

Safe Business Solutions, as your health and safety partner, want to provide you with the latest updates on Novel Coronavirus 2019 (2019-NCoV) and information to supplement your current health and safety manuals.

## **UPDATE**

Coronaviruses are a large and diverse family of viruses which include the common cold, severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS). In January 2020, officials identified a new coronavirus called novel coronavirus or 2019-nCoV.

According to the New Zealand Ministry of Health as of 6:00 pm Monday 10 February there are no confirmed cases of 2019-NCoV in New Zealand. "The likelihood of an imported case in New Zealand is high, however the likelihood of a widespread outbreak remains low." SBS recommends that due to this risk companies review their current pandemic and business continuity plans.

## **SAFE PRACTICES**

Companies should encourage employees to increase their preventative health practices including:

- Covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze
- Immediately putting used tissue in a rubbish bin
- Washing and drying hands often, especially after coughing or sneezing – use soap
- Stay away from others if you're sick

The Ministry of Health has produced posters that can be printed and posted in your workplace:

[https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/protect\\_yourself\\_against\\_coronavirus\\_poster\\_v5.pdf](https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/protect_yourself_against_coronavirus_poster_v5.pdf)

Employees that experience flu-like symptoms and have recently been traveling or in contact with people who have been traveling should be seen by a doctor before returning to work.

## **PLANNING**

Businesses should also prepare for the remote possibility of a widespread outbreak by developing plans for the following:

- high numbers of workers away due to illness or caring for dependants
- significant pressure on the health system
- disruption to supplies of goods and services (due to disruption in supply chain, or the impact of the pandemic on suppliers of these goods and services)
- national and international travel restrictions
- restrictions on public gatherings
- restrictions on, or disruption to public transport
- closure of schools
- social distancing measures put in place (for example: increasing distance between workstations, encouraging people to keep a distance of at least a metre from others, working from home).

## **BUSINESS CONTINUITY**

Finally, business continuity plans should be developed to cover:

- How you will maintain your essential services or activities with high numbers of staff absence over an extended period.
- What essential goods and services you rely on and how you will manage any disruptions to supply.
- How you can implement alternative work practices in your workplace (for example, social distancing measures, remote working capability).
- What services will need additional support to meet a surge in demand (for example, IT support services).
- How you can protect your workers and reduce the risk of spread of the pandemic influenza virus in your workplace.

If you have any questions about this information or require assistance in developing business continuity plans please feel free to reach out to us at 0508 424 723 or [info@safebusiness.co.nz](mailto:info@safebusiness.co.nz).

With information taken from the World Health Organization (<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>) and the New Zealand Ministry of Health (<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov>) websites.