

Note: This information is current as at March 17, 2020. The content found on this document does not constitute legal advice and should not be relied upon as such. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained is free from error and/or omissions, no responsibility can be accepted by WASIA or any other person involved in the preparation of this document for any claim (including without limitation, any liability arising from fault, negligence or negligent misstatement) for any direct or indirect loss or damage arising from any use or reliance on this information, or otherwise in connection with it.

We have been monitoring the rapidly-evolving COVID-19 situation closely and as always, our priority is the health of our members, their staff and clients, the shearing industry in WA and on maintaining continuity of business for agriculture.

As pressure on Australia's health system increases, and social distancing is recommended by the World Health Organization and Australian Government, we have put together this information pack for our members as employers and businesses.

Obviously this situation is new for all of us and is rapidly changing. WASIA is committed to bringing you updates and appropriate information as the situation develops.

Duty of Care to Staff and Clients

Your foremost priority is for the health and safety of your teams and clients. We are asked to take our social responsibility seriously to slow the spread of the virus and protect vulnerable people and our health system. Employers are required to provide and maintain, as far as is practicable, a working environment in which their workers are not exposed to health risks. This includes situations where employees and contractors may be at risk of contracting viruses such as the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). You will not be able to completely eliminate the risk of workers contracting COVID-19 while carrying out work. However you must do all that is reasonably practicable to minimise that risk.

Employers need to keep up to date with the latest health warnings from the [Australian government](#) and the [WA State Government](#) to ensure that any action taken is measured and appropriate.

If there is concern about the risk of employees being exposed to viruses of this nature while at work, a risk assessment should be carried out with reference to the latest information available in the links below (Helpful Resources). Shearing Contractors should develop prevention and control strategies appropriate to each workplace, in consultation with your teams and the wool grower and ensure that all are aware of and follow these strategies. [Safe Work Australia](#) has good information to follow.

These strategies may include:

- Providing clear advice about quarantine periods following at-risk travel or contact with at-risk or unwell people, in accordance with advice from the [Department of Health](#)

- Fitness for work policies and procedures, including instructions on actions staff should take if they have symptoms consistent with a virus, such as fever, cough, sore throat, fatigue and shortness of breath.
 - workers should know when to stay away from the workplace
 - what action to take if they become unwell, and
 - what symptoms to be concerned about
- Dealing with contingencies such as staff shortages
- Reminding staff about the need to ensure good personal hygiene and encourage regular hand washing, limiting contact with others and covering their mouths while coughing and sneezing.
- All Australians returning from overseas and all international travelers to Australia will have to self-isolate for 14 days, effective from midnight Sunday March 15. Criminal charges may now apply for anyone found to have breached the mandatory quarantine period, with fines of up to \$50,000 introduced.
- Regular communications with staff should the situation or policies or procedures change.

How Can You Protect Your Staff From COVID-19?

The spread of COVID-19 has impacted businesses and industries worldwide, and it is best for you as a contractor to determine ways to prevent COVID-19 from becoming an occupational hazard.

Read and understand the [WA Government's advice for employers](#) and give staff this information:

- If you suspect you may have COVID-19 coronavirus symptoms (fever, coughing, sore throat, fatigue, and shortness of breath) or may have had close contact with a person who has COVID-19 coronavirus, you should contact the Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080. Use the [Australian Health Direct](#) symptom checker.
- Tested people should remain isolated at home, until they receive their test results and further medical advice.
- Do not send staff to be tested at either [COVID clinics](#) or through GP referrals unless they have a fever and respiratory symptoms such as cough or sore throat AND:
 - have returned from overseas travel in the last 14 days OR
 - are a contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case OR
 - believe they may have been in close contact with a person infected with COVID-19.
- Unwell staff should stay home and seek medical advice as appropriate.
- Employees who are sick or become sick while in the workplace should be separated from other employees and sent home
- Protect yourself by covering coughs and sneezes, wash your hands and face often. If soap and water are not available use a hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Don't share wash-bowls or water bottles. Everyone should bring their own fresh towel every day. Keep them separate.
- Shed hands need to change work practices – stay away from the shearer until they have finished shearing (stay 1.5 meters from the shearer). Large tallies are not the highest priority until this is over.

