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To	Directors, Presidents, Area Executives and Members
From	Dom Kalasih, General Manager Industry

Preventing close contacts from occurring in your workplace

Purpose

This advisory highlights the value to your business continuity if a COVID-19 positive case becomes present and you can manage your staff to become 'casual contacts' to each other instead of them becoming 'close contacts'.

We are also sharing Ministry of Health advice and tools on managing the risk of staff catching COVID-19 in their business.

Outcomes of staff catching COVID-19 or being in contact with a case

In Phase 2 of the Omicron Public Health Response.

- If a worker tests positive, they will have to self-isolate for 10 days
- If a worker is a household close contact, they will have to isolate the 10 days with the positive case and then return a negative test on day 8
- If a worker is a close contact, they will have to self-isolate for 7 days
- If a worker is a casual contact, they only have to isolate if they have symptoms and then only have to continue if they test positive or until 24 hours after their symptoms stop.

If you can restrict the interactions of your staff to being 'casual contacts' instead of 'close contacts' they are less likely to catch COVID-19 and it will also minimise the impact on your business if any member of your staff does catch COVID-19.

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Close contacts can use the Close Contact Exemption Scheme and the Bubble of One systems to continue working, please see our previous advisories DK-11 and DK-12 or MBIE's website [here](#) for more information on these.

Differences between types of contact

The Ministry of Health document [Guidance for businesses: What to do if an employee tests positive for COVID-19](#) has a chart on page 11 with different scenarios and what type of contact the worker would be considered.

The key points are:

- ensure workers wear a mask
- keep interactions to under two hours
- where possible work in large areas (>300m²)
- maintain good ventilation.

We encourage you to make an evaluation of your current workplace interactions, see where they fit on this chart, and see if you can take any steps to ensure your contacts are casual and not close. We also recommend you document this proactive process, so that in the event one of your staff tests positive, you can demonstrate to public health officials the steps you have taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19 and prevent the rest of your staff from having to be considered close contacts. Ministry of Health have provided some templates to assist tracking the contacts at your work [here](#).

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