

COVID-19 READINESS Family Plan



A booklet to help your
family plan for COVID-19
in your community.

In case of emergency

Fill out the information below and in case of an emergency provide this information to a health or support worker.

Who will care for your children (or other dependants) if you are hospitalised with COVID-19?

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Address: _____

What do the carers need to know about your children if they go into care?

Medical needs: _____

Mental health needs: _____

Other important information: _____

List the vaccination status of everyone in the house

Name: _____

<input type="checkbox"/> no doses	<input type="checkbox"/> two doses
<input type="checkbox"/> one dose	<input type="checkbox"/> can't have the COVID-19 vaccine for medical reasons

Name: _____

<input type="checkbox"/> no doses	<input type="checkbox"/> two doses
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<input type="checkbox"/> one dose	<input type="checkbox"/> can't have the COVID-19 vaccine for medical reasons

List the details of your doctor or Community Controlled Health Service

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Address: _____

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Working through this COVID-19 Readiness Family Plan will guide you through preparations for your family and household, to help ready you for COVID-19 outbreaks in your community.

Why do we need a COVID-19 Readiness Family Plan?

To keep our loved ones safe from COVID-19.



We love our families and don't want them to get sick from the virus, so we need to do what we can to prepare ourselves for when COVID-19 comes to our community.

WE KNOW THESE THINGS:

- COVID-19 is real, and research shows we are all likely to get it one day.
- COVID-19 is not going away any time soon.

To get our families and communities ready for COVID-19 means thinking about our health and planning what to do to be well.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are strong and resilient, but our life expectancy and other health outcomes are not as good as non-Indigenous Australians.

- We may have complex health conditions and illnesses.
- We may be on a number of medications.
- We may have family members who are not getting the social and emotional wellbeing care they need.
- We may have family members who don't like going to the doctor.
- We may have family members who are scared about what will happen when COVID-19 is in community.

- We may have family members who experience family violence.
- We may have someone in our family or community with addictions.
- We may live in a house with elderly people, young kids and babies.

These are all good reasons to do some planning.

If we are not vaccinated, those who are elderly, sick or have chronic health conditions are more likely to get very sick or die from COVID-19.

When the borders are open and COVID-19 is in our communities, we will have to 'live with the virus' instead of having lockdowns. It won't be the same as it was when there was no COVID-19 around.

There will also be more freedoms for those who are fully vaccinated for COVID-19. Those who are not vaccinated will not be able to do things like go to football games, restaurants, or parties.

These are the things you can do to help you and your family prepare for when COVID-19 comes to our communities:

1. Getting your COVID-19 vaccine
2. Wearing a mask when you're out in community
3. Washing your hands with soap and keeping windows open when possible
4. Completing this COVID-19 readiness family plan

If you need some help completing this plan, ask your local Community Controlled Health clinic if they can help you.

Here's a couple of scenarios for you to run through before you start your family planning ...



SCENARIO 1

Your town has a community outbreak of COVID-19.

Infections are spreading throughout your community, your neighbours and relatives have tested positive and stores and service providers are impacted.

Queensland Government will no longer lock the state down or close borders.

- What do you think might happen if you or a member of your family gets COVID-19?
- Have I got everything ready in case someone in my house gets COVID-19?
- Who at home is not vaccinated?



SCENARIO 2

Sadly, you and your community all went to a funeral of a beloved Elder.

Everyone in your house who went to the funeral has been contacted by Queensland Health and told they are a close contact of a COVID-19 infected person and should be tested for COVID-19 immediately.

You and your family, including your young child get tested. The clinic staff tell you to go straight home and isolate until they contact you with the results. They say you can't go anywhere else; no shopping or visiting anyone.

The results come back in three days because they are overwhelmed with tests. Your child's test comes back positive, but your results have still not come back, meaning you are still stuck in the house. You are told that your child now needs to be quarantined at home, separate from the rest of the family who are waiting or have received negative COVID-19 results.

- How will you manage your child's need to quarantine away from the rest of the family?
- How will this impact everyone else at home?
- Who will look after children if you are sick and need to be taken to hospital?
- What kind of help and support do you think you might need?
- Do you know what to do if your child gets sick with COVID-19?

Who lives in the house?

Have a yarn with your family about who lives in the house and who is likely to live in the house over the next few months.

You need to make a list of all the people who will be or will likely be staying in your house.

You should take note of their name, age and anything else you think is important. For example, details about boarding school arrangements, if there is a shared custody arrangement in place, or whether they only live with you for some of the time.

On page 5 is a table you can fill out with some of the details of those currently living with you. Underneath, there is a similar table for those who might need to come stay with you temporarily.



