MASTER ELECTRICIANS AUSTRALIA

Electrical Industry Code of Practice COVID-19

Contents

1.0   Introduction

This Code of Practice has been designed to assist electrical contractors manage the risk of exposure to the COVID-19 virus to their workers, customers and others in or near their work environments.

The suggestions within this code should be considered in conjunction with your businesses risk assessments.

1.1   COVID-19 Background

COVID-19 is part of the Coronavirus family. Coronaviruses are a family of viruses that cause respiratory infections that range from the common cold to more serious diseases and can cause death. COVID-19 was first identified and reported in December 2019 in Wuhan City in China.

1.2   How is COVID-19 spread?

COVID-19 appears to spread from close contact with an infected person or by contact with contaminated surfaces.

Contact with a person is largely by face-to-face contact or between members of the same household. Close contact is having face to face contact for more than 15 mins. COVID-19 is also spread by people when they cough or sneeze.

Close contact occurs in many ways. Common examples are:
- living in the same household or similar environment (i.e. boarding school, hostel)
- direct contact with body fluids
- being in the same room or office for two hours or more
- face-to-face contact

Regarding contact with contaminated surfaces, studies suggest that depending on the surface, COVID-19 may persist from a few hours up to several days. This may vary under different conditions such as the type of surface, temperature, and humidity of the environment. Research is continuing on this aspect of virus behaviour.

1.3   COVID-19 Symptoms

COVID-19 causes mild to severe respiratory illness. The list of identified symptoms is growing as more is understood about the disease, however the most common accepted symptoms are:

- fever
- breathing difficulties and breathlessness
- cough
- sore throat
- fatigue or tiredness

1.4 Hygiene and COVID-19 prevention practices

It is vital all persons in the workplace practice good hygiene at all times, both at and outside of work. Good hygiene practices include:

- encourage workers to download and use the COVIDSafe app
- frequent hand washing or hand sanitising
- limiting contact with others, (avoiding physical contact such as shaking hands or hugs)
- maintaining social distancing (minimum 1.5mtrs between and $4m^2$ space around persons)
- where-ever possible workers will work alone (i.e. not within 1.5mtrs of another person)
- covering mouths while coughing or sneezing
- using disposable tissues when blowing noses
- providing suitable rubbish bins for waste (i.e. foot operated rubbish bins in workshops)
- staggering rest breaks or provide sufficient rest areas so social distancing can be practised
- requiring workers to stay away from the workplace if they are unwell and not fit for work, or have been in contact with someone else suspected of being unwell,
- encouraging workers to seek medical advice from health authorities immediately if there has been a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the workplace or at home
- limiting access to the workplace by other people
- reconsidering work-related travel, and
- implementing other methods of communication rather than face to face meetings, such as phone or teleconferences.

1.5   COVIDSafe App

The Australian Government Department of Health has introduced the COVIDSafe app as a tool to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus by speeding up the work of contact tracing potentially exposed individuals after a positive COVID-19 infection.

The COVIDSafe app is completely voluntary. Downloading the app is something everyone can do to protect themselves, their family and friends and save the lives of Australians. The more Australians connect to the COVIDSafe app, the quicker health authorities can find the virus.

Employers should encourage all staff to download the app and keep active on their phones at all times.

The COVIDSafe app is available from both the Apple App Store and Google Play Store.

1.6   Influenza vaccinations

Whilst there is no vaccine for COVID-19, there is one for influenza. International experience indicates persons who have impaired immune systems and/or are suffering from other health conditions are at increased risk of experiencing more severe COVID-19 symptoms. As such it is recommended all workers have a current flu vaccination to reduce the risk of becoming compromised from influenza. Vaccination certificates to evidence a person has had this year's flu vaccination are available at the time of vaccination. It is recommended workers obtain these and they are kept on the personnel file.

1.7   COVID-19 training

Training about the COVID-19 virus is important so workers understand the hazards, risk, and your controls. Information and training resources are available from both Federal and State/Territory health authorities. Do not use materials from social media sources unless specifically supplied by reputable sources.

The Australian Government Department of Health website has a free on-line COVID-19 Infection Control Training course available. This has excellent information about the virus and practical information about how to control its spread. The course takes between 15 and 30mins and can be accessed at https://covid-19training.gov.au/. Upon successful completion of the course a Certificate of Acknowledgement is available. Having all workers complete this course or similar is recommended as part of your COVID-19 control plan.

