

## Permissions for close contact critical workers

DAIRYSAFE has an obligation to actively promote food safety learnings that are important to your business.

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### Key points –

- Different requirements for close contacts are available for specified industries, including agriculture and food manufacture.
  - Close contacts who are critical workers are able return to work under specific circumstances.
  - To trigger this process, the workforce capacity to maintain a function needs to be under significant strain and alternative options for support need to be first exhausted.
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### Specified workplaces or industries - return of close contact critical workers

The Chief Public Health Officer has the authority to give specified workplaces or industries different requirements. If your industry is mentioned and a nominated officer within your business gives you their approval you have different requirements to the general public.

In that case, you must comply with the [Permissions-for-close-contact-critical-workers-to-return-to-worksite-during-quarantine-period-for-COVID-19-8PM.pdf](#) protocol when attending your workplace or work function. When not at work you must comply with the usual isolation, testing and reporting requirements.

The protocol applies to the following **primary industry related services**:

- food manufacture and distribution (excluding retail and hospitality)
- veterinary services and animal welfare
- agriculture
- freight/logistics

Close contacts who are critical workers employed in the above list of services can return to work if the **relevant Chief Executive or person conducting a business** implements the protocol and approves its application to the person.

To trigger this process, **the workforce capacity to maintain a function needs to be under significant strain and alternative options for support need to be first exhausted**. Any permission for returning close contacts to the workplace needs to be done carefully and in conjunction with comprehensive, risk mitigation plans based on multi-layered infection prevention and control. Whilst close contact critical workers are considered in these limited circumstances to be able to work, the health and wellbeing of the worker themselves, other staff members and the broader community remains of critical importance.

Work permissions for close contact critical workers should be time limited and regularly reviewed as the pandemic situation in South Australia evolves and stabilises. Where demand on service decreases to manageable levels, work permissions should be shifted back to standard quarantine requirements.

**Note:** Allowing close contacts who are critical workers to continue working needs to be balanced with the risk of further disease transmission in worksites which could lead to even greater disruption than what was originally being sought to be addressed.

### **Requirements of the close contact critical worker:**

1. The critical worker must be separated from the person who is COVID-19 positive and commence the 7-day quarantine period from the date of last contact with the COVID-19 case.
2. The close contact critical worker must be fully vaccinated (including a third dose if eligible).
3. Must be completely free of all COVID-symptoms (including headache, sore throat, runny/blocked nose, difficulty breathing, muscle or joint aches and pains, fever/chills, cough, vomiting/diarrhoea, loss of taste, loss of smell or loss of appetite).
4. Must have undertaken a PCR test prior to returning to work (can return whilst awaiting PCR result as long as that day's RAT (rapid antigen test) is negative and may continue if PCR negative).
5. Must maintain quarantine at all times when not onsite at work.
6. Must complete a RAT at the start of every shift they attend inclusive of a daily RAT for days 1 to 7 since last contact with a case. All RATs must be negative.
7. If symptoms develop, must not attend work and must obtain a PCR test immediately (work permissions will be suspended until the PCR returns negative).
8. Must not use public transport or other forms of shared transport to travel to work.
9. Must wear a surgical mask at all times at work (an N95 mask will be required if working in a setting with vulnerable people).
10. Must take meal and any other breaks alone and preferably in an outside space.
11. Only undertake critical work functions – this does not include for example staff meetings, staff social functions or professional development activities

### **Further information:**

Businesses can contact the Communicable Disease Control Branch (CDCB) COVID-19 Critical Infrastructure Outbreak Response Team via:

- [health.criticalinfrastructurecovid19@sa.gov.au](mailto:health.criticalinfrastructurecovid19@sa.gov.au)
- Team Leader phone: 0481 483 739
- Phone: (08) 7117 4119
- Hours of operation: 9am – 5pm, 7 days per week



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