



Q & A – Your questions answered

COVIDSafe Consultation – A Safety Leadership Approach

July 2021







Ai Group offers a range of multidisciplinary Work Health Safety Consulting Services.

Contact us to discuss how we can help to make your business a safe workplace.



For all your workplace related questions, please call 1300 55 66 77

Stay up-to-date with the latest advice and resources on our dedicated COVID-19 web-page. Visit <https://www.aigroup.com.au/business-services/covid19-coronavirus> for more information.





Help stop the spread of COVID-19:

- Check in everywhere, every time - all businesses and workplaces that remain open are required to use the [Victorian Government QR Code Service](#), unless an exemption applies.
- Stay up to date with the [latest exposure sites](#)
- Get tested if you are ill - anyone with COVID-19 [symptoms](#) should [get tested](#) immediately.
- Support workers to get vaccinated - appointments can be booked [here](#).
- Update your COVIDSafe Plan - every business with on-site operations must have a [COVIDSafe Plan](#). It's your list of safety actions.

For more information go to coronavirus.vic.gov.au

Do I need to consult with your workers on health and safety matters relating to COVID-19.

- You must consult when:
- assessing the risk COVID-19 presents to the health and safety of workers
- deciding on control measures to eliminate or minimise the risk of exposure to COVID-19
- deciding on the adequacy of facilities for the welfare of workers (e.g. hand washing facilities)
- proposing other changes to the workplace as a result of COVID-19 which may affect health and safety.



Do I need to consult with your workers on health and safety matters relating to COVID-19.

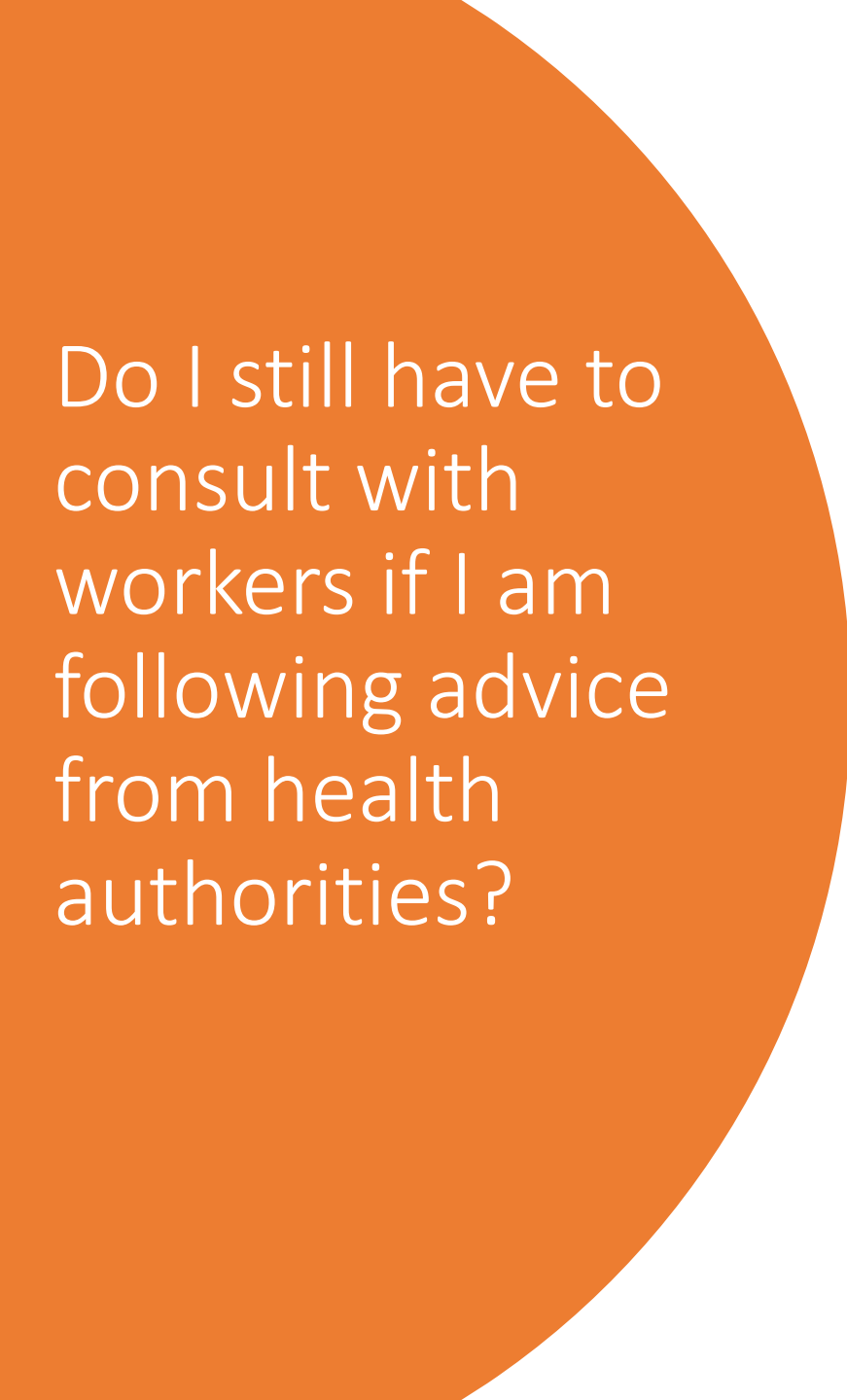
- If you and your workers have agreed to procedures for consultation, the consultation must be in accordance with those procedures.
- If workers are represented by Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) you must include them in the consultation process.