Who lives in this house?

Who might stay for a short while?

Health issues in our household

Does any member of your household or extended family have:

- **Chronic disease** (kidney disease, asthma, diabetes etc.)?
- **Other chronic health problems** (dental problems, arthritis etc.)?
- **Cancer** or have been treated for cancer?
- **Palliative care** needs or are they elderly?
- **Anxiety, depression** or other mental health issues?
- **Alcohol or other drug problems** (Ice, cannabis, tobacco)?

If the answer is 'yes' to any of these, fill in this information in the Health Map on page 7.

Contacting your Community Controlled Health Clinic or doctor

- **Do you or your family have a regular doctor** or health clinic that you visit?
- **If yes**, do you know if this doctor or health clinic can call you for a telehealth appointment if you can't go to the clinic?
- A telehealth appointment means your doctor will call your home phone or mobile number and they will conduct your appointment over the phone.

On page 8, there is space to write down your doctor's details. You may need to give them a call to get some of these details.

Getting your medicine

- If you get locked down and can't leave your house, what medications do you or your family need?
- Do you have a pharmacy where you regularly get your medicine?
- Will they deliver your medicine to you, or do you need someone to pick it up?

On page 8 there is a Medication Access Plan to help you work out how to get medication if you are stuck at home.

Our health map

Contacting your doctor

Check with your doctor or clinic whether they do telehealth, what are their opening hours and their contact number.

Phone number

Available hours

Who to ask for

Do they offer after-hours service?

☐

Yes

☐

No

If yes, what are the details?

If no, ask them who should you contact for medical advice or help after-hours.

Write those details below:

If you are told you have COVID-19, you will be asked to isolate. You will be contacted by health workers to see how you are going. If you do not need to go into hospital, you will be told which clinic or doctor will be looking after you, and how you can seek after-hours help.

Go to page 10 for more information on isolating at home.

Medication access plan

Do you have access to a GP who will provide a script to your pharmacy?

☐

Yes

☐

No

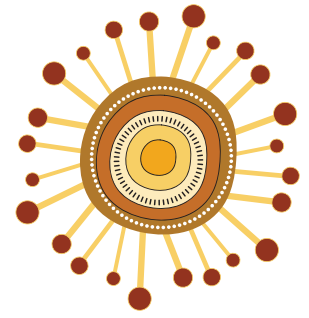
Once the pharmacy dispenses your medication how will you pay?

Does your pharmacy deliver medication? Please write these details below.

Can someone else outside your household pick this up for you?

Where do you normally get your medications? Which pharmacy / chemist do you use?

What if I get COVID-19?



Everyone's experience of COVID-19 will be different. Most will only experience a mild illness. Those who are elderly, sick or have chronic health conditions are more likely to get very sick or die. COVID-19 vaccination helps to prevent severe disease from COVID-19.

If you test positive for COVID-19, you will likely quarantine in your home if you are well enough. If are very unwell you may have to be treated and go to hospital.

What happens if me or a family member starts getting sicker?

If you have any questions, call your doctor, 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84) or 13 COVID (13 42 68). Both of these numbers can be called anytime.

If you or your family member's condition gets worse, you need to call an ambulance immediately.

Call an ambulance on triple zero (000) if:

- You are experiencing severe symptoms, like difficulty breathing or chest pain
- It's an emergency
- You or someone else is in danger of dying
- Tell the operator that you are in quarantine at home for COVID-19.

When will my quarantine end?

You will need to test negative to COVID-19 and not be sick. Your doctor or your health service will be the ones to give you this information.

What if I have to go to hospital?

While most people will have mild symptoms, some people will respond worse to the virus than others. This is more likely if you have a pre-existing condition such as diabetes, asthma or heart disease or are not vaccinated. In a small percentage of cases, someone may develop life-threatening symptoms such as gasping for breath, pneumonia, a secondary bacterial infection, or sepsis. In particularly bad but non-fatal cases, patients might develop heart problems and have scarring on the lungs.

If you are very sick, or you doctor thinks you are at higher risk of getting very sick, you may have to be admitted to hospital. This might be a confronting experience as hospital staff will be equipped with protective clothing that covers their whole body.

You will also probably be kept away from other patients, so they don't catch the virus. It's unlikely you will be allowed visitors. Hospital may be a lonely experience, but it is necessary to keep you and your mob safe. If you are feeling lonely and you need someone to talk to please call the free Coronavirus Mental Wellbeing Support Service on 1800 512 348 or Beyond Blue on 1300 224 636 (24 hours, seven days a week).

