



# Guidance for the Seafood Industry COVID-19 Alert Level 2

Version 2 – 13 August 2020

**For further information please don't hesitate to contact:**

Cathy Webb

Seafood Standards Manager

Email: [cathy.webb@seafood.org.nz](mailto:cathy.webb@seafood.org.nz)

## Background

This guide has been put together by Seafood New Zealand and Aquaculture New Zealand to provide advice to the seafood industry to operate under Alert Level 2 of the Government's response to COVID-19. Updated information has been highlighted for convenience.

We emphasise this is guidance only. You are obliged to meet all legal requirements relating to COVID-19.

This guide is intended for non-processing seafood businesses, it is not relevant for seafood processing operators – they need to comply with the Guide for Seafood Processors operating at Alert Level 2 and 3.

This guidance is aligned to MPI's generic guidance on COVID-19 safety requirements for primary industry businesses at Alert Level 2, which can be found here:

<https://www.mpi.govt.nz/protection-and-response/covid-19-coronavirus-information-and-advice/primary-sector-businesses-services-and-support-services/primary-sector-businesses-in-alert-level-2/>

It has been updated to take account of the latest scientific understanding of the transmission risks for COVID-19 and the latest information and advice on wearing facemasks.

## Protocols to be implemented under Alert Level 2

The following guidance is relevant to the following seafood operators:

- Aquaculture farm operations and harvesters
- Fishing operations (inshore and non-processing vessels)
- Other small seafood related businesses (non-processing)

Seafood operators need to implement protocols to prevent the transmission of the virus and to keep their people safe.

### COVID-19 Safety Plan

Under alert level 2 all businesses need to have a COVID-19 safety plan that sets out how they'll operate safely.

Procedures must be developed for the following:

- Contact Tracing
- Safe Operations/Staff Eligibility/Health
- Hygiene
- Physical Distancing
- Workplace/Site Requirements (including cleaning and sanitation)

### Contact Tracing

Contact tracing procedures for all staff, contractors and visitors is required, in case it is necessary by the Ministry of Health.

For all staff working on site/vessel ensure you have a register of contact information that includes their full name and two forms of contact (e.g. phone number, email address, physical address). You also need to record the date for each day they are at work and the time on-site/left site/vessel.

For any contractors or on-site visitors, set up a register to record their full name, and two forms of contact, e.g. contact phone number, email address (you could consider taking a photo of their business card), the date, time on-site and time left site.

Businesses must also have the COVID Tracer App QR Code printed and available for use at points of entry.

## Staff Eligibility/Health

Staff who are over the age of 70 or who have health conditions (e.g. respiratory disease, heart conditions, diabetes or are immunocompromised) can go to work if they cannot work from home. However, as they are higher risk, measures need to be put in place to ensure their safety.

Further information can be found here:

<https://covid19.govt.nz/individuals-and-households/health-and-wellbeing/at-risk-people/#alert-level-2-advice-for-at-risk-people>

Implement procedures to assess all staff for their risk to COVID-19, for example consider the following:

- are they in the high-risk group (age or have health conditions)?
- have they had close-contact with or been exposed to someone who is a probable or confirmed case of COVID-19?

## Staff Health

Businesses need to be alert to signs of COVID-19. The symptoms of COVID-19 are one or more of the following:

- a new or worsening cough
- a high temperature (at least 38°C)
- shortness of breath
- sore throat
- sneezing and runny nose
- temporary loss of sense of smell.

Health and wellness checks are to be carried out of all staff before each day they start work. Any staff showing any signs of illness is to be sent home immediately and further instructions provided.

All staff are to be instructed to stay at home if they are unwell or show any signs as identified above, and if this is the case to report this (by phone) to the employer for further instructions.

All staff are to be instructed to report (by phone) to the employer if someone they live with is unwell or shows any signs of as identified above (further instructions provided).

If there is any doubt about someone who feels ill in anyway, they should stay home until they have been symptom free for 48 hours. **See Appendix One and Two** for dealing with staff health and those who are tested for COVID-19.