- Workers should wear sweat-bands and towel off as much as possible. Sweat is not mentioned in the health warnings but better to err on the side of safety. Skin to skin won't transmit the disease but sweat in other people's eyes, nose and mouth must be assumed to be infectious.
- Tell aging farmers to stay out of the shed and away from you and your workers. Limit access to the workplace by other people unless necessary for the work.
- Don't shake hands or hug - keep the 1.5m distance.
- Overseas workers and staff returning from overseas will need to follow mandatory isolation protocols (14 days at present but this may change).

What is 'social distancing'?

'Social distancing' helps reduce the risk of a virus being transmitted. Social distancing includes:

- avoiding crowds and mass gatherings where it is hard to keep a reasonable distance from others (about 1.5 metres)
- avoiding small gatherings in enclosed spaces
- trying to keep 1.5 metres between you and other people where possible (for example, when out and about in a public place)
- avoiding shaking hands, hugging or kissing
- avoiding visiting vulnerable people, such as those in aged care facilities or hospitals, babies or people with weakened immune systems

Helpful resources

We've curated additional COVID-19 resources from a range of reputable sources, keep these handy and check for changes as this is a fast moving situation.

Attached -

- COVID-19 Poster
- Hand washing poster
- Staff self screening form
- Information for Employers - Australian Department of Health

Videos to share with your staff:

1. [Good hygiene starts here](#)
2. [Help stop the spread](#)
3. [Recent traveller](#)
4. [How to protect yourself against COVID-19](#)

Links to Government websites and official resources

1. **National Coronavirus Helpline 1800 020 080**
2. [WA Government](#) - latest news, facts, advice for [business & industry](#).
3. [WA Health Department](#) - latest updates and information for employers
4. [Fair Work Ombudsman](#) - for Employers and employees under the national industrial relations system ie those on the Pastoral Award 2010 for companies. Your workplace entitlements and obligations if you're affected by the outbreak of coronavirus.
5. [WA Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety](#) - This information is relevant to employers and employees in the WA state industrial relations system – sole traders, unincorporated partnerships, unincorporated trusts and some incorporated or not for profit organisations. This page provides information for employers and employees on employment obligations and entitlements in a situation where employees are unable to work due to self isolation or quarantine requirements for themselves or family members due to COVID-19 coronavirus; or the business has been impacted by travel or import / export restrictions associated with COVID-19 coronavirus.
6. [Safe Work Australia](#) has good information to follow.
7. [Australian Department of Health](#) - collection of resources, including some resources translated into a selection of languages, as well as advice for parents and those caring for the elderly.
8. [Australian Health Direct](#) symptom checker.
9. [Chamber of Commerce and Industry WA](#) - Preparing your business for COVID-19
10. [World Health Organisation's \(WHO\)](#) - world source of information
 - a. [video](#) on protecting yourself from COVID-19
 - b. [myth-busting page](#), that addresses some of the misinformation about the virus

We will continue to send information as we have it to assist our members as much as we can. We appreciate the uncertainty you are currently facing and we wish you the best in the coming weeks and months. If in the process you need more help please contact us.

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

How to avoid infection or spreading the virus



Wash your hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds



Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth



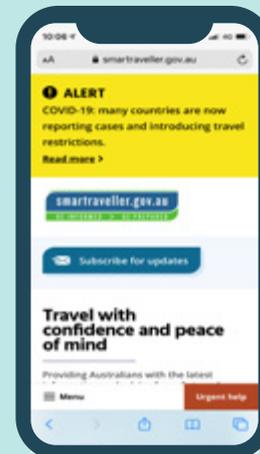
Cover your mouth or nose when coughing or sneezing