If your condition gets really bad, you may need to be admitted to an Intensive Care Unit. If you are in a small community, you may be transferred to a hospital away from family and Country.

How long will I be sick with COVID-19?

For most who are infected with the virus, symptoms will be mild, and they will feel better from a few days to a few weeks after first coming down with symptoms.

In other people, long COVID symptoms, such as fatigue, dizziness, shortness of breath and loss of taste and smell can persist for weeks, months, or possibly years. Getting vaccinated protects you against severe COVID-19 and it seems to protect you from getting long COVID.



How to isolate in the home ...

Self-isolation means staying in your own room and having no face-to-face contact with anyone. This helps stop the spread of COVID-19 to others in your home and protects your community.

Imagine, someone in your family must isolate at home *(i.e. stay in their own room).*

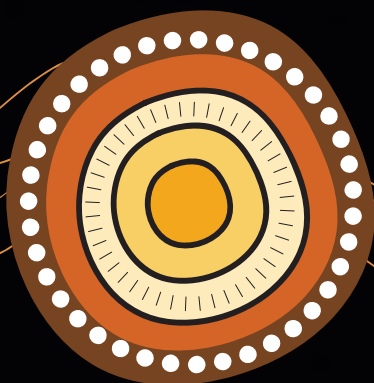
- What would this look like and who would care for them?
- Which room would they be able to have to themselves?
- How would you keep this person apart from the rest of the family, especially away from anyone over the age of 50?

The person self-isolating should stay in their room at all times. Families will have to think about who can help prepare foods, drinks, and snacks and take this to the person self-isolating.

They should also have their own toilet and shower to stop the spread of COVID-19 to others. If this is not possible – you must clean the toilet, shower and every surface after the self-isolating person uses any shared area.

If it is not possible for a person to self-isolate in your house, get in touch with your Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Health Organisation and they will talk about what other options you have.

Fill out the *Isolating at home* checklist on the opposite page.



Isolating at home checklist

Questions	Yes	No
Does the person isolating have their own toilet?		
Does the person isolating have their own shower?		
Can someone prepare meals, drinks and snacks for the person isolating?		
Does the person isolating have their own bowl, plate, cup and cutlery?		
Does the person isolating have their own bed sheets, pillows and blankets?		
Does the person isolating have their own masks to wear when they are in common areas?		
Who would be able to look after your children or Elders if you are hospitalised or isolated away from home?	Provide their name and phone number:	



Staying connected

If you or your family member has COVID-19, you may need to urgently call for help. In rural and remote communities, you may be a long distance from help and so every second will make a difference.

It is vital to have reliable methods of communication. This can be as simple as a working home phone and reliable mobile service or phone credit.

Being in isolation can bring up feelings of loneliness, worry and boredom. It is important that the person in isolation has access to things that will keep them busy and connected with others.

On page 13, there is a series of questions for you to consider to help you prepare to remain connected while you are in isolation.

For crisis support or to talk to someone call Lifeline: 13 11 14

Communications checklist

Questions	Yes	No
Do you have internet access?		
Do you have access to a computer or laptop?		
Do you have access to television?		
Do you have a house phone (land line)?		
Do family members in the house have mobile phones?		
Is the main mobile phone for use in the house on contract?		
Is the main mobile phone for use in the house on pre-paid?		
If your mobile phones require topping up credit, do you have online or phone access to do this?		
Do you have access to activities? (i.e. books, puzzles, arts and crafts, games)		
Do you have someone you can call that will help you feel connected if you are in isolation?		

Who can you ask to get your phone credit for you while you are in quarantine?

Who can send you information from the internet if you need it?

Financial safety and planning

If you are isolated or get COVID-19, you might run out of money, especially if you don't have much paid leave available.



If you have a job, you should ask your employer about the amount of leave you have.

Have a look at the money you have in the bank. If you won't have enough money to last you during a time when you're not working, here are some COVID-19 payments that might be available to you:

- If you are in lockdown you should have access to the COVID-19 Disaster Payment. For more information visit www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/covid-19-disaster-payment or call 180 22 66 (Monday to Friday, 8am-5pm)
- If you are told to isolate and can't work, you may be entitled to the Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment. For more information visit www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/pandemic-leave-disaster-payment or call 180 22 66 (Monday to Friday, 8am-5pm).

As vaccination rates continue to increase, these payments may be changed.

Your workplace might have a Pandemic Leave Policy. This will mean that if you are in forced isolation or if you are COVID-19 positive you may be able to access paid leave from work.

Ask your manager or workplace about their Pandemic Leave Policy.

