



CPSU update: Home Affairs leave, health and safety, and COVID-19

The following information is correct as of 24 March 2020

The CPSU has been liaising with Home Affairs about forms of leave and your health and safety during the COVID-19 health emergency. The following summary details the department’s current positions on various scenarios that may apply to you. Whilst the information is current, please note that it is subject to change. We will continue to send you updates on any developments as they come to hand. Please note, at this stage labour hire workers have no paid leave for any purpose, we are advocating to change this.

If you have any queries about working from home or leave: please talk with your direct supervisor.

If you have concerns about advice from your supervisor or your safety: please contact your delegate, CPSU Organiser or call 1300 137 636 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm AEDT).

Home Affairs’ EAP is confidential and free, please reach out if you need a chat, advice or support by calling 1300 360 364.

Situation	Current Home Affairs position - 24 March 2020
Options to work from home	<p>Home-based work is being assessed on a case-by-case basis, with people defined by the Department of Health as vulnerable being given priority. Priority is also being given to workers whose role is identified as essential for critical business continuity.</p> <p>Home-based work may not be available to everyone. For example, if your work is considered essential (Like the National Marine Unit) or has particular security concerns.</p> <p>The Home Affairs network has capacity for 10,000 people to work from home and staff are being asked to use their own hardware wherever possible.</p> <p>All working from home arrangements end if you become unwell and leave arrangements apply. If you are tested positive for COVID 19 miscellaneous leave with pay will apply (consistent with Protocol), this includes casuals and IIE workers but not labour hire workers.</p>
Workers required to isolate after overseas travel or exposure to a confirmed or suspected case	<p>The Federal government has mandated a 14-day isolation period for anyone returning from overseas travel. Some exemptions apply; for NMU, please refer to relevant section below.</p> <p>“If you develop a fever, cough, sore throat or shortness of breath within 14 days of overseas travel or contact with someone who has COVID-19, seek medical attention: call your GP, the Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080, or, in an emergency, your local emergency department. Notify your manager as soon as practical.”</p> <p>If a member of your household becomes unwell and is diagnosed with COVID-19, you are classified as a close contact and will need to isolate. Visit health.gov.au/covid19-resources for information on isolation. Inform your supervisor you will be absent from work for the 14-day isolation period. Confirm whether you or your supervisor will complete the COVID-19 notification form on Support Connect.</p> <p>If you remain well during the entire self-isolation period, you should return to work.</p> <p>All working from home arrangements stop if you become unwell.</p>

Situation	Current Home Affairs position - 24 March 2020
Workers required to care for sick family or household members	<p>If you are in a household with a person vulnerable to infection from COVID-19, discuss options with your supervisor. If working from home is not available the CPSU considers MLWP should apply. Please contact the us if you need help.</p> <p>Personal leave is to provide care or support to an unwell member of your family or household for whom you are a primary carer.</p> <p>If a member of your household becomes unwell and is diagnosed with COVID-19, you are classified as a close contact and will need to isolate. Inform your supervisor you will be absent from work for the duration of the 14-day isolation period. Confirm whether you or your supervisor will complete the COVID-19 notification form on Support Connect.</p> <p>If you subsequently receive a positive result from a COVID-19 test, inform your supervisor as soon as practicable.</p>
Workers required to stay home to care for children as a result of a school/childcare centre closure	<p>Discuss options with your supervisor. If working from home arrangements are not an option, the CPSU consider MWLP should be approved.</p>
Employees who wish to stay home as a precaution	<p>Working from home arrangements are being authorised on a case-by-case basis, with priority given to people classified as vulnerable by the Department of Health.</p> <p>If the government advises Home Affairs that workers are to stay home then MWLP would apply.</p>
Employees who become sick	<p>If you test positive for COVID-19, follow the advice of your state or territory health authority—visit health.gov.au/state-territory-contacts for information. Always visit health.gov.au/COVID-19 for the most up-to-date information about the virus. As soon as practical after you are notified you have tested positive for COVID-19, inform your supervisor who will complete the COVID-19 notification form on Support Connect on your behalf.</p> <p>If you are unwell and it is not COVID-19, you have a public health obligation to stay home and access personal leave</p>
Insufficient leave and unable to come to work due to COVID-19 or other illness	<p>Discuss additional paid personal leave or MWLP options with your supervisor. Contact us if you need help.</p>
Casual employees who are symptomatic, or required to self-isolate	<p>Casuals will have access to the 14 days paid miscellaneous leave relating to COVID-19. Payment will be made based on your forward roster. The Department is considering an averaging arrangement if you are required to isolate and it's outside a forward roster period.</p> <p>The CPSU continues to advocate for paid leave for labour hire workers, the department will only pay if advised by the APS Commissioner.</p>
Office closures	<p>If the Department is directed to close offices, the same principles applied during the recent wave of bushfires will be used. All workers, other hand labour hire workers, will be placed on paid miscellaneous leave.</p>
Medical evidence	<p>A common-sense approach applies to medical certificates and the Department promises to be flexible, noting phone and online medical consultations are being made more available.</p> <p>The consistent national advice for any worker is to stay home if you are unwell.</p>

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<p>National Marine Unit</p>	<p>There is no COVID-19 testing for marine crew before boarding vessels, unless they meet the criteria determined by the Department of Health. The CPSU is advocating for testing where members have symptoms or they have been on commercial flights where social distancing was not possible. The CPSU is advocating for mandatory testing of workers with family members who are identified as vulnerable before returning home, or the department must facilitate paid leave and accommodation for a 14-day isolation period, before rostered time off starts.</p> <p>The CMO has issued guidance on managing risk in moving through public spaces, on transport, and getting to work. The CPSU as advocated for charter flights where it is not possible for crew to sit together and three rows apart from other passengers on commercial flights.</p> <p>Hand sanitiser, gloves, masks and other PPE, as well as materials to sanitize your work areas on vessel, should be available to all NMU officers. Note, Spray'n'Wipe is insufficient and does not meet requirements for good hygiene as identified by the department and WHO. Please talk with your Commanding Officer if these are not available or insufficient so that these items can be sourced. Talk with your HSR or contact us if you need help.</p> <p>The CPSU has asked for more information on repatriation plans if a family member is unwell and needs care of the NMU worker.</p>
<p>You've had close contact with a confirmed COVID case at work</p>	<p>Department of Health is tracing close contact for all confirmed cases and notifying people.</p> <p>Your supervisor should advise you immediately they are told and you should be excused from work immediately. You or your supervisor should complete an incident report form and the department should facilitate medical support for you as a priority. MWLP applies, please follow advice from the health workers.</p>