Casual contacts of COVID-19

If you are a casual contact of someone with COVID-19:

- get tested for COVID-19 immediately and self-isolate until you get a negative result
- get tested again on day 6 after your last contact with the COVID-19 positive person. If you feel well, you do not need to self-isolate while waiting for this test result.

How will I know if I'm a casual contact?

You are a casual contact if you have come into contact with a COVID-19 positive person for a short period of time. You might find out through your workplace, your education facility, or directly from the COVID-19 positive person. You will not be contacted by NSW Health so please read and follow the information in this factsheet.

What do I need to do?

Self-isolate immediately

Self-isolate until you get the first negative test result, even if you are vaccinated or feel well. Refer to the Self-Isolation Guidelines for more information about how to self-isolate.

Get tested for COVID-19

Get tested:

- as soon as possible, and
- on day 6 after your last contact with the COVID-19 positive person.

At the testing clinic wear a face mask that covers your nose and mouth at all times. Tell the testing staff that you are a casual contact.

If your first test is more than 4 days after your exposure to the person with COVID-19, and your result is negative, you do not need to get the second test.

You need to be tested with a nose and throat (PCR) test even if you don't have symptoms. Get tested at a testing clinic you can safely access.

If you feel well, you do not need to isolate while you wait for the results of the day 6 test. If you work in a high-risk setting, speak to your manager before returning to work. High risk settings are healthcare, aged care, disability care, early childhood, primary school and correctional facilities.

Monitor for symptoms

You should monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 for at least 14 days after your last contact with a COVID-19 positive person. If you develop symptoms at any time, isolate and get tested again as soon as possible, even if you have already received a negative test result.

What is self isolation?

Self-isolation means you must stay at your home or accommodation and remain separated from others, even if you are fully vaccinated or feel well.

Self-isolation means you cannot:

- go to work or school
- go to any public places (e.g. shops, parks, beaches)
- use public transport
- have any visitors in your home, unless they are providing healthcare, emergency maintenance or emergency services.

You are only allowed to leave your home or accommodation to get a COVID-19 test, for urgent medical care or in an emergency (including to avoid injury or escape the risk of harm from domestic violence). If you need to leave for any of these reasons, you should travel by private vehicle, ride or walk. You must wear a face mask, stay 1.5m away from anyone else, travel directly to and from where you need to go and self-isolate in suitable accommodation as soon as possible.

If you need transport to leave your home or accommodation for any of these reasons, but do not have a private vehicle, call the NSW Health Isolation Support Line on 1800 943 553 for assistance.

Further information for accessing testing and self-isolation is available in Travelling for testing and self-isolation and the Self-Isolation Guideline.

What if my workplace has a surveillance testing program?

Casual contacts who have a rapid antigen test (RAT) each day for the 7 days after their last contact with a COVID-19 positive person, are not required to have PCR tests or self-isolate as advised in this guidance.