If you have bills due while you are in isolation, some of your billers may be willing to postpone payments until you are able to start earning money again. Call the customer assistance phone number listed on the bill to talk to them about whether this is possible.

Money can sometimes be a tough topic to talk openly about but having a conversation now while filling this out could save you from being stressed later.

Fill in the financial safety and planning checklist on page 15 to help you start thinking about your money if you are forced to isolate or if you get COVID-19.

Financial planning checklist

Questions	Yes	No
Do you or anyone in the home have access to any savings you could use?		
Do you know how and who to call for urgent financial support if you needed it?		
If you are employed, do you know if your workplace has a Pandemic Leave Policy?		
Do you know if this Pandemic Leave Policy is paid or unpaid leave?		
Do you know who or how to find this out?		
Do you think the household will have enough money to be quarantined for up to a month? <small>(Think about your monthly bills, extra data, internet, medications, cleaning supplies, food supplies, wellbeing activities, internet and TV streaming subscriptions)</small>		

When are your bills due?

- Electricity
- Rates
- Gas
- Mortgage payments
- Phone
- Other
- Rent

How much leave from work do you have?

Household supplies and checklists –

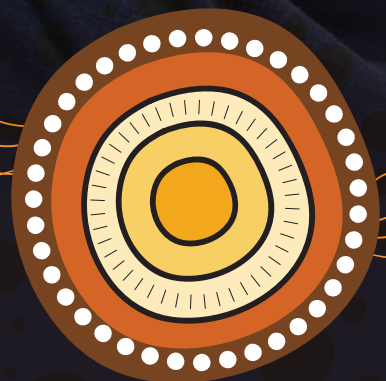
Food

Being in isolation means you won't be able to leave home to buy food. There might also be issues with accessing food where you live.

IF YOU CAN AFFORD TO, HOW WILL YOU ORGANISE TO GET FOOD?

- Will it be a meal delivery service?
- Will you order online from a supermarket and get it delivered?
- Will a friend or family member be able to do your shopping for you?
- Is there anything you need that you can't source from online ordering?

On the page 17 there is a checklist of questions for you to look at to make sure you can get access to food without leaving the house.



Food supplies

Questions	Yes	No
Can you get supermarket supplies delivered to your home?		
How often do they do deliveries?		
Are there food delivery services that will deliver to your home?		
Do you need help navigating their apps or websites?		
If yes, who might be able to help you out?		
Can you get everything your household needs (including cleaning, hygiene, and over-the-counter medicine) at these places?		
If your local supermarket stops taking online orders, can you still organise to get food?		

Please provide name and contact number of a family or friend who can support you to get groceries and other supplies if you are in quarantine:

You local Community Controlled Health Clinic will be able to tell you who to contact if you need food delivered to your house.

Household supplies and checklists continued

Cleaning and hygiene

If someone in your house has COVID-19, it will be up to the household try to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

You will need cleaning and disinfecting supplies as well as things like floor cleaner, tissues, paper towels, toilet paper, garbage bags, face masks, hand sanitiser, soap and gloves.

Have a think about what you need to get to make sure you can keep your house clean. Make sure you wipe down surfaces, handles, appliances, and other household items with soapy water.

On the page opposite is a brief list of cleaning and hygiene supplies you may need if you must isolate for COVID-19.

Hygiene products

Product	✓	Product	✓
Masks		Tissues	
Soap		Surface spray	
Bleach		Bins	
Hand towels		Disposable cloths	
Dishwashing liquid		Wet wipes	
Gloves		Hand sanitiser	
Antibacterial floor cleaner, mop and bucket		Toilet paper	
Disinfectant		Garbage Bags	
Paper towels		Laundry detergent	
Nappies		Menstrual products	

It has sections for things like fruit, bulk goods, and dairy. The list may help remind you of things you need and minimise the number of times you need to shop and reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading in community.

[illegible]

Where to go for more help

If you get COVID-19 you will be given phone numbers to call when you need help with things like isolating, medical needs and food delivery.

Contact your local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Health Organisation (ATSICCHO) or doctor

Health service

Phone

Email address

For crisis support or to talk to someone

Call Lifeline 13 11 14

Beyond Blue 1300 22 4636

After-hours health advice

Phone 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84)

for 24 hour assessment, referral, advice, and hospital and community health centre contact details. Ask the operator to speak to an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander nurse.

COVID-19 vaccination

A dedicated service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is available by calling the National Coronavirus Helpline on 1800 020 080 and choosing option 5 or visit www.makethechoice.com.au.

Emergency

In an emergency call 000.

What other important phone numbers or contacts do you have?

Add their details below.