## Hygiene

All staff are to follow the normal workplace hygiene and protective clothing routines as well as the following additional measures:

- All staff must use regular hand washing (wash with hand-soap and running water for a minimum of 20 seconds, dry thoroughly with disposable paper towels), and use hand-sanitiser, including:
  - After visiting the toilet
  - Before eating
  - After smoking/vaping
  - Before putting on and after removing protective clothing and equipment
  - Before handling any product
  - Before and after cleaning, particularly after cleaning high contact surfaces.
- Staff must be reminded not to touch their face and eyes, if it occurs, to wash hands as per the above.
- Staff must be reminded to use cough/sneeze etiquette (cover coughs and sneezes with disposable tissues, place in rubbish or cough/sneeze into elbow and then wash hands, as above).
- Implement rigorous cleaning and sanitation regimes in high touch/contact surface areas.
- Gloves are recommended if common contact surfaces are used by adjacent workers.

## Facemasks

The Ministry of Health has updated its advice on the use of facemasks as it has been seen elsewhere that masks can help reduce the spread of COVID-19 where there are cases of community transmission.

<https://covid19.govt.nz/health-and-wellbeing/masks/>

Therefore, at level 2 staff are encouraged to wear facemasks, particularly if working indoors. However, they are to be worn when staff are together/working at distances of less than 1 metre.

If facemasks are used, staff must be instructed on their correct use, including how to put them on and how to take them off:

For instruction and videos, see

<https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/hp7353-ppe-donning-and-doffing-guidance-28mar20.pdf>; or

<https://covid19.govt.nz/health-and-wellbeing/masks/>

## Physical Distancing

At Alert Level 2, it is expected that a one metre physical distancing in most environments (including workplaces) will be maintained.

Where 1 metre is not possible, staff are to wear a facemask.

Other procedures for physical distancing include (where possible):

- staggered breaks and shift changeover times for different teams

- creation of “walkways” for staff when moving through and around their work area
- people not facing each other when passing in narrow passageways; instead passing “side-by-side” or “back-to-back”

The key to identifying the distance between staff is the distance between people’s faces. If they are standing side by side – it is the distance between their faces when the two staff turn their heads to face each other and not the distance between their shoulders.

## Cleaning

Implement regular cleaning and for all high-touch contact surfaces, particularly in any communal, social or amenity areas, including doors, door handles, handrails, switches, bathroom fixtures, toilets, appliances, etc. Ensure staff conducting cleaning of social spaces have suitable PPE (e.g. gloves) to use.

## Contractors and Visitors

If contractors or other visitors need to come on site, implement procedures to manage the risk. This will include things like:

- Carrying out risk assessment, checking:
  - have they had close-contact with or been exposed to someone who is a probable or confirmed case of COVID-19?
  - have monitored their own personal health and can confirm they do not have a raised temperature or any other flu like symptoms and have been observing the isolation requirements when not working.
- Confirm they agree to follow the requirements including distancing, sneezing and cough etiquette (into elbow), hand washing, and all other workplace rules, protocols and measures, and especially those measures related to preventing the transmission of Covid-19.

## Deliveries of Goods to Site

Implement procedures for receiving deliveries – ensuring distancing between the delivery staff and receiving staff.

## Supervision and Checks

Implement supervision and additional checks confirm the procedures are being followed. The frequency of these checks will depend on your operation, but it is important to make sure staff are following the procedures you have put in place, particularly health and handwashing after touching high-contact areas. It is suggested you do this after every break.

## Information for Staff

All staff must be provided with verbal and written instructions to make sure they fully understand their responsibilities to ensure safe operations, including what they need to do if they are unwell or have any symptoms. **See Appendix One** for an example that can be adapted for your staff and site requirements.

## Appendix One: Instructions for Staff (Example)

Workplaces must implement protocols to prevent the transmission of the virus and to keep their people safe. These are designed to protect you, your families and other staff members from being infected with the virus. This document provides guidance for staff while we are operating at Alert Level 2:

If you have any concerns or questions, please talk to one of the following people:

- Manager, contact phone number \_\_\_\_\_
- Supervisor, contact phone number \_\_\_\_\_

The Ministry of Health website provides details about COVID-19.

