



# COVID-19

## **Guidance for accommodation providers when a guest is self-isolating at their property after exiting MIQ**

Version 1.0 - 11 November 2021

**NOTE:** please refer to the Ministry of Health website for the most up-to-date version of this guidance, as it will be regularly updated.



# COVID-19

## Introduction

This FAQ document has been written as guidance for accommodation providers hosting guest/s who have recently exited a managed isolation facility (MIF) after entering Aotearoa New Zealand, and are self-isolating on their premises. This can be read in conjunction to the '**Guidance for post-MIQ self-isolation<sup>1</sup>**' which will be given to everyone leaving a MIF to self-isolate so that they clearly understand what is required of them during their self-isolation period.

It is important to note that accommodation providers are **not** required to enforce the '**Guidance for post-MIQ self-isolation<sup>1</sup>**' for guests self-isolating at their property. However, it's important to be aware of the guidance to be best prepared.

Isolation is a key part of how we manage COVID-19 as a nation, as it effectively helps us limit the spread of the virus. From 14 November 2021, most international arrivals into Aotearoa New Zealand will complete their isolation in two parts:

**Part 1:** 7 days in a MIF, then

**Part 2:** 3 days in most cases in self-isolation (alone or with their travel bubble companions), until they receive a negative day 9 test result. This self-isolation can happen at their normal place of residence or could be a temporary rental (e.g. a sole occupancy AirBnB, or other accommodation provider).

Further information about the type of accommodation that people can use for this self-isolation period is provided later in this document, and in the '**Guidance for post-MIQ self-isolation<sup>1</sup>**'.

**Remember:** after leaving a MIF, a person's self-isolation will not end until they have **received a negative 'day 9' COVID-19 test result**. It may take a couple of days for tests to be turned around at labs and so travellers have been advised to make sure their self-isolation accommodation plan accounts for this, in case there are delays.

## What is the public health risk of people who are self-isolating after leaving a MIF?

There are a range of factors and measures in place that mitigate the public health risk associated with these people, which include:

- The overall positivity rate among returnees is low – around 2 or 3 active cases are identified per 1000 returnees. The vast majority of these cases – likely more than 80% - are identified by day 7 and moved to appropriate quarantine facilities. This means that there is less than 1/1000 likelihood that someone will become positive for COVID-19 after leaving a MIF on day 7.
- Returnees will have tested negative for COVID-19 at multiple points during their stay, including on around day 6 of their stay in a MIF;
- Most travellers report being fully or partially vaccinated against COVID-19;

<sup>1</sup> Find the most up-to-date '**Guidance for post-MIQ self-isolation**' document here: <https://www.health.govt.nz/post-miq-self-isolation>



# COVID-19

- All travellers will complete a final health check prior to leaving the MIF facility to ensure they do not have any COVID-19 symptoms;
- Returnees will be required to wear face masks while in public areas in transit to their place of self-isolation. They will also be required to follow the usual public health advice around maintaining physical distancing where possible, performing regular hand hygiene, and contact to Healthline if they feel unwell.

As a result, we consider that there is a low risk to public health, however, there is still a (very) small chance that they may subsequently test positive for COVID-19 while self-isolating.

That is why it's so important that they, you and your employees follow the requirements and guidance in this document, and in the '**Guidance for post-MIQ self-isolation**<sup>1</sup>' document. These requirements exist to keep them, you, and our communities safe from COVID-19.

## Everyone should remain vigilant for symptoms of COVID-19

**If you, your employees or anyone self-isolating at your property develop COVID-19 symptoms at any time**, stay home/in self-isolation and call the dedicated COVID-19 Healthline (for free) on 0800 358 5453 (or +64 9 358 5453 for international SIMs), or their General Practice, or an after-hours clinic. If it's an emergency – including if anyone develops shortness of breath or has trouble breathing – they should call 111.

The self-isolating person also needs to inform these health services that they have recently arrived from overseas and are self-isolating. They have been advised of this in the '**Guidance for post-MIQ self-isolation**<sup>1</sup>' document.

If you or your employees have symptoms of COVID-19, you should inform the health services that you work at a property where a person is self-isolating after returning from overseas.

Follow their instructions about how and where you should go to get tested. You, your employees, and the self-isolating person should not leave home/self-isolation until the symptoms have been discussed with Healthline or a health professional.

### Symptoms for COVID-19





# COVID-19

## What happens if the guest self-isolating at my property tests positive?

Although they will have tested negative for COVID-19 during their stay in a Managed Isolation and Quarantine Facility, there is still a (very) small risk that the guest may subsequently test positive while they are in self-isolation.

If someone self-isolating at your property tests positive for COVID-19, they and relevant persons at your property will be contacted by your local public health unit. There are several steps that will need to be taken and instructions that will need to be followed. A staff member from your local public health unit will talk you through each of these steps, and will inform you/your staff if testing for COVID-19 is required.

