

COVID-19 & CLS – FAQs for Families

As at 14.01.2022

CLS Response

What is CLS doing to minimise the risk to clients, families, and employees?

We are undertaking a number of activities to assist with preventing COVID-19 from being an issue for the organisation, including:

- ✓ Refresher training of PPE
- ✓ Increased supply and use of PPE
- ✓ Increased cleaning of frequently used surfaces and areas
- ✓ Facilitating access to Vaccine clinics for clients and staff
- ✓ Sharing easy-read information
- ✓ Encouraging social distancing
- ✓ Continuing to stockpile additional PPE, cleaning supplies, etc.
- ✓ The COVID Support Team has been established to ensure that we are across all updates and are communicating any changes

What is CLS doing to prepare for a potential outbreak?

The COVID Support Team has been formed in order to ensure we are well placed to respond to suspected and actual outbreaks. This team will be ensuring that we:

- ✓ Identify potential outbreaks and respond
- ✓ Liaise with the Public Health Unit, GPs and other health professionals to respond and care for individuals
- ✓ Provide advice to support teams and managers as to how to care for the person/what information Queensland Health may need

CLS has a specific action protocol for the first 24hours after a case has been identified/demonstrates symptoms which includes:

- ✓ Isolating the person as best we can
- ✓ Increasing PPE
- ✓ Advising the Public Health Unit
- ✓ Deploying RAT kits (once available) for other household members and staff
- ✓ Identifying other close contacts
- ✓ Cancelling all community outings for the household and non-essential appointments
- ✓ Communicating with family, guardians and the support team
- ✓ Redeploying staff to assist where necessary

Will clients showing symptoms/who test positive continue to be supported?

CLS will endeavour to meet all support commitments. Where someone is unwell, we will use additional safety precautions to limit infection. Where someone is diagnosed with COVID-19 we will be guided by their health professionals and the Public Health Unit as to what support they require and who is best-placed to provide this support.

There are specific risk assessment tools in place that we use to guide us.

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Will staff who have been identified as a Close Contact be able to work?

In short, it depends. Queensland Health have set out a number of rules (where there is a “critical workforce shortage”) that means that Support Workers can work if they are a close contact, do not have symptoms, have had a negative RAT test/are assessed to be low-risk prior to starting their shift and are in full PPE during their shift.

We will make these decisions on individual circumstances and will consult with you first to get your consent before proceeding.

Do Support Workers have to isolate for 7 or 14 days?

While the rules have changed for the general population, if you have COVID-19 you will not be able to return to work for 14 days and will have to complete a negative RAT/PCR test prior to returning.

Similarly, we would ask that if you become COVID positive, that you also refrain from visiting for the full 14 days.

This may change and we will keep you informed as best we can.

Communication

How do I ask a question about COVID-19?

The easiest way is to email COVIDSupport@cls.org.au. If it's urgent, call the office and ask to speak with someone (or on-call after hours).

Over the next week more information will become available on our website (www.cls.org.au).

Why do I keep hearing different information/rules?

It's complicated. We're working with vulnerable people, and both the federal and state governments are creating and changing rules rapidly. Also, the rules for us are often different to the rules promoted on Facebook, media conferences and news channels which are meant for the general public.

If you have heard two different things and aren't sure what to do, email COVIDSupport@cls.org.au.

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Visitors

Do visitors have to wear masks when coming to a supported home?

Yes – we have active cases of COVID in the community, you must wear a face mask unless you have a medical reason not to. If you have any concerns at the point of entry, call the office or on-call.

If Allied Health are visiting the house we will request they wear a surgical mask, gown and face shield.

What visitors shouldn't be attending houses?

People who are COVID-19 positive OR have symptoms.

Non-family members who do not provide an essential service (healthcare, therapy, important house maintenance, etc.) or aren't vaccinated.

Vaccines, Boosters and Testing

Are booster's mandatory for CLS staff?

At this stage, the Qld Government has not made boosters mandatory. However “fully vaccinated” is likely to mean three doses very soon – once this happens they will be required to have the booster.

Are vaccinations and booster's mandatory for Clients?

No they are not. Where a client identifies they wish to receive the vaccine we will support them as best we can to do so.

Can people who aren't vaccinated visit a SIL?

Everyone who visits must be vaccinated.

The exceptions are: emergency healthcare, maintenance or a resident's family member.

When will CLS start using RAT (Rapid Antigen Tests) Tests?

As soon as we humanly can. We ordered them in December 2021, and were initially expecting them to arrive this week. This has been delayed and is out of our control. We will advise you about how they will be used when they arrive.

Is Allied Health Open?

Allied Health is open and operating – if you have concerns about how to access the service please call, or email ahc@cls.org.au.