Use only disposable tissues, and dispose of them immediately after use



Avoid close contact with anyone showing respiratory symptoms



Monitor travel advice on Smartraveller smartraveller.gov.au

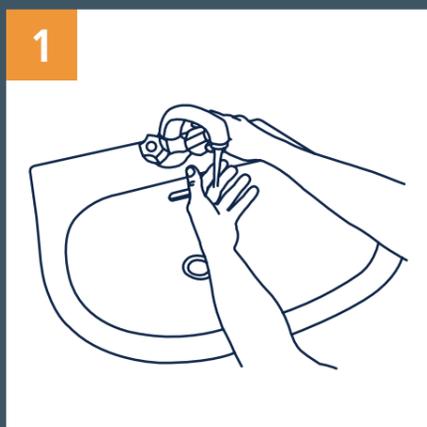


Stay at home when you are sick

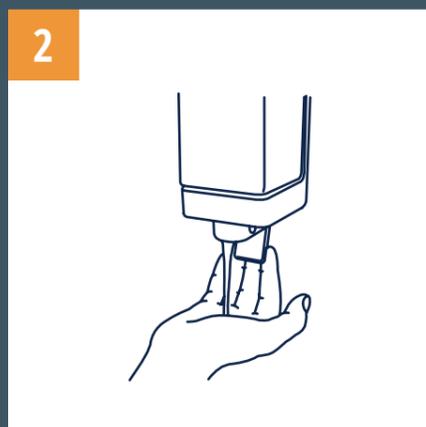
Hand Hygiene

Protect yourself and others from the spread of illnesses. It is important to wash your hands:

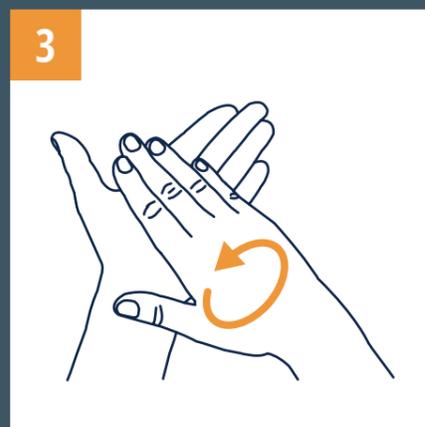
- After coughing or sneezing
- When caring for the sick
- Before, during and after you prepare food
- Before eating
- After toilet use
- When hands are visibly dirty
- After handling animals or animal waste



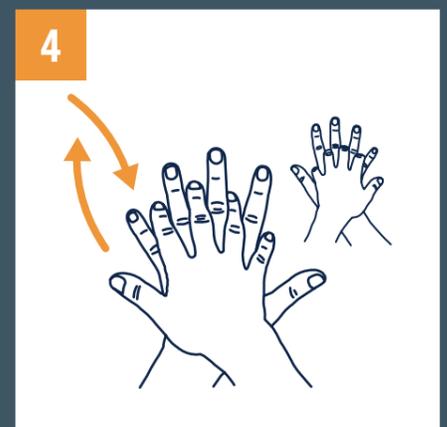
Wet hands with water



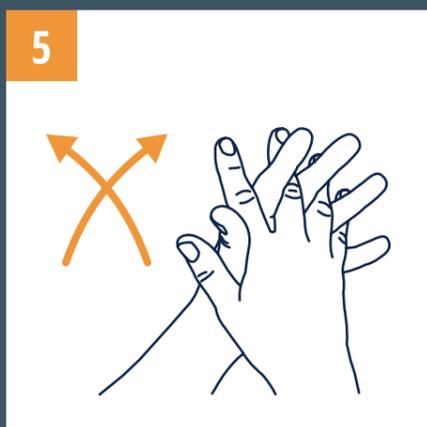
Apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces



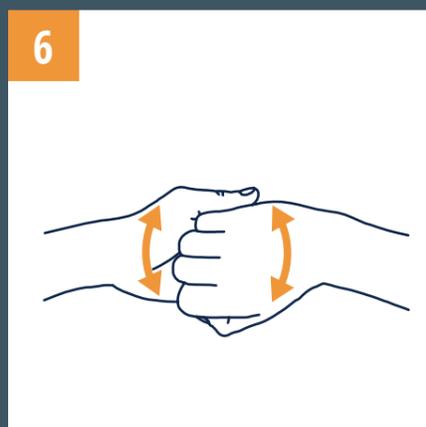
Rub hands palm to palm



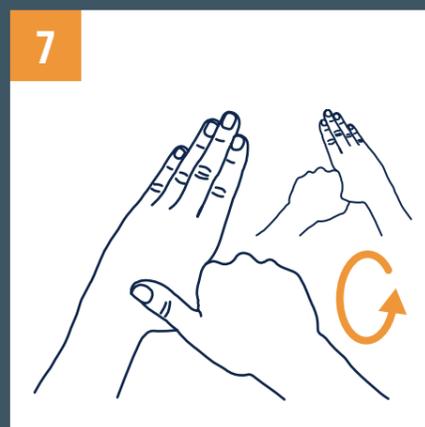
Right palm over left dorsum with interlaced fingers and vice versa