For more information, go to <https://covid19.govt.nz/health-and-wellbeing/covid-19-testing/if-you-test-positive-for-covid-19/>

## If a guest or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, would they need to be transferred to a MIQ facility?

If a guest or staff member tests positive for COVID-19 at your property, they will be contacted by your local public health unit to work through the next steps. This includes working with the person with COVID-19 to determine the best place to quarantine (e.g. whether that's at home, in another suitable accommodation, or in a MIQ facility).

For more information, go to <https://covid19.govt.nz/health-and-wellbeing/covid-19-testing/if-you-test-positive-for-covid-19/>

## Will my staff members need to be tested regularly if we have self-isolation guests staying in our property?

Your staff members are not required to be regularly tested for COVID-19 as the risk of them contracting COVID-19 is low. The only time staff will need to be tested for COVID-19 is:

- if they develop COVID-19 symptoms as outlined above,
- potentially if a positive case of COVID-19 is detected at your property – the local public health unit or contact tracing teams will inform your staff if there is a need to be tested for COVID-19 in this instance, or
- if they are a close contact of a community case.

## Cleaning and PPE use for staff

### What personal protective equipment (PPE) do my staff need to wear?

No specific PPE is required for your staff other than a face mask, and regular hand hygiene.

Regular hand hygiene can be achieved by either by washing your hands with soap and water and drying them properly, or using an alcohol-based hand sanitiser containing at least 60% alcohol. These options for keeping your hands clean are recommended over glove use if handling any items that have come in contact with the guest who is self-isolating.



# COVID-19

## How do we clean a room while a guest is self-isolating?

Rooms should not be cleaned by housekeeping staff while a guest is self-isolating.

Clean linen can be delivered to guest's rooms and left outside their door. All staff should maintain 2-meter physical distancing and ensure they wear a face mask. This could be done by leaving the clean linen outside the guest's door, knocking, and stepping away from the door.

You may choose to provide basic cleaning materials for guests to clean the room themselves during their self-isolation period.

## How do we clean a room after a guest leaves our property?

If the guest has indicated to you that they have received a negative day 9 test, then you can clean the room normally. There are no additional precautions required. As always, it's still important to remain vigilant and if you or your staff develop COVID-19 symptoms at any time, stay home and call the COVID-19 Healthline, or your General Practice, or an after-hours clinic.

General cleaning information can be found at the Ministry of Health website here:

<https://www.health.govt.nz/covid-19-cleaning-faqs>

## How do we clean a room if someone tests positive while they are self-isolating?

If a guest tests positive for COVID-19, leave the room for at least 12 hours before cleaning the room. When you go into the room to clean it, open a window (if possible) and follow the cleaning guidance provided on the Ministry of Health website here: <https://www.health.govt.nz/covid-19-cleaning>

## How do we clean common areas?

As guests should not be using the common areas (other than when entering and leaving the property) public areas can be cleaned normally. It's always a good idea to regularly clean high touch surfaces such as door handles, lift buttons, and other surfaces that guests regularly touch.

General cleaning information can be found at the Ministry of Health website here:

<https://www.health.govt.nz/covid-19-cleaning-faqs>

## Requirements for post-MIQ self-isolation

### Where can someone self-isolate?

The location someone can self-isolate is permitted to be anywhere in the country, but must be somewhere:

- With either cell-phone coverage, a landline number, or wifi so that they can be called and/or texted by public health officials if needed, and
- that they can access a COVID-19 testing centre or General Practice from, so that they can meet the requirement to be tested on day 9.

It is strongly recommended that a person self-isolates in a standalone private residence without any other occupants, other than the people in their travel bubble. This can be a temporary rental (e.g. a sole occupancy AirBnB, a motel unit). However, a person can self-isolate in an apartment or a private hotel room if required, but they must stay in the apartment or room the entire time.





# COVID-19

A person cannot self-isolate in shared accommodation where they have to share facilities like a kitchen or bathroom with people you don't know (e.g. boarding houses, backpackers, hostels, or shared AirBnBs).

People who are using a AirBnB, motel, hotel or other such accommodation to self-isolate are expected to inform the accommodation provider of this. If you have any concerns about someone self-isolating at your property, please find out more information on the Ministry of Health website at the following link:

<https://www.health.govt.nz/post-miq-self-isolation>

## What do accommodation providers need to do to ensure a guest who is self-isolating is compliant with self-isolation requirements?

It is important to note that accommodation providers **are not** required to enforce the requirements detailed in the '**Guidance for post-MIQ self-isolation**'<sup>1</sup> document among guests self-isolating at their property. However, it's important accommodation providers are aware of these requirements to best prepare for a guest self-isolating at their property.

Please read the '**Guidance for post-MIQ self-isolation**'<sup>1</sup> document for further information.

## A self-isolating guest is not complying by the 'Guidance for post-MIQ self-isolation' – what can I do?

If you're comfortable doing so, you can remind the guest directly (either by phone, or while wearing a face covering and maintaining 2-metres physical distancing) about the importance of complying with the rules.

