

COVID-19 | CHECKLIST

10 Things You Need for a Safe Return to Work

Use this guide to engage in proactive health and safety discussions with your employer before work restarts under level 3.

1. Have you seen and had a say on your workplace's COVID-19 safety plan?

Businesses permitted to re-open under Level 3 must have a special COVID-19 safety plan. Before work starts, they need to discuss and develop this plan with you.

2. Has your employer talked to you about how to keep safe from COVID-19 while at work under Level 3?

Health and safety laws place duties on employers to engage and communicate with workers on all matters that impact their health and safety. There should be clear procedures for discussing extra COVID-19 health and safety measures.

3. Are non-COVID-19 related risks still being dealt with?

While the focus is on COVID-19 at the moment, it is important that your employer also considers any new risks that arise as workplace practices change as well as any other risks to health and safety. For example, if shift work is introduced, managing fatigue.

4. Do you know who the Health and Safety Rep is in your workplace?

Find out if you have a health and safety rep, and contact them if you do.

5. Are you able to maintain physical distancing while you do your work?

Physical distancing should be at least 2m in most cases, or between 1m and 2m with other effective controls.

6. Have measures been put in place to ensure good hygiene at work?

This might include, hand hygiene, staying at home if you are sick and ensuring worksites have good air ventilation. Enabling good hygiene means having adequate facilities and equipment to practice good hygiene.

7. Has your employer made it clear you must stay home if you are sick or vulnerable to the virus, and have they made sure that you will be paid?

To stop transmission, you need to stay away if you are feeling sick. Check with your employer what the plan is if someone feels ill. The Government have announced they are extending the paid leave scheme for Level 3 for people more at risk of Covid -19 complications so they can stay home with pay.

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8. Do you have access and information on appropriate PPE?

If Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is being used in your workplace, it needs to be used correctly and safely, your employer must provide information and training on how to do this. Incorrect use of PPE can be even more dangerous in spreading COVID-19.

9. Is there a special plan for cleaning the workplace for COVID-19 before work restarts?

If necessary, the worksite might need a thorough cleaning before work starts again. Sites should have inductions for all workers when they return

10. Has your employer provided support and/or advice to help with the extra stress or working during the COVID-19 pandemic?

The COVID-19 pandemic is stressful. Working during the pandemic can be even more stressful. What is your employer doing to help you and your workmates deal with that stress?

If you want find out more detailed information about the health and safety requirements for a return to work under Alert Level 3, check our our more detailed fact sheet [here](#).

What to do if you DO NOT have these things at your work?

A Raise it with your employer. Each person who is affected should raise it too. If your workplace has a Health and Safety Rep you should let them know about your concerns as well. The law says it is your employer's responsibility.

B Raise it with someone outside your work. If you belong to a union, raise it with them. You can also log it online with the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions at www.together.org.nz/covid-19-work-rights. AND, you should also tell Worksafe, the government agency responsible for health and safety in New Zealand – worksafe.govt.nz/notifications/health-or-safety-concern/raise-a-concern-form (or phone 0800 030 040)

C Always remember if you believe your work is unsafe you have the right to cease work. You can stop unsafe work when the work will expose any worker or other person to a serious risk and the exposure to the hazard is immediate or imminent.