 cases                | X          | X       | X        |
| Providing PPE                           | X          |         |          |
| Proper use of PPE                       | X          | X       |          |
| Cleaning – workspaces (incl. equipment) | X          | X       |          |
| Cleaning – shared areas & equipment     | X          | X       |          |
| Vulnerable employees                    | X          | X       |          |
| Following QFAV & Government guidelines  | X          | X       | X        |

|                    |   |   |   |
|--------------------|---|---|---|
| Health & Wellbeing | X | X | X |
|--------------------|---|---|---|

## QFAV COVID Code

We ask that you remain mindful of a safe and healthy workplace for yourself and for those that you work with and therefore ask the following of you:

- Physical Distancing;
- Coughing, sneezing and blowing nose etiquette;
- Hand wash/sanitise at a very minimum;
  - Before and after you handle any QFAV equipment;
  - Before and after you treat a patient;
  - Before you enter the first aid room and when you leave the first aid room; and
  - Before you enter the restrooms/change rooms and when you leave the restrooms/change rooms.
- Clean and sanitise your own workplace, work equipment, any shared equipment and your own personal items you bring to work; and
- Advise us immediately if you are feeling unwell in any manner.

## Common Areas

Break times are to be staggered to avoid crowding common areas at one time. You must bring your own food to work and store in your own cool bags unless advised otherwise that QFAV or the event is providing food and/or food storage.

We recommend having your breaks outside in the open air where possible.

Please remember to observe physical distancing protocols and abide by maximum numbers signage if in place. We also ask you to please clean up after yourself when using the First Aid Room facilities.

## Cleaning Work Areas

We ask that every volunteer takes responsibility for their own work space and ensure that their surfaces, equipment, personal items and shared items are cleaned and disinfected. Frequently touched items should be cleaned/disinfected more often than items that are infrequently touched. We also ask that members empty rubbish bins and dispose of all rubbish appropriately before leaving their work area after each event.

The Event Commander is the designated Infection Control Officer and will monitor and record appropriate cleaning details on the event paperwork at each event.

## Shared Areas and Items

The Event Commander will prepare a cleaning and disinfecting schedule of all shared and common areas and surfaces for each event.

Protecting our workplace against COVID-19 and infection in general is everyone's responsibility. We ask that if you do use a shared area or surface, or see something that needs cleaning, rather than assuming someone else will do it, to please assist the team by cleaning and/or disinfecting.

## COVID-19 in the Workplace

If a member of QFAV is reasonably suspected to have COVID-19 and they have been, or are in the workplace, the following steps will be followed.

1. Isolate;
2. Seek advice;
3. Transport;
4. Clean;
5. Identify & inform; and
6. Review.

Depending on where the member has been within the event will determine whether we are required to close the workplace completely.

**As per new normal procedures, if you are feeling unwell or showing any symptoms of COVID-19 we require you to stay home and not attend any QFAV events until you are well. If you are in the workplace and start feeling unwell we will direct you to go home and seek medical advice.**

If you are not in the workplace and rostered to attend an event, and it is suspected that you have COVID-19 you must let your Event Commander or the Event Coordinator know immediately and seek medical advice.

## **Daily Health Declaration**

At each event you will be required to answer a short health declaration to show that you are fit to attend. This will take place upon your arrival and sign on prior to commencing work along with the temperature scanning. If you indicate that you are unwell, have been in contact with anyone who has been diagnosed or showing any symptoms of COVID-19 you may not be permitted to attend and will be directed to seek medical advice. Members in this situation will not be permitted to work at events until they are given medical clearance by their treating doctor.

QFAV also strongly encourages all members to download the Governments COVIDSafe mobile phone app. QFAV believes it is an important tool to allow Governments to ease restrictions, including mass gatherings, while keeping everyone safe.

## **Signing On and Starting Work**

If a sign on sheet is used, members are required to use the hand sanitiser provided before and after signing on and off at the start and end of each event. Members should use their own pens at all times. Your pen should be cleaned immediately after use by any other person.

## **Getting to and from Work**

Members are encouraged to use their own transport to get to and from events.

If care pooling is being used hand sanitiser must be used and physical distancing maintained where possible.