1.8   Safety Meetings, Toolbox talks and Prestart meetings

Safety meetings, toolbox talks and daily prestart meetings are vital components of an effective safety management program and should not cease during the COVID-19 pandemic, however the way you conduct these may need to be altered.

Consider if it is feasible to hold meetings using apps such as Zoom and Messenger, or via phone conferences. Most apps have the advantage of being able to record the meeting so other workers can view later where unable to attend.

Where face-to-face meetings are unavoidable, you must ensure social distancing requirements are satisfied (minimum 1.5mtrs between and 4m^2 space around persons) and sanitise the meeting venue both before and after a meeting.

1.9   Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Whilst PPE is lowest on the heirarchy of hazard control methods, it is still extremely useful for COVID-19 to support other control methods. PPE is a vital tool for assisting you manage the increased risks posed by the COVID-19 virus in the workplace.

Employers must provide appropriate PPE for workers where their controls indicate this is required. Typical PPE to protect against infection and prevent the virus spreading, includes;

- Minimum P2 Respirators (reusable or disposable)
- Safety Glasses
- Disposable Gloves
- Alcohol based hand sanitiser
- Alcohol based disposable wipes.

For respirators to be effective, users need to be clean shaven around the areas where the respirator seals. Depending on the type of respirator, moustaches that do not extend beyond the corners of the mouth may be acceptable, but full beards are not acceptable.

Workers with beards need to be consulted about the potential impacts of beards on respirators. Whilst positive pressure respirators that work with beards are available, consideration also has to be given to the potential for airborne particles to become lodged in exposed facial hair that may gain entry to the body once the respirator has been removed.

In some environments extra PPE may be required by the facility operator. For example protective gowns and faceshields may be required if working in medical or aged care environments. The PCBU for the facility will instruct workers about their requirements if applicable.

1.10   Management of PPE

Workers must be trained in how to use the required PPE correctly.

Workers have a responsibility to care and maintain their PPE, so that it remains effective and its life is maximised. PPE should be maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Reusable respirators shall be fully cleaned after each use and stored in a suitable container/location.

PPE should be stored in accordance with manufacturer's instructions in a clean and operational condition.

Repair or discard damaged or defective PPE. PPE that is damaged or lost must be reported to management as soon as practicable.

2.0   Workforce

2.1   Employer obligations

Work Health and Safety (WHS) laws require employers to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of their workers and others at the workplace. This includes providing and maintaining a work environment that is without
risk to health and safety and adequate facilities for workers in carrying out their work, so far as is reasonably practicable.

To comply with the laws, an employer must identify risks in the workplace, and do what is reasonably practicable to eliminate those risks, or where it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate them, minimise those risks.

Key considerations in determining what measures are reasonably practicable include:
- likelihood of the risk occurring
- degree of harm that might result
- availability and suitability of a control measure.

Further information about assessing risks and control measures is available from your State or Territory Code of Practice for managing the work environment and facilities.

Employers must have measures in place to eliminate or manage the risks arising from COVID-19.

To do this, you should keep up to date with the latest COVID-19 information and advice to ensure that any action taken is appropriate. This includes monitoring the information available from the Australian Government Department of Health, State or Territory government departments/agencies and relevant industry associations. The Smartraveller website also has information for those businesses who have staff that travel overseas.

It is not possible to totally eliminate the risk of workers contracting COVID-19 while carrying out work, so you must do all that is reasonably practicable to minimise that risk.

The control measures for your business will depend on the work being carried out by workers and the particular workplaces. Generally:
- you should determine appropriate control measures in consultation with workers, or their representatives, taking into account official information sources
- implement those control measures and clearly communicate them to all workers. Communication should give clear direction and guidance about what is expected of workers
- workers should know when to stay away from the workplace
- what action to take if they become unwell
- what symptoms to be concerned about.

It is important to monitor relevant information sources and update your control measures as information and circumstances change and ensure workers are informed of all changes.

It is important that workers are provided with appropriate PPE, facilities, information, and training on how and why they are required to use them.

2.2   Employee obligations

Work Health and Safety (WHS) laws require workers to follow company procedures, participate in WHS processes and not do any action or inaction that can cause injury or harm.

With respect to COVID-19, workers must understand the requirements of them which include following company policies and procedures, using and maintaining the PPE provided and observing company hygiene practices.

