



Director-General's COVID-19 UPDATE

Deidre Mulkerin | Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women

Hello colleagues

Minister Farmer and I continue to meet regularly with representatives of our portfolio peak organisations to find solutions to any issues that arise as we adapt to new ways of working. With stage 1 of the [Roadmap to easing Queensland's restrictions](#) now in place, there's been a fair bit of discussion around the effects of the eased restrictions on service delivery.

The relaxed restrictions coincide with the revised [Home Confinement, Movement and Gathering Direction](#) (No.5) coming into effect on 15 May.

Parts of the Direction remain unchanged — a person who resides in Queensland is permitted to leave their principal place of residence:

- to perform work or volunteering, or carry out or conduct an essential business, activity or undertaking, and the work, business activity or undertaking to be performed is of a nature that cannot reasonably be performed from the person's principle place of residence;
- to avoid injury or illness or escape a risk of harm, e.g. escaping a risk of harm related to domestic and family violence or accessing support from a domestic and family violence support service.

Our advice throughout the COVID-19 pandemic has been that all services the department funds and that promote the safety of children, families and women should be treated as essential services.

The revised Direction allows for a household to have up to five visitors. This does not prevent workers or volunteers entering a residence, and they are not counted as visitors.

As restrictions ease, it remains critically important that we continue to follow the advice of health professionals in maintaining social distancing and practising good hygiene.

We need to keep the safety of those most at risk at the forefront of our decision making while we continue to plan for the safe delivery of essential services. More information on delivering in-home services safely is available on the [Queensland Government website](#).

In relation to face-to-face delivery of services, and whether staff continue to work from home, or return to the office, Queensland Health recommends employees continue to work from home where employers support this occurring. Should staff choose to return to the office, organisations should consider staggering rostered shifts to support physical distancing and hygiene requirements.

Of course, all organisations have obligations and responsibilities under Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) legislation, and this is a key consideration prior to transitioning staff back into the workplace. All workplaces should have a [WHS plan to manage COVID-19](#) and display the plan prominently in the workplace.



Escaping domestic and family violence

Following the COVID-19 DFV Summit, Queensland Health updated the Home Confinement, Movement and Gathering Direction to make it absolutely clear that people can leave their principal place of residence to access support from domestic and family violence support services.

The example in the Direction now makes it clear that this includes leaving home to access support from domestic and family violence support services as a permitted reason for leaving your principal place of residence:

6(n) avoiding injury or illness or to escape a risk of harm;

- *Example — escaping a risk of harm related to domestic and family violence; or accessing support from a domestic and family violence support service.*

Please let people know that domestic and family violence services continue to operate and help is available if they are not safe in their home. Further information about support services is available on the [Queensland Government's domestic and family violence web portal](#).

Business continuity planning

As we enter the recovery stage of the pandemic period, it is a good time to re-look at your business continuity plan. I know organisations have found innovative ways to continue business operations during this time, many of which have been developed while in the thick of the crisis. Some of things your service has learned could be included in your plan.

We still have some way to go before all restrictions are lifted, and many of the things we are doing now will continue to help us in the future, and next time we need to activate our plans. There are also lots of things we have learnt that might be useful to keep beyond the current environment.

A reminder that the Queensland Government publishes a COVID-19 stakeholder bulletin each day from Monday to Friday on the [COVID-19 website](#). The daily bulletin includes an overview of key developments for the past 24 hours, as well as Public Health advice, and updated information on government services and financial and community assistance.

Thanks once again for your continued support of Queensland's children, young people, families and women during these challenging times.

Until next time, look after yourselves and your family and friends.

Warm regards

Deidre Mulkerin

Director-General

Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women

