

|  |
| --- |
| Staff information - Coronavirus (COVID-19) Emergency Accommodation program |
| Last updated: 6 May 2020 |

The coronavirus (COVID-19) Emergency Accommodation (CEA) program provides hygienic, safe and secure accommodation for Victorian frontline workers who are required to self-quarantine or self-isolate, should they be unable to do so in their home.

## How will the program work?

If you are required to self-quarantine or self-isolate the CEA program will organise, in partnership with your employer, suitable accommodation within the Melbourne CBD or other metropolitan and regional areas. Workers will be accommodated, where possible, within reasonable proximity to their usual home or workplace. Workers cannot choose their accommodation or the rating of the accommodation they will be provided.

Accommodation will also be available to frontline hospital and paramedic workers regularly operating in an environment with consistent exposure to coronavirus (COVID-19) patients who require accommodation on compassionate grounds and who cannot safely isolate at home because they live with people who are at-risk or other healthcare workers.

## Who is eligible for CEA emergency accommodation support?

The following frontline workers are eligible for emergency accommodation support in three categories:

* + Public and private hospital clinical or non-clinical healthcare workers
	+ Paramedics and patient transport officers
	+ Frontline workers in hospital laboratories
	+ Victoria Police workforce
	+ Youth Justice workforce
	+ Metropolitan Fire Brigade officers
	+ Country Fire Authority Emergency Medical Response officers
	+ Victoria Corrections workforce
	+ Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation workforce
	+ Frontline workers in supported accommodation for people with a disability
	+ Public sector residential aged care workforce
	+ Community based pharmacy workforce
	+ Workers in primary care settings

**Category 1:** Frontline workers with **unprotected exposure to coronavirus** (COVID-19) or who have been directed to self-isolate by their employer and who cannot safely self-isolate at home.

**Category 2:** Frontline workers who have a **confirmed diagnosis** of coronavirus (COVID-19) and who cannot safely self-quarantine at home.

**Category 3:** Frontline hospital and paramedic workers regularly operating in an environment with **consistent exposure to coronavirus (COVID-19) patients** who require accommodation on compassionate grounds or those who cannot safely isolate at home because they live with people who are at-risk or other healthcare workers. All categories include non-clinical hospital staff such as orderlies, clerks, food services staff and cleaners who work on hospital wards. Emergency accommodation is only available for the frontline worker, not for their family members or housemates.

## When do workers have to self-quarantine or self-isolate?

Consistent with public health advice, self-isolation is required for a period of 14 days if there is close contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19).

If the recommended infection control precautions have been taken while caring for a suspected or confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19), such as using the recommended personal protective equipment (PPE), it is **not** considered to be a close contact and self-isolation is **not required**. Refer to [COVID-19-Guidelines for health services and general practitioners](https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/health-services-and-general-practitioners-coronavirus-disease-covid-19) for the complete definition of close contact.

If a worker has been diagnosed with coronavirus (COVID-19) self-quarantine is required. The department will advise when a confirmed case can be released from quarantine.

For healthcare workers choosing to self-distance on due to consistent exposure to COVID-19 patients (category 3) there is no set time and should be decided in conjunction with the healthcare organisation’s human resources lead.

## When is accommodation unsuitable for self-isolation or self-quarantine?

The home environment may not be suitable for self-isolation or self-quarantine if the worker lives with people identified in an at-risk group, such as:

* + people over 65 years of age
	+ people who are immunosuppressed or have an underlying chronic health condition
	+ pregnant women, particularly from 28 weeks gestation
	+ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The home environment may also be unsuitable for self-isolation or self-quarantine if the worker shares a house with other frontline workers.

## How do I access the CEA emergency accommodation?

Frontline workers employed by a Health Service, Ambulance Victoria, Corrections Victoria, Youth Justice, Victoria Police, Metropolitan Fire Brigade or Country Fire Authority Emergency Medical Response officers, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOS), or are part of the public sector residential aged care workforce or work in supported accommodation for people with a disability can access this program through your direct line manager or your Human Resources department who will assess your eligibility and directly arrange your emergency accommodation.

If you are small organisation or practice without an in-house Human Resources team or a sole practitioner or trader in community-based pharmacy or primary care settings, please call 1800 675 398 and press the option for accommodation.

## Other key information about the CEA emergency accommodation

* + You cannot choose your accommodation or the star rating of the accommodation to be provided.
	+ For those exposed to coronavirus or that are coronavirus positive, meals will be provided, delivered to door (three per day). Allergies and special dietary requirements will be met.
	+ Healthcare workers accommodated on compassionate grounds due to working in environments that involve consistent risk of exposure to coronavirus will be in accommodation that will allow self-catering. You will be required to remain in isolation and follow the “stay at home” restrictions.
	+ For their safety, friends and family will not be able to visit whilst you are in self-isolation.
	+ You will not be able to attend work if you are in isolation due to coronavirus exposure or are coronavirus positive.
	+ The CEA program is for frontline workers who voluntarily choose to self-isolate in a hotel rather than at home, or where they are required to self-quarantine after being diagnosed with coronavirus (isolation diagnosis direction) and are not able to safely do so at home.
	+ You can choose to self-isolate or self-quarantine in your home with extra precautions in place to manage the risk of coronavirus transmission to others.

## Additional information

For more information visit. www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au

Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.
© State of Victoria, Australia, Department of Health and Human Services, May 2020.