Good hygiene practice includes:
- encourage download and use of the COVIDSafe app
- frequent hand washing or hand sanitising
- limiting contact with others, (avoiding physical contact such as shaking hands or hugs)
- maintaining social distancing (minimum 1.5mtrs between and 4m^2 space around persons)
- where-ever possible workers will work by themselves (i.e. not within 1.5mtrs of another person)
- covering mouths while coughing or sneezing
- using disposable tissues when blowing nose
- using suitable rubbish bins for waste (i.e. foot operated rubbish bins in workshops)
- staggering rest breaks or provide sufficient rest areas so social distancing can be practised
- workers staying away from the workplace if they are unwell and not fit for work, or have been in contact with someone else suspected of being unwell
- seeking medical advice from health authorities immediately if there has been a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the workplace or at home
- limit access to the workplace by other people
- reconsider work-related travel, and
- using other methods of communication rather than face to face meetings, such as phone or teleconferences.

Workers should be reminded they have a duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and to not adversely affect the health and safety of others.

Workers should be provided with a point of contact to discuss their concerns, and have access to support services, including employee assistance programs.

2.3   Working from home

Where it is practicable and suits the needs of the business, employees should continue to work from home until health authorities indicate it is safe for everyone to return to the workplace. Where workers are working from home, employers are required to take reasonable steps to ensure the home work environment is physically and mentally safe. Steps should be put in place to ensure workers do not feel unsupported or alone. Regular phone or video catch-ups and meetings should be arranged to ensure workers are not isolated due to not attending the normal work environment.

2.4   Health screening and monitoring

Monitoring the health of employees is important. Workers should be screened for COVID-19 risk factors and where they exist, should be required to stay away from work until proven they do not have COVID-19. Preferably screening should be conducted before workers arrive at the workplace. Screening can be conducted by phone, text, email or web-based media.

Where screening occurs care must be taken to preserve workers privacy and not made to feel ostracised or victimised with respect to their answers or any treatment required.

Workers should initially be screened using the questions below:

Checklist for screening workers for possible COVID-19 exposure factors	NO	YES
Has the worker or any persons at the workers home, been diagnosed with the COVID-19?		
Has anyone at the workers home arrived from overseas or interstate in the last 14 days?		
Is anyone at the workers home, including the worker, in isolation or quarantine?		
Is there anyone at the workers home, that is unwell and could potentially have COVID-19 (difficulty breathing, coughing, cold like symptoms)?		
Is there anyone at the workers home that has been in contact with anyone with COVID-19?		

An answer of Yes to any of the above questions should be investigated. The worker should not be permitted to commence work until a health official confirms the worker is not carrying COVID-19.

Workers should also be required to inform the employer should the answer to any of these questions change, and it is suggested they be rescreened on a regular basis.

2.5   Vulnerable workers

Health authorities have recognised that some groups in our community are more vulnerable to the severe health effects of COVID-19. The following groups of people have been deemed as vulnerable workers in relation to the COVID-19 virus:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders 50 years and older with one or more chronic medical conditions
- People 65 years and older with a chronic medical condition
- People 70 years and older
- People with compromised immune systems
- People who are pregnant.

If you have any of these workers in your business, you need to consider extra precautions to provide for their safety from COVID-19.

2.6   COVIDSafe and Influenza message to workers

As the country moves closer to staged easing of restrictions across each State and Territory, insert business name are reassessing our COVID-19 controls and management strategy.

We encourage all staff to download and activate the COVIDSafe app. This app will form an important step in our plans to return to business as usual. Whilst we expect the people you live with are free of the virus, we have limited control over whom you may be exposed to during work and no knowledge or control over whom you may be exposed to whilst travelling, walking, shopping etc. The ability for authorities to rapidly locate and test potentially exposed people is an important one and business name expects this ability will assist us to reduce potential COVID-19 exposure in the workplace.

If you have not already done so, business name encourages all workers to have the influenza vaccination this year. Whilst it does not prevent the COVID-19 virus affecting you, international experience has shown people have greater risk of experiencing severe COVID-19 symptoms if they have compromised health due to other illnesses. Having the flu vaccination this year is a positive step you can take towards minimising the chances of experiencing the flu and reducing the chances of severe complications of COVID-19 should you be unfortunate enough to contract the virus.

Whilst both of these control measures are voluntary, business name strongly encourages you to adopt them as they will help us provide a safer workplace for everyone.