## **Health & Wellbeing**

Even though physical distancing from other members is encouraged, we don't want you to feel socially distanced or alone. We encourage working together with your colleagues whilst on shift however keep in mind your social distancing and general health etiquette.

## External Resources

This is not an exhaustive list but gives you a starting point for accessible resources to help take care of your personal health & wellbeing during this period.

[Lifeline](#) - 13 11 14

[Beyond Blue](#) - 1300 224 636

[Headspace](#) - 1800 650 890

[Head to Health](#) – online resources and guides for mental health conditions

[www.headtohealth.gov.au](http://www.headtohealth.gov.au)

## Medical Equipment

All common use medical equipment should be cleaned with disinfectant regularly. Equipment health will be monitored and managed by the Event Commander.

## Lifts

If the event is in a building where lifts are available for use, please adhere to individual lift signage for the maximum number of people allowed in a lift at one time. Please also follow physical distancing guidelines by maintaining 1.5 metres from others whilst in a lift.

## Meetings

### Internal Meetings

Internal (member) meetings are permitted when absolutely necessary and must be held in an area that complies with the Government physical distancing guidelines. If a meeting is needed QFAV preference is that members use video conferencing software, such as Zoom.

### Client Meetings

No onsite client (event organiser) meetings should take place until further notice. QFAV again requests that members use video conferencing software where possible to meet with event organisers if required.

## Personal Hygiene Hand Hygiene

The most important step in protecting yourself from any infection including COVID-19 is hand washing with soap and water. All members are required to wash their hands or at the very minimum sanitise their hands, using an alcohol based sanitiser;

- Before and after signing on and off at any event;
- Before entering the work/treatment and common use areas and on exiting these areas; and
- Before entering any restrooms or change rooms and when exiting the restrooms or change rooms. Hand sanitiser will be supplied by QFAV and readily available for member and patient use at all events. **Respiratory Hygiene**
- Members must cover their nose and mouth with a tissue or bent elbow when coughing or sneezing; and
- After using a tissue it must be disposed of in a clinical waste or appropriate rubbish bin then wash or sanitise hands, using an alcohol based sanitiser.

# Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

## Face Masks

Members are required to wear face masks when working in close proximity to a patient. Wearing face masks at all times as a general precaution in a QFAV workplace is not mandatory but can be worn by personal choice. Refer to Pandemic Risk Assessment Matrix below.

## Gloves

Gloves are basic PPE for first aid and this protocol is mandatory. Their use in general dealings with patients is encouraged. Refer to Pandemic Risk Assessment Matrix below.

## Protective Gowns

Protective gowns will be supplied by QFAV for use where appropriate while treating patients. If a member is unsure whether a gown should be worn please consult the Event Commander who is the designated Infection Control Officer. Refer to Pandemic Risk Assessment Matrix below.

## Pandemic Risk Assessment Matrix (e.g.Covid-19)

| NON CARDIAC ARREST PATIENTS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | CARDIAC ARREST PATIENTS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>CLINICAL &amp; EPIDEMIOLOGICAL CRITERIA</b><br>A patient: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• with a fever (&gt; 37.5C)</li><li>• with a history of fever (e.g. night sweats, chills)</li><li>• presenting with acute respiratory symptoms</li><li>• diagnosed with Covid-19; <b>OR</b></li><li>• currently in quarantine or isolation</li></ul> <b>Note:</b> Other reported symptoms of Covid-19 include fatigue, loss of smell, loss of taste, runny nose, muscle pain, joint pain, nausea and vomiting, diarrhoea and loss of appetite. Clinical judgement should be used to determine if individuals with sudden onset of one or more of these symptoms should be considered a suspect case. | <b>PPE REQUIREMENT</b><br><b>Primary crew – airborne &amp; contact precautions (mandatory)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* P2/N95 mask</li><li>* Gloves and</li><li>* Eyewear</li></ul><br><b>Secondary crew/s:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Thumb gowns</li><li>* P2/N95 mask</li><li>* Gloves and</li><li>* Eyewear</li></ul> |
| <b>PPE REQUIREMENT</b><br><b>All crews – airborne &amp; contact precautions PPE:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Thumb gowns</li><li>• P2/N95 mask</li><li>• Gloves and</li><li>• Eyewear</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>DEFINITIONS</b><br><b>Close contact:</b> A close contact is defined as requiring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Face-to-Face contact in any setting with a confirmed or probable case, for greater than 15 minutes cumulative over the course of a week, in the period extending from 48 hours before onset of symptoms in the confirmed or probable case <b>OR</b></li><li>• Sharing of a closed space with a confirmed or probable case for a prolonged period (e.g. &gt; 2 hours) in the period extending from 48 hours before the onset of symptoms in the confirmed or probable case.</li></ul>                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

