

Business Continuity - working remotely

Things to consider

This document has been prepared as a guide for organisations looking at ways to continue working during the restrictions anticipated during the COVID-19 pandemic. Organisations need to consider their own situation and remain up to date with government advice & legislation.

Management

- Review risk and crisis management plans
- Look at ways to reduce staff contact with clients /participants
- Considering having staff work from home – working from home policy?
- Support staff members who get the disease – honouring contracts and sick leave arrangements

Staff *

- Be supportive – be concerned for staff welfare
- Discuss the COVID-19 situation and possible ramifications
 - Transmission
 - Hygiene
 - Social distancing
 - Self-isolation
- Discuss a working from home situation with staff
 - What it means for staff
 - What will need to be put in place
- Review these **Working from Home** resources

Technology

- Computers – relocated from office?
- Laptops for staff – or use of personal computers
- Use of personal mobile phones
- Reimbursement for use of personal equipment
- Internet access – upgrades necessary at home?
- Remote access security software
- Personal computer antivirus and other software upgrades?
- Access to technical help
- Security and insurance for office equipment at homes (also personal equipment?)

At the Office (or work location)

- Diverting main phone number- to a designated person who will screen calls and send email messages to relevant people
- Ensure Remote Access to database/server/emergency contact numbers

Communications (staff, clients and members)

- Updates to website and social media
- Update to suitable 'out of office' message
- Communicating as a team – when, how? Do you have suitable technology?

Managing the Office (or work site)

- Cleaners
- Security – office, computers & other items secure
- Mail deliveries
- Deliveries/Suppliers/visitors
- Advise board of directors if applicable

- Advise building management/landlord if applicable
- Advise insurer
- Payroll - can this be performed remotely & timesheet management consideration
- Discuss contingencies if management team are ill/or unavailable
- Consider plans for work experience students and interns

Staff Illness Notifications

- Management to be informed if COVID-19 suspected or confirmed
- Staff member advised to seek medical treatment, start self-isolating
- Staff member will need medical clearance i.e. doctors certificate to return to work

*** Employment Legislation**

If required/necessary, employer can stand down employees if they cannot be usefully employed (natural disasters or in an emergency situation)

- Advise the start date of any stand down
- Whether employees will be paid or not
- Offer the use of leave
- Send follow up email to each employee outlining the conditions of any individual stand down (paid/unpaid/leave)

Refer to <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/how-we-will-help/templates-and-guides/fact-sheets/rights-and-obligations/employment-conditions-during-natural-disasters-and-emergencies#temporary-close>

Useful Links & Resources

- <https://www.business.qld.gov.au/running-business/protecting-business/disaster-resilience/pandemic-risk-management/staff>
- <https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/02/coronavirus-covid-19-isolation-guidance.pdf>
- https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/news/2020/coronavirus-covid-19-workplace-risk-management?utm_source=campaign+homepage&utm_medium=website&utm_content=coronavirus+image+link&utm_campaign=novel+coronavirus+2019
- <https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert#learn-more-about-coronavirus-covid19>
- <https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/02/coronavirus-covid-19-information-about-home-isolation-when-unwell-suspected-or-confirmed-cases.pdf>

Disclaimer

- QORF offers this guide as general advice only.
- All information is provided in good faith.
- The responsibility to comply with all relevant legislation and to be aware of current government advice rests with each individual organisation