

VERSION 1 - 5 MAY 2020

**KNOW
YOUR
RIGHTS!**

Workplace Safety

All workers have the right to safe work and the protection of workers' rights is now more important than ever. When workers and students return to schools, employers must ensure that the workplace is safe and that the risk of exposure to hazards such as COVID-19 is controlled.

You have the right to be consulted about health and safety matters at your school and the best way is with the assistance of your elected Health and Safety Representative (HSR). [You can find out more about the HSR role and election process here](#) - if your workplace doesn't have an elected HSR then speak to your IEU Organiser. Employers cannot appoint HSRs, they must be elected by the employees.

The *Victorian OHS Act 2004* and in Tasmania, the *Work Health and Safety Act 2012* require employers to consult workers about matters to do with health and safety at work. An elected HSR has particular rights to be consulted, trained and provided with relevant information in order to be able to represent workers. Employers who do not consult with the elected HSR and with employees can face hefty fines.

Before employees return to work they can insist that the employer consults them about how the return and ongoing work at the school will be safe. You should ask your elected HSR to consult with the employer on your behalf. The IEU will assist HSRs who are members of the union in this consultation. The employer, in dealing with the hazard of COVID-19 exposure, must first assess the risk for those at the workplace and then implement and monitor control measures to reduce the risk, starting with the highest level of control possible.

The control measures your employer implements should be specific to your school and the risk posed to your members, hence the critical role for your HSR in this process. See overleaf for the kinds of controls which you could seek to include. Please note that these are in no way limited and we encourage you to get in touch with us if you have found additional measures to improve the workplace safety at your school.

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**NEED
HELP?**Speak to your IEU
Organiser today.

Workplace Safety

Control measures to implement in your workplace
to limit the risk of exposure to COVID-19.

Physical distancing :

- Classrooms, staffrooms and offices.
- School yard and play areas.
- Bus stops, student drop off/pick up area, where students assemble/line up, bag/locker areas.
- Toilets, kitchens, changerooms.

All school activities should be reviewed to consider non-essential gatherings.

Infection control

- Review system for deliveries, school visitors, parent access.
- Develop protocol for school entry declarations, those arriving by public transport, and exclusion of those who display symptoms.
- Ventilation.
- Reducing access to commonly touched surfaces where possible. For example, commonly used doors kept open, playground equipment, equipment used from library/labs/sports/prac subjects.
- Provision of flu vaccine to employees when available.

Hygiene

- Hand sanitiser, soap and access to amenities for hand washing.
- Review of cleaning routines and increased/ focussed cleaning of commonly touched surfaces.
- Protocol about equipment students bring to school including laptops borrowed during Term 2, shared stationery, shared food.

Personal Protection Equipment

- Hand sanitiser and disinfectant wipes, gloves. Additional supplies for employees showing symptoms including masks, glasses and aprons.

Information and Training

- Personal hygiene and habits, social distancing and cleaning.
- Clear first aid policies about dealing with those who show symptoms of infection.
- Signs and information displayed (see [safeworkaustralia.gov.au](https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au)).
- Regular meetings of the OHS committee .