



Frequently Asked Questions: COVID-19

Kalyra staff

updated 31 March 2020

***NEW**

What about resident laundry that usually is done by family members?

Families are able to continue doing resident's laundry at home. However, we ask that they do not enter the home to collect it but rather arrange a time via phone to pick it up from Reception (one of our team members will need to bring the laundry to the front entrance/reception area).

What if I have a chronic health condition?

It is important to continue to practice good hygiene and infection control measures. Please contact your manager or Human Resources for specific advice if you feel your condition puts your health at significant risk.

What about surgical masks?

Most people will not benefit from wearing a surgical mask. Masks are of benefit to people who are sick so they don't cough on others. We don't want anyone with cold or flu symptoms near our aged care homes. For more information on [masks from the Department of Health](#).

What happens if an outbreak occurs?

Staff, residents and families will be notified if a case of COVID-19 occurs. Kalyra will enact its comprehensive response plan.

What about personal protective equipment?

We have appropriate supply of personal protective equipment to deal with infectious conditions such as COVID-19 and gastro which will be provided to staff if required.

Will there be additional cleaning of Kalyra facilities?

Yes, we have already implemented additional cleaning measures at our residential aged care facilities.

Is Kalyra in “lockdown”?

Kalyra is not in a “clinical” lockdown due to an outbreak. Kalyra is in an “operational” lockdown to protect residents. No visitors or volunteers are allowed to enter our residential aged care facilities. Residents are not to leave unless on an essential medical or dental reason. This decision, over and above government requirements, will be reviewed on 8 April 2020.

Full clinical lockdown occurs when an outbreak is suspected and involves very strict conditions with no visitors and care management with residents staying within their rooms for the required period across the site.

How can I practice social distancing at work?

Maintain a distance of 1.5m between people wherever possible at all times or 2sqm per person. The only reason you would be within 1.5m of another person is because you are delivering clinical care.

Is the annual flu vaccine mandatory?

Yes. Staff must receive the 2020 influenza vaccination by 1 May to work in or visit an aged care facility and you will not be paid or be allocated any shifts if you have not complied. This is a directive from the Federal Government for Residential Care staff. Kalyra requires all staff to have an influenza vaccine by 1 May 2020 as this is in the best interests of our community as a whole and we have set up the vaccination program accordingly. We do not want staff in other areas to put community clients, residents or tenants at risk of influenza.

What if my child’s school closes? Can I bring my children to work?

No. To protect the health of our Kalyra community you will need to find alternative childcare arrangements if schools are closed. Please talk to your manager as soon as possible to look at your roster options.

What if I work at more than one site or for another employer?

If you work at more than one Kalyra site (including residential and Help at Home) OR for another employer, you must complete the disclosure form (link to be sent via Jessie separately) by 31 March.

What about my annual leave?

Annual leave requests will not be accepted for the next three months to ensure we have as many people as possible able to support our residents and clients. Current annual leave requests will be reviewed by line managers and Human Resources.

What if I need more supplies like hand sanitiser, toilet paper or masks?

As an essential service we are working hard to maintain appropriate supplies including medical consumables and sanitiser/cleaning products to support our residents and clients as our first priority. It is very disappointing that some of our stock has already been removed from offices/sites. This puts the most vulnerable residents and clients at risk and will be reported to SA Police—any theft is a crime and breaches our values.

What about Federal Government’s “retention bonus” for aged care workers.?

The Federal Government has announced a \$234.9 million for a COVID-19 'retention bonus' to ensure the continuity of the workforce for aged care workers in both residential and home care.

- This will mean a payment of up to \$800 after tax per quarter – paid for two quarters – for direct care workers.
- Two payments of up to \$600 after tax per quarter – for two quarters – for those who provide care in the home.

Payments will be delivered to providers to pay their workers and part-time workers will be paid a pro-rata rate.

More information will follow soon.

What about workers with visa work restrictions?

New visa arrangements are available now to support the aged care workforce. Aged care providers can now temporarily offer more hours to international students to help ensure the care of older Australians.

These changes apply to both residential and home care.

They are temporary measures and are designed to address any staff shortages caused by COVID-19. We need to support workforce continuity in case a large part of the workforce is unable to come to work. Providers will ensure all staff are adequately trained. For more information, visit www.homeaffairs.gov.au.

Will I have access to Government payments if I can't go to work?

Workers who are unable to attend work because they have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or who are in isolation may qualify for Sickness Allowance (or JobSeeker Payment from 20 March 2020) if they do not have any employer leave entitlements, such as sick leave, and they meet general eligibility requirements in respect of residency and income and asset tests.

Young people under the age of 22 who are unable to attend work because they have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or who are in isolation may qualify for Youth Allowance if they meet the same requirements. For more information, visit Services Australia www.servicesaustralia.gov.au.

I am worried about coming to work—what should I do?

Talk to your manager. It is normal to feel some anxiety during times of uncertainty. If you are struggling emotionally in any way or you would like advice in relation to a family member the [ACCESS](#) Program is available to you at any time. This service is totally anonymous and confidential.

Where can I find more information about COVID-19 and aged care?

- For the latest advice, information and resources, go to www.health.gov.au.
- Call the National Coronavirus Help 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.
- [Download the fact sheet](#) for residential aged care workers from the Department of Health.
- Visit the [Kalyra COVID-19 webpage](#)