To assist us maintain an effective COVID-19 control plan, can you answer the below questions for us:

I have actioned	Yes	No	Comment – if required
COVIDSafe app loaded and active on my phone			
Flu vaccination completed			

2.7   Standard hygiene practices

Infectious agents can be spread in a variety of ways, including:
- breathing in airborne germs from coughs and/or sneezes
- Touching contaminated objects such as handrails and door handles

- Eating contaminated food
- Skin-to-skin contact
- Sharing personal items such as clothing, tools, electronic equipment, or other objects
- Contact with body fluids, pathogens in saliva, urine, fecal matter or blood can be passed to another person's body via cuts or abrasions, or through the mucus membranes of the mouth and eyes
- Maintain social distancing, that is a minimum of 1.5meters between all persons.

It is vital workers practice good hygiene at all times, including during and outside of work hours.

2.8   Education

Educate workers on good health and hygiene practices:
- Do your workers know not to come to work when they are unwell, even if they feel fit to work?
- Look for signs of 'presenteeism'? Are managers and supervisors modelling the correct behaviours or is there a culture of 'soldiering on' that needs to be discussed as a team?
- Have you informed workers about the importance of hand washing?
- Have you trained workers on how to wash their hands (with soap and water for at least 20 seconds) and dry them correctly?
- Have you trained workers on how to correctly use alcohol-based hand sanitiser?
- Inform workers and others when they need to wash their hands. This includes:
  - before and after eating
  - after coughing or sneezing
  - after going to the toilet
  - after changing tasks
  - after touching potentially contaminated surfaces
  - before starting jobs at customer premises
  - after completing jobs at customer premises

- Inform workers of the following good hygiene measures to limit the spread of the virus:
  - cover coughs and sneezes with an elbow or a tissue
  - avoid touching the face, eyes, nose and mouth
  - dispose of tissues hygienically
  - dispose of waste (paper towels, respirators, gloves etc) in appropriate waste containers
  - wash hands before and after smoking
  - clean and disinfect surfaces and shared equipment
  - wash body, hair (including facial hair) and clothes thoroughly every day
  - stay minimum of 1.5 metres away from others
  - don't shake hands and avoid any other close physical contact where possible
  - no spitting
  - put cigarette butts in the bin

- Implement measures, where reasonably practicable, to minimise contact between people:
  - Can you put in a system to provide for cashless transactions?
  - Require workers to minimise contact with others, including customers, where possible

3.0   Vehicles and transporting workers

3.1   Cleaning

Regular internal cleaning of company vehicles should be adopted. Where vehicles are occupied and/or operated by other than the same one operator, they should be sanitised after each use and at the end of the work day. All surfaces that are touched by users or likely to contain particles breathed out should be cleaned. This includes but is not limited to, drivers controls (steering wheel, indicators, gear shift etc), door handles, window controls, radio, mirrors, dashboard, seatbelt, seats and seat adjuster. Passenger areas should also be santised if they have been used.

Refer vehicle manufactuers instructions for products that can be used.

3.2   Drivers/Operators

Where practical vehicles should be assigned a specifc operator. This will reduce the need to sanitise the vehicle controls as sanitisation needs to be completed each time an operator is changed.

Requiring operators to use disposable gloves may be another practical control to reduce the need to sanitise all surfaces.

3.3   Passengers and seating

Where practicable, avoid having multiple persons in the same vehicle. When passengers are carried in a vehicle, they should be seated to maximise the distance between persons and maintain as much social distance as possible. Seats should be assigned to specific workers. Assigned seating may reduce the need to sanitise seats which needs to be completed each time a new passenger is about to occupy a seat.

Where multiple passengers are carried in a vehicle, consideration should be given to requiring them to wear disposable respirators to reduce risk of inhaling another persons expired air and potentially airborne contaminants.

3.4   Air-conditioning and ventilation systems

Every step should be taken to avoid recirculating air within a vehicle, even when only ocupied by one person. Recirculating air has the potential to spread airborne contaminants throughout a vehicle cab. Where practicable vehicle windows should be left open whilst driving to ensure regular air changes within the vehicle.

If air conditioning and ventilation systems are used, the filters need to be serviced regularly.

