

## COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### Important Contact Information

**Bedford's COVID-19 Helpline:**

**0429 135 448, 0429 124 648, 0413 743 203**

**(8:30 in the morning until 4:30 in the afternoon)**

**Bedford's COVID-19 Help email:**

[covidhelp@bedfordgroup.com.au](mailto:covidhelp@bedfordgroup.com.au)

**The Government's COVID-19 Helpline:**

**1800 020 080**

**(Operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)**

Below are some answers to questions that you might have about what Bedford is doing to help keep everyone safe and well during COVID-19. The Government tell us what we need to do and what we ask everyone to help us with.

Sometimes the Government changes what we need to do at home, when we are outside, like when we go shopping, and also at work.

We are always listening to what the Government puts in place and what they ask Bedford to do. The FAQs here are correct today, 4 August 2021 and we will update them and sent them to you if anything changes.

**Question: What is Bedford doing about COVID-19?**

**Answer:** We are keeping things really clean and are talking to everyone about hygiene, social distancing and how to keep themselves safe.

Our COVID team has regular meetings to make sure we know if the Government changes anything that we need to do at Bedford. We will let you know about all of these changes.

**Question:** Has anyone at Bedford caught COVID-19?

**Answer:** No one at Bedford has been told that by a Doctor they have COVID-19.

**Question:** What should I do if I think you have been near someone who has COVID-19, or I think I might have COVID-19?

**Answer:** Call your doctor or Health Direct on 1800 022 222 and they will help you with what you need to do and where you can get tested to check if you have COVID-19.

Don't come to Bedford but please call our helpline team on 0429 135 448, 0429 124 648 or 0413 743 203 or email us on [covidhelp@bedfordgroup.com.au](mailto:covidhelp@bedfordgroup.com.au) and let us know how you are and especially if you are told to stay home and keep away from other people (isolate).

**Question:** What should I do if I have been tested and told that I have COVID-19?

**Answer:** The Government will get in touch with you and tell you all the things you need to do.

As soon as you can, please let us know and call our helpline team on 0429 135 448, 0429 124 648 or 0413 743 203 or email us on [covidhelp@bedfordgroup.com.au](mailto:covidhelp@bedfordgroup.com.au)

**Question:** What will Bedford do if I have to stay home and keep away from other people (isolate)?

**Answer:** We will write down that you are away. Then we will follow the government rules about COVID-19.

**Question:** What should I do if I live with other people and have been told that I must stay home (isolate).

**Answer:** You will need to stay home and let us know. You can still get paid if you have annual leave and you can ask your Bedford supervisor about getting paid.

Any other people who live in your home might have to isolate too, so you will need to tell them you have been asked to isolate and they will need to talk to someone from the Government and ask what they need to do.

The Government's COVID-19 Helpline: 1800 020 080  
(Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

**Question: Do I need to wear a mask at work?**

**Answer:** At Bedford we are doing what the Government asks us to do. Masks are important to help stop the spread of COVID-19 so if you feel ok wearing a mask, that will help to keep everyone safe.

The Government might tell us that we all have to wear masks at work, but if that happens we will let you know.

**Question: Will Bedford close?**

**Answer:** Bedford does not want to close, but sometimes the Government tells us that we should. We had to close last year when COVID-19 was first found in Australia and we have closed parts of Bedford since then. This includes a few weeks ago when Employees couldn't come to work.

We are always listening to what the Government tells us we need to do, and as soon as everyone is allowed to come back to work, we let you know.

We really want to make sure that you can come to work safely and that everyone is safe at work.

**Question: How does Bedford decide what parts of Bedford will keep open or close?**

**Answer:** We always want to keep as much of Bedford open as we can, but we must make the changes that the Government tells us.

We don't usually know what is going to change or when anything will change. So, the Government tells us, we listen to the new rules and have to decide what we need to do in separate areas of Bedford. This means that one area of Bedford may be closed while a different area is open.

We know this might be a little bit confusing, but it is the best way to keep everyone at Bedford safe.

If you want to talk to someone about if you can work or when you can come back to work, any another questions you have about COVID, you can talk with one of our COVID-19 Helpline team on 0429 135 448 or 0429 124 648 or 0413 743 203 or email the Helpline team on [covidhelp@bedfordgroup.com.au](mailto:covidhelp@bedfordgroup.com.au)

**Question: Are Bedford CAL programs still running?**

**Answer:** The Government tells us that we can still have our CAL programs, so you can come to those. Some of the programs might be a bit different, but it will still be a fun time and you can keep in touch with your friends at Bedford.

If the Government tells us we need to close our CAL programs for a little while, we will let you know.

**Question: Is Day Options still running?**

**Answer:** You can continue to come to Day Options programs. If these Day Options programs have to close we will let you know.

**Question: What does social distancing mean?**

**Answer:** At the moment, the Government tells us that we don't have to be 1.5 metres away from anyone else (one and a half times the length of your arm). Instead the space we are in needs to be big enough to keep everyone as safe as possible. This space is one person for every 2 square metres. Ask your PTO or Supervisor, to show you how big that space is if you need any help working it out.

We are still not allowed to shake hands, give 'high fives', hug or sit too close to other people. You can still wave and say hello to everyone though.

**Question: Should you wear a mask on buses, trains, or taxis?**

**Answer:** The government tells us that it's a good idea to wear a mask, because sometimes there are a lot of other people on the same bus or train - so, it's a very good idea to wear a mask.

You can buy a mask at a chemist or the supermarket. You will need to check if you can wear the type of mask you buy for all of the day or if you need to change it. Some masks you can wear all day and just wash them every day.

