



This Queensland Council of Unions Work Health and Safety COVID-19 Toolkit has been developed for use by affiliate unions to help organisers, officials and other staff understand the way in which the risk of exposure to COVID-19 as a workplace hazard should be managed for their workplaces and members.

The Toolkit includes:

1. WHS Guidelines for Managing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19
2. Training Materials on how to implement the Guidelines including:
  - a. a PowerPoint presentation
  - b. Training activities
  - c. Group Discussion Questions

The WHS Guidelines follow and apply the risk management framework from the Work Health and Safety Act and Regulations, and in particular focus on how to implement appropriate control measures using the hierarchy of controls.

It also briefly covers what actions a WHS entry permit holder, a Health & Safety Rep, or a worker can take. However, it is recommended that union staff who have not undertaken their WHS entry permit holder training enroll to do so.

There are a number of options for how unions can use the Toolkit:

- i) the QCU can provide online training for unions via Zoom (either for an individual union or a general forum for individuals from different unions)
- ii) the QCU can provide training/briefings for relevant union trainers on how to deliver the training and associated issues
- iii) individual unions can provide their own training using the QCU training resources

Training resources include:

- a copy of the WHS Guidelines for Managing the Risk of COVID-19
- a PowerPoint presentation which steps through the Guidelines
- a group training activity on applying the hierarchy of controls, including suggested responses
- group discussion questions

These materials are available to supplement the WHS Guidelines and presentation which are able to be adapted for use by individual unions.

**Please note:** the QCU has requested and has been advised by the Qld WHS regulator that SafeWork will be able to deliver the WHS entry permit holder training in an online format for unions. Please contact us for further information.

We welcome your feedback on the resource. Please contact Jacqueline King Assistant General Secretary on 0439 329793 or Damien McGarry WHS HSR Coordinator on 0429 985268 for further information or to discuss your training options and needs.



## Group Training Activity

### Trainer/Facilitator Notes

#### 1) PowerPoint Slides

The union trainer/facilitator can use the PowerPoint slides which are able to be modified or adapted for individual union use e.g. by providing more relevant case studies or examples of how the hierarchy of controls would be applied to the union's industry sector(s) and workplaces.

The slides can also be adapted to focus only on the rights of a WHS entry permit holder, or for both permit holders and Health and Safety Reps.

Please note the training materials are not intended to cover the field for either WHS entry permit holders or Health and Safety Reps training which should still be undertaken separately (both are now available to be conducted online in real time engagement).

The entire training activity should take approximately one (1) hour. The slide presentation is designed to last for 30 minutes. The activities and general discussion should take a further 30 minutes.

#### 2) Group Activity

A group activity is available which includes four scenarios which can be adapted to cover specific workplaces relevant to the individual union. The activity is designed for participants to practice how they can apply the hierarchy of controls to different work situations and embed their knowledge from the presentation and/or previous WHS knowledge.

It is recommended that the group activity is undertaken particularly for union staff who are not familiar with Work Health and Safety laws and the hierarchy of controls. However, they can also be a useful refresher for other staff.

The activity should be run after participants have received information on the hierarchy of controls (see PowerPoint Slides).

The activity can be run as part of Zoom online training (or using other online technology). After introducing the activity the trainer/facilitator should ask participants to go offline for 10 minutes to discuss the scenario(s) and options for control measures with one or more other participants (using available IT tools such as the private chat function on Zoom between participants, or mobile group calls).

After 10 minutes ask participants to come back online and then facilitate a debrief from every group (one person only) and discuss any feedback.

Note: if each group is given one scenario then ask other groups to comment by adding any other feedback they think is relevant. Otherwise, if all groups completed the four scenarios simply ask for any additional feedback at the end of the debrief of all groups.

**IMPORTANT POINT:** it is strongly recommended that trainers/facilitators make sure participants do the small group activity to help embed the knowledge they have taken from the presentation.

#### 3) Group Discussion and Action Plan

When the small group activity is completed, the trainer/facilitator should lead a general discussion for how the union can implement the WHS Guidelines for Managing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 within particular industry sectors and workplaces. Some general discussion points are provided in this toolkit.

The trainer/facilitator can collate responses from the group on their computer and by sharing their screen simultaneously with all group participants as they type the responses from group members. This is a useful tool to make the session more interactive and real-time. The responses could result in the form of an agreed plan or agreed action items which can be distributed to all participants following the meeting.