4.0   Facilities

4.1   Offices

Where it is practicable and suits the business needs, workers should continue to work from home until Health Authorities indicate it is safe to fully reopen offices. Where offices are operating, they must be arranged so minimum social distancing requirements can be satisfied and maintained. A minimum $4m^2$ space should be manitained around every worker in offices.

Regular sanitisation of office spaces should be implemented. Sanitisation should be daily where offices are used by persons not living in the same bubble, but may be more frequent depending on the businesses risk assessment based on the nature of the office environment and how it is utilised.

Air-conditioning systems should be regularly serviced. Particular attention should be paid to sanitising filters, with frequency to be determined by the PCBU in conjunction with a risk assessment.

Where practicable office doors should be latched open to reduce workers having to touch doors and handles. Where it is not practicable or safe to keep doors open, frequent sanitising of door handles and frequently touched surfaces should be implemented. Hand sanitiser may also be placed near frequently used doors for workers to use after operating door handles.

Note; Fire doors should not be latched open.

4.2   Reception areas

Steps should be taken to reduce the number of visitors to business premises and reception areas.

Hand santiser should be available for visitors.

Remove magazines etc from waiting areas as these are a potential contact contamination source.

Screens should be installed to reduce potential for airborne contaminants from expired breath being exchanged between visitors and staff.

Sign-in (visitor register) processes should be changed to eliminate visitors having to physically sign-in. Site specific instructions such as emergency procedure details which are commonly acknowledged during sign-in processes could be text to visitors with the receipt verified by them.

Reception areas should be regularly sanitised throughout the work day. Frequency can be dependent on the frequency of visitors to reception i.e. more frequent the more often visits occur.

Where visitor passes are used, on return they should be placed in a specific receptacle and sanitised before reuse/reissue.

4.3   Amenities

Businesses must ensure workers have access to appropriate amenities.

Amenities include:
- Lunchrooms
- Common areas
- Toilets
- Change rooms.

Amenities should be provided with appropriate sanitisation and hygiene resources, including:
- Hand washing facilities, such as a wash basin, clean running water, soap and paper towels
- Access to hand sanitiser
- Rubbish bins with touch-free lids (e.g. foot pedal bins)
- Appropriate waste management systems.

4.4   Lunchrooms and common areas

Consideration should be given to allow for workers to use lunchrooms and common areas without impinging on social distancing requirements.

Tables and chairs should be restricted and arranged so workers have $4m^2$ personal space around them and do not have to pass within 1.5meters of each other.

Hand washing facilities or hand sanitiser should be available in each lunchroom and a regular sanitisation program for the facility implemented. At a minimum, this should occur after each break time and the end of the work day.

Where sufficient space is not available to maintain social distancing requirements, break times should be staggered so workers can maintain social distancing requirements.

4.5   Toilets, bathrooms and changerooms

Latching open doors to bathrooms may affect building hygiene requirements where toilets are accessed from lunchroom facilities. Where communal toilets are accessed from workshop areas, it may be possible to latch open the main access door and provide privacy with a screen that workers could walk around without having to touch. Toilet doors should not be latched open.

4.6   Lifts

Notices should be attached at all lift doors advising the maximum number of passengers to allow social distancing requirements of $4m^2$ per person.

Lift call and operation buttons need to be sanitised regularly and consideration given to other methods of safe operation of buttons, such as providing hand sanitiser nearby or disposable options such as 'ice block' sticks that can be used on controls and then disposed of into an appropriate recepticle.

4.7   Shared equipment

Use of shared office equipment such as copiers, printers, phones and computers should be minimised as far as practicable. Where shared use cannot be eliminated, sanitisation controls need to be implemented. Consider using controls such as personal issue or disposable stylis for operating touch screen devices.

4.8   Cleaning and sanitising

Current research indicates the COVID-19 virus is destroyed by most standard cleaning products.

Regular cleaning and sanitisation (minimum of twice daily) of frequently touched surfaces such as toilets, door handles, stair handrails, light switches, lift buttons, tabletops and the like is recommended.

5.0   Site work environments

5.1   General principles

Workers should have sufficient workspace to maintain social distancing requirements (min 1.5mtrs between people and $4m^2$ personal space. Where this is not possible, extra precautions shall be implemented such as use of PPE and restricting time periods where workers share the same space.

