



CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for carers

17 April 2020

Table of contents

1	What is coronavirus disease (COVID-19)?	2
2	What are the symptoms of coronavirus disease (COVID-19)?.....	2
3	How is COVID-19 spread?	2
4	Who is at risk of developing COVID-19?	2
5	What do I need to do if I fall into the risk groups mentioned?.....	2
6	Where can I get more information on COVID-19?	3
7	The child in my care is visibly upset and anxious about Coronavirus. How can I support them? .	3
8	Will the children still need to go day care or school?	3
9	If the child in my care is sick, can I still take them to the doctors or hospital?	4
10	How can I support children with complex needs?	4
11	How can I protect myself from contracting COVID-19?.....	4
12	What is someone in my household has COVID-19? What about the child in my care?.....	4
13	What is self-isolation? How do we do this?.....	4
14	What is social distancing?	5
15	Is respite care still available to my family/household?.....	5
16	Can children still see their birth families during this pandemic?	5
17	Will Anglicare Victoria visit our house during this pandemic?	5

1 What is coronavirus disease (COVID-19)?

This is a virus that can cause an infection in people, including a severe respiratory illness. It has not been detected before this outbreak, which originated in the Wuhan province of China in December 2019.

The World Health Organisation has declared the new strain of coronavirus, called COVID-19, a global public health emergency. The federal government has announced a pandemic, and has currently enacted an Australian Emergency Response Plan.

2 What are the symptoms of coronavirus disease (COVID-19)?

The most common symptoms reported include:

- Fever
- Breathing difficulties such as breathlessness
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Fatigue or tiredness

3 How is COVID-19 spread?

The spread of coronavirus disease occurs through close contact with an infected person, mostly face-to-face or within a household. Although it can be spread from a cough or sneeze in droplets for a few metres, it cannot be carried for long distances in the air so we should all go about our lives as normal.

People of all ages can be infected by coronavirus disease. Older people, and people with pre-existing medical conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, and heart disease) appear to be more vulnerable to becoming severely ill with the virus.

4 Who is at risk of developing COVID-19?

People who:

- Have been in contact with a person with COVID-19
- Have visited or returned from international travel in the last 14 days.
- Are older or have underlying illnesses that make them more vulnerable to respiratory disease, including those with diabetes, chronic lung disease, kidney failure, people with suppressed immune systems.

5 What do I need to do if I fall into the risk groups mentioned?

Those at risk are advised to:

- stay at home (self-quarantine) for 14 days after returning from international travel or after the last contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus
- avoid public settings - this means you should not attend work, school, childcare or university or go to other public places and should not use public transport or taxis

- monitor your health
- if you develop symptoms, isolate yourself and seek medical attention. Please call your doctor, your local emergency department or the Department of Health and Human Services dedicated coronavirus line on 1800 675 398. Tell the person when you call where you have travelled or who you have been in contact with.

If you are at risk of having the infection, a sample will be taken from your nose and throat and that sample will be tested at a laboratory to determine if you have COVID-19.

6 Where can I get more information on COVID-19?

The Australian and Victorian Governments are working around the clock with international agencies to respond to the outbreak of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and to keep the Victorian community safe.

For further information and to keep up to date with the latest information, please refer to:

[The Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services advice](#)

[The Australian Government Department of Health advice](#)

[Better Health Victoria](#)

[World Health Organisation](#)

[Travel information regarding COVID-19](#)

7 The child in my care is visibly upset and anxious about Coronavirus. How can I support them?

It is likely some children will be aware of this situation. To help support children in your care ensure you are:

- Talking to them about facts of the virus and provide them information in a way that is age appropriate for the children in your care. You may need to approach this in different ways for different age groups including the use of technology i.e. SMS or online messaging services.
- Aware of your own behaviour as children easily pick up cues from the environment and adults around them and may further cause anxiety.
- Checking in with them and their feelings. This is vital to ensure they are being listened to and to help them process and express how they are feeling.
- Able to have a break from online activities and ongoing news. This is an opportunity to create more family time to cook together or play board games.