It is recommended that trainers/facilitators familiarise themselves with the Zoom functions (or other online platform), particularly the chat function and sharing screens. There are a number of short training videos online for Zoom if this is the product being used.

Go to <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/sections/201740096-Training> for further information.



# Safety Toolkit for managing workplace risk of COVID-19

## Group Activity Scenario 1

Fiona works in an essential workplace. Fiona and her work colleagues have had a meeting with management to discuss COVID-19, and in particular, the safe distancing measures that are to be applied to all indoor and outdoor workplaces.

After measuring all areas of the workplace, they have discovered that the numbers of workers accessing the lunch room and some work group areas do not comply with the 4 square metre rule i.e. there should only be one worker for every 4 square metres in addition to the 1.5 metre distance rule.

Applying the hierarchy of controls, what options do Fiona and her colleagues have to ensure the safe distancing measures are applied effectively and that the risk of exposure to COVID-19 is minimised?

### Your Group Task:

Write your responses below (there may be more than one response for each or none for a level of control):

Elimination	
Substitution	
Isolation	
Administrative	



# Safety Toolkit for managing workplace risk of COVID-19

## Group Activity Scenario 1 (with suggested responses for the trainer):

Fiona works in an essential workplace. Fiona and her work colleagues have had a meeting with management to discuss COVID-19, and in particular, the safe distancing measures that are to be applied to all indoor and outdoor workplaces.

After measuring all areas of the workplace, they have discovered that the numbers of workers accessing the lunch room and some work group areas do not comply with the 4 square metre rule i.e. there should only be one worker for every 4 square metres in addition to the 1.5 metre distance rule.

Applying the hierarchy of controls, what options do Fiona and her colleagues have to ensure the safe distancing measures are effectively applied and that the risk of exposure to COVID-19 is minimised?

Suggested responses could include:

Elimination	Remove all workers from the workplace who can perform their work from their place of residency. Ensure workers at risk are also able to work from home or negotiate special paid leave if work is unable to be undertaken remotely.
Substitution	Provide alternate physical workspace for work to be done that complies with the social distancing rule (this may occur with reduced numbers in the workplace with people working from home).
Isolation	If there is still essential work that must be performed in the physical workplace, implement social distancing measures i.e. the 1.5 metre and 4 square metre rule.
Administrative	Negotiate changes to stagger lunch breaks and start times to ensure the number of workers in a designated area complies with the 4 square metre rule. Sign post the maximum number of people permitted within designated areas. Create floor markings in common areas to designate the 1.5 metres required. Provide training and instruction to all employees on the importance of maintaining social distancing and how this will apply in designated areas of the workplace.



# Safety Toolkit for managing workplace risk of COVID-19

## Group Activity Scenario 2

Tom is a truck driver for a road freight company. Tom's company has been discussing how to implement measures to minimise the spread of COVID-19 and what that means for safe work practices. Three concerns that have been raised by workers include:

- 1) how to ensure social distancing where there are teams of drivers;
- 2) handling paperwork required for proof of delivery; and
- 3) access to the lunchroom at the depot.

Applying the hierarchy of controls, what options do Tom and his colleagues have to ensure the safe distancing measures are applied and that the risk of exposure to COVID-19 is minimised?

### Your Group Task:

- Write your responses below (there may be more than one response for each or none for a level of control):

Elimination	
Substitution	
Isolation	
Administrative	



# Safety Toolkit for managing workplace risk of COVID-19

## Group Activity Scenario 2 (with suggested responses for the trainer):

Tom is a truck driver for a road freight company. Tom's company has been discussing how to implement measures to minimise the spread of COVID-19 and what that means for safe work practices. Three concerns that have been raised by workers include:

- 4) how to ensure social distancing where there are teams of drivers;
- 5) handling paperwork required for proof of delivery; and
- 6) access to the lunchroom at the depot.

Applying the hierarchy of controls, what options do Tom and his colleagues have to ensure the safe distancing measures are applied and that the risk of exposure to COVID-19 is minimised?

Suggested responses could include:

Elimination	Stop or reduce the use of driving teams as much as possible.
Substitution	Use electronic paperwork where possible. If a signature is required, talk to the business about providing a confirmation email instead, or take a photo of the goods onsite as proof of delivery.
Isolation	Limit the physical interactions between workers, suppliers, customers and others. Stagger meal and start times to limit the numbers of workers in the depot at any one time.
Administrative	Place signage in the workplace about safe distancing and what it means. Place floor markings in common areas in the depot to indicate the 1.5 metres and make sure chairs are placed at least 1.5 metres away from other chairs. Provide training in the new safe work practices to all staff.