We are all getting used to the QR codes, so it's a good idea that you use your phone to scan the code whenever you visit somewhere new. This will help the Government to find out if you have visited a place where someone with COVID has been.

**Question:** Can my Bedford Support Worker, who helps at home and when I'm out of the house (like shopping), still come to my home?

**Answer:** Yes. The Government tells us that they are essential to continue to support you, so they will continue to visit and support you. If the Government tells us that we can't do that, we will let you know.

**Question:** Should I stay at home to try to keep someone safe, if there is someone in my family who is a bit older (over 70) or gets sick more easily?

**Answer:** It's up to you but if you do, Bedford will pay you for two days – this is called Carer's Leave. You can only ask for Carer's Leave once a year. If you have any Annual (Holiday) Leave saved up, you can ask to be paid from there. You can also decide to not come to work and also not get paid – this is called Leave Without Pay.

If you are not sure about how much leave or what type of leave you can use, ask your PTO or DSW and they will help you work this out.

**Question:** What happens if I do not have any leave and the Government has told me to stay at home (isolate)?

**Answer:** Call Centrelink to find out what payments you might be able to ask for. The Government pays different amounts of money to support who have to stay home and you should call or ask the person that helps you with your money to call Centrelink on 180 22 66.

**Question:** What should I do if I have an NDIS Plan meeting booked?

**Answer:** If you have to meet with Bedford or the NDIS about your plan and the Government has told us that we are not allowed to meet people in person, then you can talk to your NDIS Planner on the phone.

If your appointment is with Bedford, we will call you.

If your appointment is with the NDIS, they will get in touch with you. They might also be able to make your plan last longer, so that you don't have to meet with them for a while.

You can also look at the NDIS website for help - [www.ndis.gov.au](http://www.ndis.gov.au)

**Question:** My support worker, who doesn't work at Bedford, can't come to help me - can Bedford help?

**Answer:** Call our COVID-19 Helpline team on 0429 135 448, 0429 124 648 or 0413 743 203 or email them on [covidhelp@bedfordgroup.com.au](mailto:covidhelp@bedfordgroup.com.au) and someone will talk with you about it.

**Question:** What can I do if I have to stay at home?

**Answer:** Call our COVID-19 Helpline team on 0429 135 448, 0429 124 648 or 0413 743 203 or email them on [covidhelp@bedfordgroup.com.au](mailto:covidhelp@bedfordgroup.com.au) and someone will bring you a copy of our workbook that has a lot of interesting things to do in it.

**Question:** What can I do if I have to stay home and don't have any food?

**Answer:** You can go for a quick visit to the supermarket on your own (make sure you wear a mask), or if you can't leave home, you could ask a friend or someone from your family to get some shopping for you.

You can also get help from places like Foodbank or the Salvos on the internet.

- Foodbank [foodbank.org.au](http://foodbank.org.au)
- Salvos [salvationarmy.org.au](http://salvationarmy.org.au)

**Question:** What should I do if I'm home on my own and need tablets or other medication?

**Answer:** If friends or family can't help, call your chemist and they may be able to bring your tablets to your home. It's a good idea to have the telephone number for your chemist handy - maybe on your fridge.

**Question:** What should I do if I was at a place and I find out a person with COVID had been there too at the same time (exposure site).

**Answer:** It's a good idea to use your phone to scan the QR code and if you do that, the Government will get in touch with you and tell you what you need to do.

The South Australian Health Department website has [a list of locations](#), and what day and time is important. If you were at one of the locations, but not during the important time, you don't need to worry and can come to work or do everything else, as usual.

If you are unsure about what to do, call the COVID-19 Helpline team on 0429 135 448 or 0429 124 648 or 0413 743 203 during work time, or email the Helpline team on [covidhelp@bedfordgroup.com.au](mailto:covidhelp@bedfordgroup.com.au) and they will help you work out what you need to do.

**Question:** I checked the South Australian Health website and think I was at an exposure site during the important date and times. What do I need to do?

**Answer:** This will depend on what the Government thinks the risk is of you catching COVID-19. You can check the SA Health website and look at the different levels of risk. You will also need to call or email the COVID Helpline on 0429 135 448 or 0429 124 648 or 0413 743 203 during work time or email the Helpline team on [covidhelp@bedfordgroup.com.au](mailto:covidhelp@bedfordgroup.com.au)

If you look at the SA Health website and are not sure what to do, you can also ask the Helpline.

**Question:** My support worker, or someone I know, was at an exposure site - do I need to get a COVID test or isolate?

**Answer:** No. You will only need to get a test and isolate if the support worker or someone you know has COVID.

**Question:** Do I need to take leave if Bedford has a lockdown?

**Answer:** Bedford may need to stand down staff and employees in the Government tells us there is a lockdown.

At the beginning of COVID, you could get JobKeeper but the Government doesn't pay that now. If this happens, you may want to apply for leave to continue getting paid.

**Question:** Will I need to pay money from my NDIS Plan if I can't come to work or do activities during a lockdown?

**Answer:** Everyone's NDIS Plan is different and you will have to check or if you have someone who helps you with paying your bills to check in your Service Agreement.

**Question:** What if I have any other questions or need help to understand about COVID-19?

**Answer:** Call our COVID-19 Helpline team on 0429 135 448, 0429 124 648 or 0413 743 203 or email them on [covidhelp@bedfordgroup.com.au](mailto:covidhelp@bedfordgroup.com.au). You can only do this while they are at work from 8:30 in the morning to 4:30 in the afternoon and only during the week on Monday to Friday.