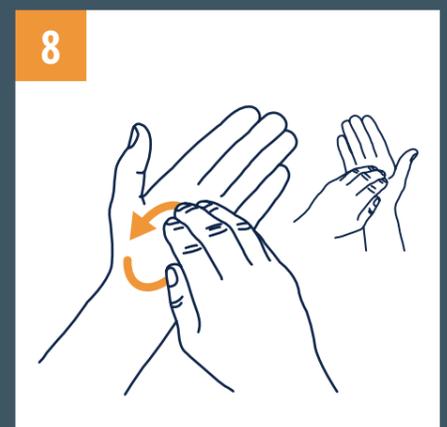
Palm to palm with fingers interlaced



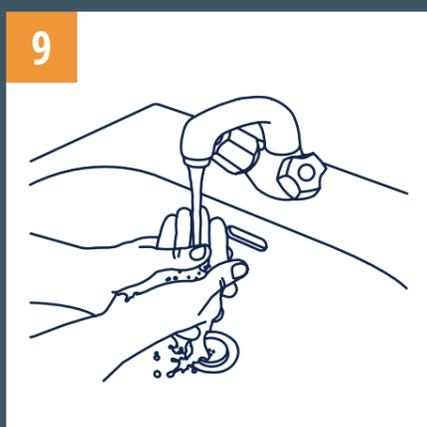
Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked



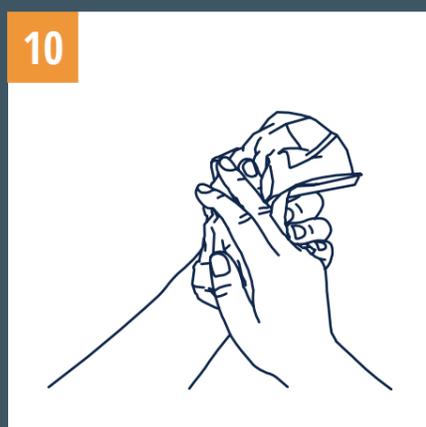
Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa



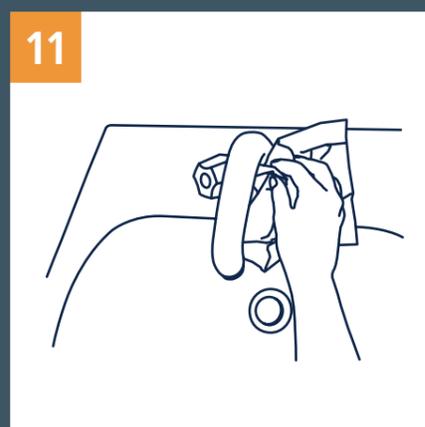
Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa



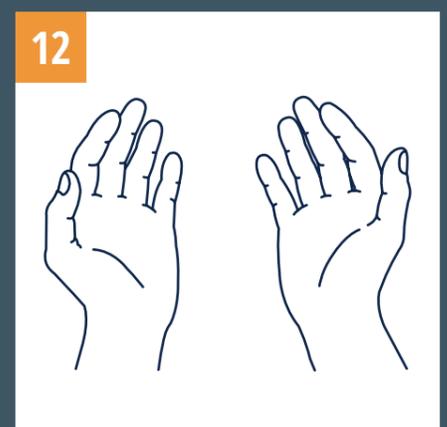
Rinse hands with water



Dry thoroughly with single use towel



Use towel to turn off faucet



... and your hands are safe



Duration of the entire procedure: 40-60 seconds



Chamber of Commerce
and Industry WA

COVID-19 Staff Questionnaire

In the interests of maintaining a safe and healthy environment for everyone, we ask that you accurately complete this self-assessment urgently.