If you don't feel comfortable, you report a breach here: <https://covid19.govt.nz/alert-levels-and-updates/report-a-breach/>

## Can I transport guests who are self-isolating to our property?

It is strongly recommended that wherever possible, the person self-isolating uses private transport to travel to their place of self-isolation (e.g. they drive themselves). For example, a friend, or other whānau members could drop a car off to the facility they are staying in.

An accommodation provider, friend or whānau members are also permitted to pick up the person from the MIF and transport them to the property they are self-isolating in. If you do pick them up, ensure that windows within the car are wound down to ventilate the vehicle (if possible), and make sure you're both wearing a face mask for the duration of the trip. It is recommended that the person picking up the person that they are fully vaccinated.

As they may be returning to their hometown to complete their self-isolation, they are allowed to cross an Alert Level boundary on their way home. You are also allowed to cross an Alert level boundary if you are coming to pick them up from a MIF. They will have to have some evidence of their self-isolation address to show at the boundary. Further information can be found at <https://covid19.govt.nz/travel/permitted-travel-at-different-alert-levels/permitted-movement-within-alert-level-3/>



# COVID-19

Alternatively, if private transportation options are not available, they can take public transport to their place of self-isolation (e.g. a taxi, bus or domestic flight). They need to get there as soon as possible and take the most direct route.

They must continue to wear a face mask during travel, and must not stop and visit people, or go into stores along the way (e.g. to get groceries). Further information about the requirements for travel to a place of self-isolation is provided in the '**Guidance for post-MIQ self-isolation**<sup>1</sup>' document.

## Travel to and from COVID-19 testing while a guest is self-isolating

Those that are self-isolating are required to be tested on day 9 since they arrived in the country. To get this test, they will need to go to a local community testing centre or book in for a test at their General Practice. This is the only time they are allowed to leave their self-isolation accommodation, other than for emergencies – further information is in the '**Guidance for post-MIQ self-isolation**<sup>1</sup>' document.

As above, it is strongly recommended that they use private transport to get to and from their day 9 test (e.g. if at all possible, drive themselves or be driven by someone in their bubble).

An accommodation provider can drive them to their day 9 test if required (if the person is not symptomatic). If you drive or your employee drive them to and from their day 9 test, ensure that windows within the car are wound down to ventilate the vehicle (if possible), and make sure you're both wearing a face mask for the duration of the trip. It is recommended that the driver is fully vaccinated.

If this is not possible, and they have no symptoms of COVID-19, they can use a public form of transport (e.g. a taxi or bus) to get to and from your day 9 testing appointment. They must scan in on the public transport and wear a face mask the entire time.

If they have symptoms of COVID-19 and cannot drive themselves or be driven to and from their day 9 test appointment by someone in their travel bubble, they can call the COVID Healthline [0800 358 5453](tel:08003585453) or for international SIMs +64 9 358 5453 to discuss how they can be supported to be tested.

## Can guests smoke while self-isolating?

The person self-isolating can smoke, but they should smoke outdoors. They should also not smoke in the same area or at the same time as anyone else (including other guests and staff).

This is the responsibility of the guest self-isolating at your property and not the responsibility of the accommodation provider to monitor. They should also ensure that they:

- put their face mask on when moving through the property to smoke,
- put their face mask back on again before returning indoors, and
- wash or sanitise their hands before and after smoking.

## How should food be delivered to guests?

Deliveries of food and any other goods should be contactless – they should be delivered outside guest's rooms. All staff should maintain 2-meter physical distancing and ensure they wear a face mask. This could be done by leaving a tray of food outside the guest's door, knocking, and stepping away from the door.



# COVID-19

If guests have ordered groceries or food delivery service (like uber eats) and the food cannot be delivered to the door of the self-isolating room easily by the delivery service (e.g. if in a large hotel), then the delivery should be dropped at reception and taken up to the room by hotel staff.

The food could then be left outside the guest's door, door knocked on, and staff member stepping away from the door for the guest to receive it. All staff should maintain 2-meter physical distancing and ensure they wear a face mask.

## Can guests use the property's shared gym or pool while self-isolating?

No – guests should not use shared gym or pool facilities while self-isolating.

## Where can I go for further information?

If you have further questions or queries, refer to the Ministry of Health website  
<https://www.health.govt.nz/post-miq-self-isolation>

Please check the website often as guidance is regularly updated.

## Once the guest has completed their period of self-isolation

A guest's period of self-isolation is completed when they have received a negative result from their day 9 test. Again, note that it may take a couple of days for tests to be turned around at labs and so travellers have been advised to make sure their self-isolation accommodation plan accounts for this, in case there are delays.

Once a result from their day 9 test has been received, guests that were self-isolating in your property can now be treated normally. No extra precautions are required with the guests, but as always, it's still important to remain vigilant for symptoms of COVID-19. If you or your staff develop COVID-19 symptoms at any time, stay home and call the COVID-19 Healthline, or your General Practice, or an after-hours clinic.