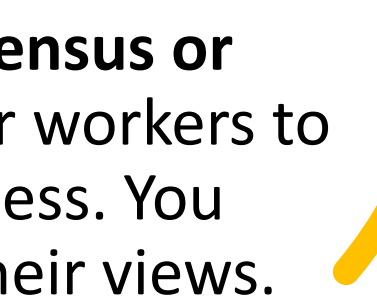
Do I need to consult with your workers on health and safety matters relating to COVID-19.

- You must allow workers to raise and express their views on work health and safety issues that may arise directly or indirectly because of COVID-19.
- You must genuinely take the views of workers into account when making decisions and advise them of your decision



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Do I still have to consult with workers if I am following advice from health authorities?

- You must consult with workers about all the things you are doing to identify and manage the risks to keep workers safe during the pandemic. Workers are most likely to know about the risks of their work, including new risks introduced as a result of COVID-19 control measures. Involving them will help build commitment to this process and any changes you make at the workplace.
 - Consultation does not require **consensus or agreement** but you must allow your workers to be part of the decision making process. You must genuinely take into account their views.
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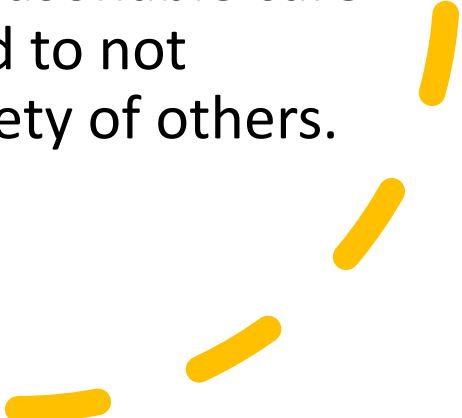
Some or all of my workers are working from home, does consultation have to be face to face?

- When you or your workers are working from home you may not be able to consult with them face to face.
- You must find other ways of consulting with them such as emails, video conferences or calling workers individually to discuss their concerns.






What do my
workers
need to
know?


- You must provide workers with clear direction and guidance about what is expected including:
 - when to stay away from the workplace
 - what action to take if they become unwell
 - what symptoms to be concerned about, and
 - that workers have a duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and to not adversely affect the health and safety of others.
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What other information should I share with my workers?

- You must share relevant information with workers about health and safety issues, such as any COVID-19 WHS policies you have put in place or updated to taken account of the pandemic conditions (e.g. how to report any incidents) and any changes to emergency plans.
- You must provide this as early as possible and ensure that it can be easily understood by your workers.
- You should also remind workers about contacts to discuss their concerns such as HSRs, and access to support services, including employee assistance programs (EAP).



Is there
anyone else I
should be
talking to?

- talk to your suppliers about how to safely manage deliveries
 - talk to other businesses that share your worksite or premises about how to manage shared areas such as lifts, bathroom and kitchen facilities
 - talk to other businesses that share your worksite or premises about what you will do if there is a case, or suspected case, of COVID-19 at the worksite or premises, and
 - talk to other businesses you interact with, for example, the onsite food van or the contract cleaner.
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Resources

- Consultation: A guide for Victorian workplaces – Worksafe Victoria
- This guide provides information on:
 - what matters employers must consult about
 - who needs to be consulted
 - what consultation involves
 - different ways that consultation can occur
 - developing consultation procedures
- <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/resources/consultation-guide-victorian-workplaces>





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