<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>

COVID-19 is a new illness that can affect your lungs and airways. The symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to other illnesses and include:

- a new or worsening cough
- a high temperature (at least 38°C)
- shortness of breath
- sore throat
- sneezing and runny nose
- temporary loss of sense of smell.

These symptoms do not necessarily mean you have COVID-19. The symptoms are like other illnesses that are much more common, such as cold and flu. COVID-19, can be spread from person to person. When a person who has COVID-19 coughs, sneezes or talks, they may spread droplets containing the virus a short distance, which quickly settle on surrounding surfaces.

You may get infected by the virus if you touch those surfaces or objects and then touch your mouth, nose or eyes. Here are the procedures if you start to feel unwell.

- If you start to feel ill with any of the COVID-19 (or cold/flu like) symptoms at home before you come to work – you must stay home or if you start to feel unwell at work with any of the COVID-19 (or cold/flu like) symptoms, you need to go home
- You need to ring Healthline (0800 358 5453) or your GP, they will give instructions on what to do and/or if they need a test for COVID-19
- If it is determined you need a test for COVID-19, you need to stay at home in isolation until you receive the results of the test and you need to inform the employer that you are being tested
- If it is determined you don't need a test for COVID-19, you should stay at home until you are symptom free for 48 hours
- If you suspect someone who lives with you may have COVID-19, or if someone who lives with you may have been exposed to COVID-19, you also need to stay at home and contact your employer for further advice

To contact your employer:

You can contact your employer by ringing: \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_

Healthline (0800 358 5453) is free and available 24 hours per day for every day of the week. They will give you advice on what to do and you must follow that advice. They have access to interpreters if you need one.

For a person to be considered recovered from COVID-19, they must meet the following criteria:

- It must have been at least 10 days since the onset of their symptoms.
- After the 10 days, they need to have been clear of all symptoms for 48 hours.

If a person was hospitalised, it must be at least 10 days since they were discharged from hospital and they must be clear of all symptoms for 48 hours.

## Procedures while you are at work

We have changed the way we operate so that you can continue to work and keep safe. You must follow these instructions.

1. Avoid congregating in large groups before and after work, stick with your work team bubbles.
2. Use normal health and hygiene procedures, as well as the following:
  - Wash your hands regularly with hand-soap and running water for at least 20 seconds, then dry them properly with disposable paper towels, do this each time:
    - After visiting the toilet
    - Before eating
    - After smoking/vaping
    - Before putting on your protective clothing, including any face masks and gloves and after removing them
    - Before handling any product
    - Before and after cleaning, particularly after cleaning high hand-contact surfaces.
  - Use hand-sanitiser after washing your hands
  - Change or sanitise your gloves regularly (if you use them)
  - Please try not to touch your face or eyes, if it occurs, wash hands as per the above
  - Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing with a disposable tissue, and place it in the rubbish or cough/sneeze into your elbow and then wash your hands
  - If you are issued with a face mask, remove the face mask by only touching the straps/ loops (not the front)
  - Don't share your PPE
3. Follow any other instructions given by the supervisor/manager

## Staff Declaration:

I \_\_\_\_\_ have had these procedures fully explained to me and I understand what my responsibilities are and the procedures I must follow at work, and agree to comply with all of these requirements.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Company Representative:** \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix Two: Dealing with a COVID-19 Positive Result

The following is guidance should a staff member, particularly in processing premises, be infected with COVID-19. In this situation, the Ministry of Health will take the lead and each situation is acted on a case by case basis.

Cases are handled by the local MOH representative. These will be put in place for any person who tests positive for COVID-19.