For this survey, identifiable data including survey responses, demographics and comments may be made available to nominated administrators within the company. If you have any questions about how this data may be used, please contact _____

Your responses will be reported to _____ based on the specific rules for this survey. If you have any additional questions, please contact _____

		Yes/No
1	Has it been less than 14 days since you've returned from any overseas travel?	
2	Have you had close personal contact* with anyone who has returned from overseas travel within the last 14 days?	
3	Have you had close personal contact with anyone suspected or confirmed to have Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)?	
4	Are you experiencing: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fever• Flu-like symptoms such as coughing, sore throat and fatigue• Shortness of breath	
5	Are you planning any business or personal travel to any location (International or within Australia) within the next three (3) months?	
6	Optional - Are you, a member of your immediately family, or a member of your household in a high-risk category for developing serious illness from the virus? Please refer to the Department of Health (Commonwealth) website: https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert#if-you-are-at-risk	

If you have answered 'Yes' to any of the above questions, please provide details (type 'N/A' if not applicable):

- I hereby declare the information I have provided is true and correct.
- I confirm my mobile phone number is with my HR Department and up-to-date.
- I confirm I either take my _____ laptop home on a daily basis or have access to a suitable computer/laptop at home that can access _____
- I confirm I have internet access at home.

Signature

Employee Name

Date



Information for employers

People who have returned from a country or region that is at high or moderate risk for COVID-19 should monitor their health closely. If you develop symptoms including a fever and cough you should isolate yourself immediately and urgently seek medical attention. Go to www.health.gov.au/covid19-travellers for the list of at-risk countries.

People who think they may have been in close contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus, should also monitor their health and seek urgent medical attention.

This information sheet should be read in conjunction with the 'What you need to know' and 'Isolation guidance' information sheets found at www.health.gov.au/covid19-resources. Go to www.health.gov.au/covid19-travellers for the current list of higher risk countries.

Can staff go to work?

Specific requirements are in place for people who have returned from a country or region that is at high or moderate risk for COVID-19, or think they may have been in close contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus. Go to www.health.gov.au/covid19-travellers for the list of at-risk countries and isolation requirements.

Employees who are in isolation should alert their employer. Depending on the type of work, and provided the employee is well, they may want to discuss alternative arrangements such as working from home. See the 'Isolation guidance' information sheets at www.health.gov.au/covid19-resources

What should I tell my staff?

Employers should provide information and brief all employees and contract staff, including domestic and cleaning staff where applicable, on relevant information and procedures to prevent the spread of coronavirus. You should inform staff who meet the above criteria that they should remain isolated in their home. Employees should advise their employer if they develop symptoms during the isolation period, particularly if they have been in the workplace. Public health authorities may contact employers in the event an employee is confirmed to have coronavirus.

What precautions should I take when cleaning?

When cleaning, staff should minimise the risk of being infected with coronavirus by wearing gloves and using alcohol-based hand sanitiser before and after wearing gloves. If cleaning rooms or areas of the workplace where a person with a confirmed case of coronavirus or a person in isolation has frequented staff may wish to wear a surgical mask as an added precaution. If a confirmed case of coronavirus or a person in isolation is in a room that cleaning staff need to enter, they may ask them to put on a surgical mask if they have one available.

Can food and water spread coronavirus?

Some coronaviruses can potentially survive in the gastrointestinal tract however, food-borne spread is unlikely when food is properly cooked and prepared. With good food preparation and good hand hygiene, it is highly unlikely that you will become infected with coronavirus through food.

It is unknown at this time if the virus is able to survive in sewerage. Those who work closely with sewerage should take the same precautions as those outlined above for cleaners. Drinking water in Australia is high quality and is well treated. It is not anticipated that drinking water will be affected by coronavirus.

How can we help prevent the spread of coronavirus?

Practising good hand and sneeze/cough hygiene is the best defence against most viruses. You should:

- wash your hands frequently with soap and water, before and after eating, and after going to the toilet
- cover your cough and sneeze, dispose of tissues, and use alcohol-based hand sanitiser
- and if unwell, avoid contact with others (stay more than 1.5 metres from people).

More information

While coronavirus is of concern, it is important to remember that most people displaying symptoms such as fever, cough, sore throat or tiredness are likely suffering with a cold or other respiratory illness—not coronavirus.

For the latest advice, information and resources, go to www.health.gov.au

Call the National Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080. It operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If you require translating or interpreting services, call 131 450.

The phone number of your state or territory public health agency is available at www.health.gov.au/state-territory-contacts

If you have concerns about your health, speak to your doctor.