

COVID-19 Level Changes – Roles & Responsibilities

Under the Health & Safety at Work Act (2005) employers are required to provide a safe and healthy environment for their employees, at all times. As always, both parties in the employment relationship must act in good faith. The law does not go away in a pandemic!

We have compiled an easy resource to consult that lists out some roles and responsibilities in one spot:

Employee Responsibilities

- Adhering to all employer policies and procedures.
- Agreeing to only work in a location that is suitable and safe for working remotely.
- Being contactable during the normal span of hours.
- If they are not available or able to be contacted, putting on an out of office and informing their colleagues (as they would in a physical office environment).
- Ensuring fitness for work requirements are met. If employees are unwell or unable to work due to other reasons, then leave entitlements are to be accessed.
- Ensuring home worksite complies with health and safety requirements at all times, [reporting any health, safety and wellbeing hazards, near misses and incidents](#).
- Maintaining accurate and up to date records of hours worked at home within normal span of hours.
- Not holding meetings with clients or other employees at their home.
- Working in an environment that has limited distractions and protects the confidentiality of our clients.
- Making necessary childcare arrangements.
- Taking reasonable precautions necessary to secure the employer's technology, equipment and information.

Employer Responsibilities

- Fulfilling their obligations in respect to company policies and procedures.
- Agreeing to a plan with the employee as to how they will work at home and how the workload will be managed.
- Ensuring the employee is working in accordance with this plan.
- Where the employee cannot work from home, consulting with them to come up with a workable solution, be it annual leave, special paid leave or unpaid leave. Remember, it must be agreed by all parties and you can only direct an employee to take annual leave if parties are unable to obtain agreement and 14 days of notice must be provided.
- Taking reasonable steps to ensure that the employee is adhering to employer policies and procedures.
- Ensuring that the employee understands their health and safety obligations.
- Reviewing and signing off on records of hours worked (timesheets) as required,
- Scheduling communication meetings including methods of disseminating information to employees who are working from home.
- Where practicable, providing equipment and tools required to perform the tasks required.
- Accurately documenting the ownership and usage arrangements of equipment and assets.
- Ensuring that they check in with their people and their wellbeing.

Note that this list is not exhaustive nor is it to be substituted for legal advice. Please [contact us](#) if you need assistance in drafting policy or procedures in regard to working from home or other COVID-19 related matters.