### Dealing with the affected staff member and close work contacts

- If anyone starts to feel ill with COVID-19 (or cold/flu like) symptoms at home before they come to work – they must stay home, if they start to feel unwell at work, they need to go home
- They need to ring Healthline or their GP, they will give instructions on what to do and/or if they need a test for COVID-19
- If it is determined they need a test for COVID-19, they need to stay at home in isolation until they receive the results of the test
- They also need to inform the employer that they are being tested for COVID-19
- At that point the employer should identify that person's team/close work contacts and consult with Ministry of Health or a medical professional to determine if it is necessary to also isolate these close contacts
- The employer should give the site, including any high contact areas (e.g. door handles etc in communal spaces) a thorough clean (see below)
- If the results come back negative, see note below regarding the person who returned the negative test
- If the results come back positive – the person with COVID-19 will be required to isolate and follow Ministry of Health instructions, and that person's team/ close work contacts will also be required to isolate according to the Ministry of Health's instructions if not already)
- Advise your local MPI verifier (if appropriate)
- If any of the close work contacts develop symptoms, they need to ring Healthline or their GP and follow their advice
- Once staff have been at home and in isolation for the time required by the Ministry of Health's instructions and show no symptoms or signs of the illness they can return to work.

### Notes:

If there is any doubt about someone who feels ill in anyway, they should stay home until they have been symptom free for 48 hours.

The advice to people who have negative results is:

- they still need to complete the full 14-day quarantine period if they have returned from overseas or have had close contact with someone with the virus
- if they are still sick with the same illness at the end of the 14-day isolation period, they will need to stay in isolation until they have been symptom-free for 48 hours
- if they are well, have been symptom free for 48 hours, they can return to normal activity.

## Identifying close-work contacts

The Ministry of Health define a 'Close Contact' as any person with the following exposure to a suspect, confirmed or probable case during the case's infectious period, without appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE):

In terms of a workplace the following are examples of what might be considered close contacts:

- anyone living in the same household or household-like setting
- face-to-face contact in any setting within two metres of a case for 15 minutes or more (e.g. people working opposite each other, sitting opposite each other in the smoko room)
- having been in a closed environment (e.g. a processing area, smoko/break room or communal space, amenity areas, travelled in the same vehicle, etc) within 2 metres of a case for 15 minutes or more

The more you can isolate people or groups people in the work environment, the easier it will be to identify close work contacts.

## Dealing with the site

As this virus is new, there is limited research to date but some work has been undertaken, either on this virus or other coronaviruses. The current information indicates:

- the length of time that SARS-COV-2 (the cause of COVID-19) survives on surfaces will vary depending on factors such as the number of contaminated droplets present and environmental temperature and humidity.
- coronaviruses can survive on inanimate surfaces for many hours and possibly days but are readily inactivated by cleaning and sanitation (disinfection).
- Chlorine-based sanitisers have been shown to 'kill' viruses.

It is highly likely that the site, especially a processing premise, will have been cleaned and sanitised several times since the affected staff member had been on-site, assuming they remained at home at the on-set of symptoms.

However, a full and thorough clean and sanitise of all areas that the affected person and their close work-place contacts have been, is to be undertaken. This should occur when no other processing/product staff (except for the cleaning crew) are on-site. The company is to follow the advice of MOH representative dealing with the positive case, with regards to site closure time-frames –this is likely to be between 2 and 4 days.

The cleaning-crew should ensure they are wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) such as disposable gloves, facemasks and eye protection or a face shield. They need to wash and sanitise their hands before putting on and after taking off, their PPE.

Areas to focus on during the cleaning and sanitation. All the normal contact and non-contact surface in any work area, as well as amenities, smoko rooms and other communal areas including:

- Doors and door handles
- Break/communal areas, benches, tables and chairs (including seats and legs)
- Any appliances such as microwave, fridges, kettles/jugs, vending machines
- All hand-basins, towel dispensers
- Toilet doors, door handles/locks
- Lockers

- Handrails in stairwells
- Hallway and corridor walls
- Outside smoking areas
- Offices (reception areas, desk fronts, keyboards, door handles, etc)
- Any items handled by the affected person and their close-work contacts (e.g., utensils, pens, control panels or equipment)

Further information can be found here:

<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-information-specific-audiences/covid-19-advice-workplaces/guidance-workplaces-have-case-covid-19>