# Safety Toolkit for managing workplace risk of COVID-19

## Group Activity Scenario 3

Kate is one of twenty part and full time employees for a small call centre in Brisbane. The call centre fields calls from private hospitals and medical facilities to order medical supplies, and is deemed to be an essential workplace. Its hours of operation are between 9.00 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Friday.

Kate is concerned that the workspace for the call centre is not sufficient to meet the new social distancing rules of 1 person per 4 square metres. In fact, it's a bit tight and the area is only 60 square metres with 20 people.

Applying the hierarchy of controls, what options do Kate and her fellow workers have to ensure their risk of exposure to COVID-19 is minimised?

### Your Group Task:

- Write your responses below (there may be more than one response for each or none for a level of control):

Elimination	
Substitution	
Isolation	
Administrative	



**Group Activity Scenario 3 (with suggested responses for the trainer):**

Kate is one of twenty part and full time employees for a small call centre in Brisbane. The call centre fields calls from private hospitals and medical facilities to order medical supplies, and is deemed to be an essential workplace. Its hours of operation are between 9.00 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Friday.

Kate is concerned that the workspace for the call centre is not sufficient to meet the new social distancing rules of 1 person per 4 square metres. In fact, it's a bit tight and the area is only 60 square metres with 20 people.

Applying the hierarchy of controls, what options do Kate and her fellow workers have to ensure their risk of exposure to COVID-19 is minimised?

Suggested responses could include:

Elimination	Look at work from home option with diversion of phone calls. Advise customers to order online or via email to minimise the number of phone calls required.
Isolation	Minimise the number of workers permitted in the work area and rotate workers through work from home arrangements and call centre work to comply with the social distancing measures.
Administrative	Negotiate changed shift arrangements to accommodate the essential work required to be done only. Stagger meal breaks and start times for workers who can only perform work in the workplace. Place floor markings in common areas in the depot to indicate the 1.5 metres and make sure chairs are placed at least 1.5 metres away from other chairs. Provide training in the new safe work practices to all staff.



# Safety Toolkit for managing workplace risk of COVID-19

## Group Activity Scenario 4

Ben is an employee at a normally busy suburban railway station. While the numbers of passengers have dramatically decreased since the government directives for essential work and stay at home were released, there are still people coming through the station every day. Ben is concerned at how to ensure there is social distancing as people arrive through the turnstiles onto the platform at peak times.

Applying the hierarchy of controls, what options do Ben and his colleagues have to ensure the safe distancing measures are applied and that the risk of exposure to COVID-19 is minimised?

### Your Group Task:

- Write your responses below (there may be more than one response for each or none for a level of control):

Elimination	
Substitution	
Isolation	
Administrative	



# Safety Toolkit for managing workplace risk of COVID-19

## Group Activity Scenario 4 (with suggested responses for the trainer):

Ben is an employee at a normally busy suburban railway station. While the numbers of passengers have dramatically decreased since the government directives for essential work and stay at home were released, there are still people coming through the station every day. Ben is concerned at how to ensure there is social distancing as people arrive through the turnstiles onto the platform at peak times.

Applying the hierarchy of controls, what options do Ben and his colleagues have to ensure the safe distancing measures are applied and that the risk of exposure to COVID-19 is minimised?

Suggested responses could include:

Isolation	Maintain the 1.5 metre rule when people are going onto the platform.
Administrative	Mark the 1.5 metres distance from the turnstile with tape on the ground. Sign post the requirement to stay 1.5 metres behind another person.



### **Group Discussion Points:**

The following activity is for the trainer/facilitator to capture key approaches and a general plan for how union staff should proceed with using the WHS Guidelines.

#### Suggested discussion points:

- Are there any key actions that we need to take to ensure union staff are following the implementation of the WHS Guidelines within their workplaces?
- What specific actions do we need to take as a union/group etc?
- Are there particular control measures that we need to pursue in particular workplaces or industry sectors and how should we go about that?
- What type of pushback are we getting from employers/workplaces and how can we address these in the context of the WHS legal framework?
- Are there action items the union needs to do to use the WHS Guidelines for COVID-19?
- Are there any further training requirements on WHS for COVID-19 or WHS generally?