Avoid sharing tools and equipment wherever possible. For example, drop saws, drills, ladders or elevating work platforms (EWP's) should not be used by more than one worker, unless sanitised first. Where it is not possible to eliminate shared use:

- Provide cleaning products (e.g. alcohol wipes or spray) where the tools and equipment are kept/located
- Ensure users wipe down tools and equipment immediately before and after use
- Ensure users thoroughly wash or sanitise their hands before and after every use.

5.2   Customer advice

Keeping customers and workers informed about your COVID-19 work processes is very important so everyone has a clear understanding of what to expect. Customers are more likely to have confidence in your busness where they understand you have effective controls in place to look after your own workers and others in the customers premises.

Where possible discuss your proceedures with customers before arriving on site. Procedures should address:

- Minimising persons in the work area
- No physical interaction with your workers (i.e. shaking hands)
- Hygiene expectations
- COVID-19 site risk assessment
- Using the COVIDSafe app
- Any COVID-19 Infection control training workers have had
- Process if working in teams
- Process for interacting with other trades/services, if appropriate

This could be addressed via a pre-visit email or key points in a text with link to your procedures on your webpage.

Steps should be taken to reduce the number of persons in the work environment and maintain $4m^2$ space around each worker. Customers should be required to remain outside of work areas and away from workers.

5.3   Work teams

Work teams are unavoidable for some jobs. When required, maintain as much social distancing as possible and limit the time that workers are required to be in close proximity to each other. Use of PPE such as respirators, disposable gloves and safety gloves should also be implemented.

For larger businesses with work teams, it is good practice to assign fixed (permanent) teams of workers. Ideally work teams should not interchange members or assist other teams. Having consistent teams provides a degree of business risk control in that if a team member becomes infected with COVID-19 or quarantined, potentialy only that work team is affected by isolation and not the entire workforce.

5.4   COVID-19 site risk assessment

Prior to workers attending work sites, a site specifc COVID-19 risk assessment should be completed. Risk assessment should identify if COVID-19 high risk factors are present such as:

- Has anyone on-site been diagnosed with COVID-19?
- Has anyone on-site arrived from interstate or overseas in the last 14 days?
- Is anyone on-site in isolation?
- Is anyone on-site unwell or could potentially have COVID-19 (difficulty breathing, coughing, cold like symptoms)?
- Has anyone on-site been in contact with anyone with COVID-19?

If the answer to any question is 'Yes', specific controls to manage the increased COVID-19 exposure risk, need to be documented and agreed by management prior to site visit commencing.

5.5   Documentation and paperwork

Handling of documents between workers and customers should be avoided. Whenever possible documentation should be electronic and emailed to the customer.

Where documents must be handled, it should be minimal, and consideration should be given to using disposable gloves.

5.6   Domestic/residential environments

Workers should wash or sanitise hands when they arrive at site (before starting work), when the job is complete (before leaving site) and before and after any break periods. Basic principle is 'take no infection in, bring no infection out'.

If using customers facilities (tap and sink) for washing, workers should have their own soap and paper towel. **Workers should not use customers towels due to virus transmission risk.**

Avoid touching pets.

Where practicable fittings (power points, light switches, electrical equipment) should be wiped down with sanitising wipes before being handled.

If handling air conditioning filters, extra precautions should be taken due to the potential for contaminants to concentrate in the filter. Disposable gloves and respirators should also be used.

5.7   Commercial/industrial environments

Commercial/Industrial workplaces should have their own COVID-19 control processes in place, these should be discussed with the customer prior to site visit to ensure they do not clash with your procedures and expectations. Where differences are identified, discussion should be had with the customer to agree on a safe approach for your workers on their site.

Consider social distancing requirements 4m^2 clear space around each person and implement controls where this is not possible. Controls may include health screening questions to identify COVID-19 risk factors, use of PPE (masks, gloves, eye protection) and sanitising work area before and after workers have handled equipment.

5.8   Construction work environments

Construction work generally falls into two broad types:
- Smaller projects where the number of different companies/trades at the same time is limited
- Larger projects where multiple companies/trades are present at the same time.

Small projects, for example a single domestic residence construction site, are frequently timed so only one trade/service provider is on site at a time. For these projects you should liaise with the project manager to ensure your workers are the only ones on site. Preferably site visits should occur on different days to other trades/service providers. This allows time for any virus residue that may be present to become non-viable (no longer infectious).

Commonly touched areas should be sanitised before starting work and again when finished. This may be achieved with standard disinfectants or cleaning products.