8 Will the children still need to go day care or school?

The day care centre or school will communicate with you directly the status of the school being open or closed. Victorian government schools have moved to remote and flexible learning for Term 2, however

there are exceptions to this for vulnerable children including those in OOHC. This is best discussed with your case worker and the child's school.

9 If the child in my care is sick, can I still take them to the doctors or hospital?

You can still access these essential services for your children if they are sick and require immediate health attention. Contact your GP for an appointment or in an emergency, call 000. Please ensure you are aware of medical centre or hospital safety requirements for infection control. If you are concerned that you, or a child in your care are exhibiting symptoms of Coronavirus, please call the Department of Health and Human Services dedicated coronavirus line on 1800 675 398.

10 How can I support children with complex needs?

Ensure you communicate with the team at Anglicare about any concerns you may have to ensure you are set up with the right support for you and your household. Ensure you have detailed advice from child's doctor to keep them safe especially as some children may be vulnerable to COVID-19.

11 How can I protect myself from contracting COVID-19?

- Wash hands often with soap and running water, for at least 20 seconds. Dry with paper towel or hand dryer.
- Try not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow.
- Isolate yourself at home if you feel sick. If you take medication ensure you have adequate supplies.
- Phone your GP first if you need medical attention. They will tell you what to do.
- Buy an alcohol-based hand sanitiser with over 60 per cent alcohol.

12 What is someone in my household has COVID-19? What about the child in my care?

Ensure the person in your household who has tested positive has all the medical care and support required from your GP and let the team at Anglicare Victoria know to support where possible. Make sure others in the household also get tested quickly so you or others can get the medical help you need and ensure that you and the children are well supported.

Contact the Information Hotline on 1800 983 006 for 24/7 advice about COVID-19.

13 What is self-isolation? How do we do this?

Self-isolation requires you to avoid contact with other people and stay home for 14 days. You and your household will be required to do this if you:

1. Have recently returned from overseas
2. Have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19

3. or anyone in your family home are being tested for COVID-19 and are awaiting results.

If you are required to go into self-isolation, please ensure you make the team at Anglicare Victoria know as soon as possible to not only ensure we can support where and children in your care but also set up alternative arrangements for home visits and ongoing support. Detailed state information is available on the following [Department of Health and Human Services website](#).

14 What is social distancing?

Social Distancing (or physical distancing) is a way of behaving at home and in the community to help prevent the spread of Coronavirus. The State and Federal Government are consistent in advising that we practice social distancing when we are in public. This includes:

- Shopping for essentials
- Receiving medical care
- Exercising
- Travelling to work or education

For more up to date information visit the [Department of Health and Human Services website](#).

15 Is respite care still available to my family/household?

Check with your case worker at Anglicare Victoria to evaluate the current arrangements for respite care options for consistency and whether it is safe to do so. If there is no confirmed exposure from the respite carers to COVID-19, it may be possible to continue as usual but again, we will need to evaluate all circumstances together with your family and the respite carers and will communicate with you with any changes.

16 Can children still see their birth families during this pandemic?

The pandemic will be disruptive to current arrangements so please ensure you talk to your case worker at Anglicare Victoria to evaluate the circumstances and safety for the child in your care.

Wherever possible, alternative arrangements for family contact visits including FaceTime, WhatsApp, Phone or other technology facilities will be used.

We will continue to assess this situation with the Department of Human and Health Services (DHHS) and will communicate any further updates.

17 Will Anglicare Victoria visit our house during this pandemic?

Wherever possible, the team at Anglicare will engage with you and the children in your care via telephone, Skype, and online video calling platforms. However, we understand that there will be times that face to face contact will be required to ensure we are supporting you, and meeting the needs of the children in your care and the program. In these instances, we have developed safe and flexible practices to ensure we are able to visit your household safely.