Pandemic Risk Assessment Matrix (e.g. Covid-19) V.1 11<sup>th</sup> June 2020 DB

## Physical Distancing Work Areas

All work areas will be measured to ensure that there is 4m<sup>2</sup> per person as well as 1.5 metres between each person where appropriate, taking into consideration any fixed equipment in these areas. Details of these measurements will be made available to members by the Event Commander at the start of the event. In order to comply with these Government guidelines, work and start and finish times may be staggered, as mentioned above.

## Shared and Common Areas

Members must keep 1.5 metres between themselves and other members where appropriate. In highly frequented areas floor markings will be placed and we ask members to use these as a physical distancing guide. There will be signs in common areas indicating how many people can be in the room. Members must not exceed this number where possible.

## **Restrooms**

Public restrooms are high risk areas and should be cleaned regularly by the event organiser. QFAV asks that all members please follow proper hand and general hygiene etiquette when using the restrooms. You must also follow signage for maximum room capacity numbers. We ask that if one facility is occupied that you use a different facility to avoid physical contact in a small area.

## **Return to Work Health Questionnaire**

Before returning to a QFAV workplace (event) you must have completed a “return to work” questionnaire to assess that you are fit for work with no symptoms of any infection or COVID-19. For members who have not already completed, the questionnaire will be available at the sign on point at the start of an event until further notice.

## Return to Work Training

Prior to returning to events, volunteers should complete the **Australian Government COVID-19 Infection Control Training** (available at: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/apps-and-tools/covid-19-infection-control-training>). This is a free course, and members are only required to complete the main Infection Control Training module.

## Temperature Scanning

Before entering a QFAV workplace at an event, you will be required to have your temperature checked to ensure you do not have a fever or a temperature above 37.5 C. These temperature checks will be conducted prior to starting your shift. If your temperature scan indicates a fever, you will not be permitted to attend your shift and will be directed to seek medical advice. Members will not be permitted back in a QFAV workplace until they are given medical clearance by their treating doctor.

## Tool Box Talks

Event Commanders will conduct a tool box talk at the start of each shift to cover off all necessary and important information that members need to know. These talks will also include Event Commanders checking in on their team to ensure everyone is fit for work.

## Uniforms

Your uniforms can easily get contaminated. Protective gowns should be worn when appropriate and your uniform washed after every event with a disinfectant detergent following the detergent manufacturer's instructions. You are required to wear closed in shoes, keeping in mind the activities undertaken whilst at work.

## Visitors

Visitors, including patient's family and/or friends, to a QFAV workplace should be limited and enter the workplace only if necessary. Members are to refrain from inviting friends or family to visit while you are at an event workplace. If visitors need to come on site they must where possible remain in open areas away from the workplace.

## Vulnerable Volunteers

A risk assessment for vulnerable members in the workplace will be continuously conducted in consultation with QFAV members. Members at greater risk for COVID-19 are those listed in the above "*who is at risk*" section.

Volunteers who have identified as vulnerable or high risk for COVID-19, should meet with their relevant group's Management Committee to discuss in confidence individual circumstances and individualised risk control measures. These measures will be subject to review on a regular basis. Any member who is vulnerable or high risk and have not yet let their group know must do so immediately.

## Work Schedule

Member's start and finish times are generally determined by event requirements, however due to Government restrictions and physical distancing measures, QFAV may stagger shift times to comply

with current hygiene protocols. The QFAV Event Commander or the Event Coordinator will contact you to advise of your roster if it varies from what is showing on MMS.

To maintain physical distancing, break times will also be staggered. Your Event Commander will again advise you of timing.