For larger projects, discussion should be had with the project/site manager regarding their site COVID-19 management plan. Any conflict with your own processes should be discussed and resolved. Some states have a code of practice for large construction projects. Where this is the case, that code of practice should be complied with.

Care should be taken to clearly define workspaces and potential interaction with other trades/service providers.

Use of site amenities, common areas and break times must be agreed on with project/site managers to minimise potential for workers to come into contact with each other.

Visitors should be excluded from work sites.

5.9   Workshop and warehouse environments

Assess workshops and warehouses to ensure social distances can be maintained. Where practical, areas around workstations should be marked to delineate a workers minimum 4m^2 personal space for others.

Shared tools and equipment such as drill presses, metal cutters/folders, welders, pallet jacks and the like should be kept clean and controls sanitised after each use. Warehouse equipment such as forklifts should be treated in the same way as other vehicles as per section 3.0 of this code.

5.10   Aged care facilities

Aged care facilities have strict requirements due to the high risk of negative health outcomes should COVID-19 virus affect their residents. All aged care facilities should have their own COVID-19 risk management systems in place and these need to be complied with to work in these environments.

Most facilities require visitors to site to have had the latest influenza vaccination and may exclude persons from site whom do not have proof of a current vaccination.

To provide service to this sector it is recommended workers have a current vaccination and carry a vaccination certificate. These are available from the clinic or pharmacy at time of vaccination.

Completion of the Australian Government Department of Health COVID-19 Infection Control training course is also recommended and staff should have their Certificate of Acknowledgment available whilst working on-site.

5.11   Working interstate or overseas

The situation regarding border closures within Australia and internationally is fluid and likely to change as the pandemic evolves. If you are considering travel outside of your State/Territory it is recommended you check with health authorities in both your own State/Territory and the one you intend to travel to, before arranging work and travel for current and expected quarantine or isolation requirements.

Web page details for all the Australian Government and State/Territory health departments are listed in scetion 6.1 of this code.

6.0   Appendices

6.1   References

The following websites contain COVID-19 resources and reference material:

Australian Government Department of Health
https://www.health.gov.au/

Australian Government COVID-19 Infection Control training course
https://covid-19training.gov.au/

COVIDSafe app information
https://www.health.gov.au/resources/apps-and-tools/covidsafe-app

Master Electricians Australia
https://www.masterelectricians.com.au/

State and Territory Health departments
ACT   https://health.act.gov.au/
NSW   https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/
NT   https://health.nt.gov.au/
QLD   https://www.health.qld.gov.au/
SA   https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/
TAS   https://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/
VIC   https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/
WA   https://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/

Safe Work Australia COVID-19 resources
https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/covid-19-information-workplaces

6.2   MEA COVID-19 resources

For a full list of MEA COVID-19 resouces, head to:
https://www.masterelectricians.com.au/member-resources/covid-19-customer-procedure-checklists or alternatively click the green headings below to download the following:

COVID-19 JobKeeper Subsidy and Fair Work Act Amendments
Fair Work Act – changes for employers and employees on JobKeeper Wage Subsidy during the COVID-19 pandemic.

COVID-19 2 Person's Restrictions – Workplace
Do you have staff who work together in twos? Have you considered how to manage this with the new government restrictions?

COVID-19 Travelling in Vehicles
Do you have staff whom travel in the same vehicle? Have you considered how to manage staff in these close proximity environments?

Reducing the risk of COVID-19 procedure

The purpose of this procedure is to provide guidelines and information (via Government Departments) to effectively reduce the risk of transmitting COVID-19. This procedure can be customised to include your company name.

Customer/client checklist prior to attending site

This risk assessment checklist may be used in collaboration with the client, prior to attending the site. If required, please download the checklist, save it and send to your customers as an attachment.

COVID-19 Management procedure for customers

This document may be used to customise your own procedure to suit the specific requirements of your business. It is to be provided to customers to explain the 'on-site' processes your company has in place to minimise the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

COVID-19 Advisory Notice – Customer contact precautions

Resource outlining the steps to minimise risk of infection and spread prior to attending the customers premises, commercial obligations and essential company policies and procedures.

COVID-19 Procedure – Working from Home – Employee Safety Checklist

This is a 10-point safety checklist to help employers ensure the safety of the employees temporarily working from home. The checklist also links to State and Territory guidelines for managing work environments.

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For additional information and resources
call 1300 889 198 or masterelectricans.com.au