



NSW RFS COVID-19 Response Action Process

As at 28 March 2022

Follow the advice on the [NSW Government website](#) for requirements on testing and isolation – including when to use PCR or Rapid Antigen Testing, isolation and reporting requirements

Confirmed (Positive test result)

You're a confirmed case if:

- › You get a positive PCR test; or
- › You have symptoms and get a positive RAT; or
- › You're a [high risk exposure](#) and get a positive RAT; or
- › You get an initial positive RAT and a second positive result 24 hours later.

Check the [NSW Government website](#) for testing, reporting, follow up testing and isolation requirements. Positive RAT results must be recorded on the Service NSW website.

WHAT TO DO

- › Advise your chain of command who will alert the OCC on 1800 RFS OPS (member to also alert the OCC if their chain of command is uncontactable).
- › You must NOT attend any NSW RFS location (ie brigade, FCC, District or office).
- › You must self-isolate for 7 days commencing on the day of testing. In consultation with their manager, staff may continue to work from home during this period if able to do so, and they feel well enough.
- › If you have a sore throat, runny nose, cough or shortness of breath in the last 24 hours of your isolation, remain in isolation until 24 hours after your symptoms have resolved. If you are not getting better or you are concerned, call your GP.
- › If you have no symptoms at day 7, you may return to RFS duties on day 8 but must wear a mask for an additional 7 days. In line with NSW Health advice, you do not need to undergo a RAT for 8 weeks after you are released from self-isolation.
- › Notify OCC on 1800 RFS OPS when you're clear to return to duty.

Note: You do not need to have a RAT confirmed with a PCR test unless you are in a higher risk category (eg more than 20 weeks pregnant, immunosuppressed, unvaccinated and over 16 years, or Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander).

Symptoms (Showing COVID-19 symptoms)

If you are **experiencing COVID-19 symptoms** such as:

- › Fever (37.5 C or higher)
- › Cough or sore throat
- › Severe headaches or dizziness
- › Shortness of breath (breathing difficulties)
- › Runny nose
- › Loss of taste or smell

WHAT TO DO

- › Get a RAT immediately. If it's positive, you're a confirmed case.
- › If your RAT is negative, do another RAT in 24 hours. You must NOT attend any NSW RFS location (ie brigade, FCC, District or office).
- › Staff may continue to work from home if able to do so and well enough.
- › Advise your chain of command who will alert the OCC on 1800 RFS OPS (member to also alert the OCC if their chain of command is uncontactable).
- › You may return to NSW RFS duties only after you have received two negative test results and are not showing any symptoms.

Contact (Exposure to a confirmed case)

If you've been in contact with a confirmed case, [assess your risk on the NSW Health website](#).

If you are a **high risk exposure**

- › Self-isolate for 7 days from the date of exposure and get a RAT as soon as possible and again on Day 6. If all tests are negative you can leave isolation after 7 days.
- › Advise your chain of command who will alert the OCC on 1800 RFS OPS (member to also alert the OCC if their chain of command is uncontactable)
- › Staff may continue to work from home if able to do so and well enough.

All **other exposures**

- › Follow the advice from NSW Health. Generally there is no need to isolate unless you are instructed to. Monitor for symptoms and if symptoms develop, get a RAT.

If you have been in contact with someone who has **COVID-19**

- › Under the [Public Health Order](#), critical workers (including emergency services personnel) **without symptoms** are exempt from these isolation requirements if their absence poses a high risk of disruption to the delivery of critical services, and are unable to work from home. This includes emergency response. [Check the fact sheet](#).

Links

- › [Rapid Antigen Testing for the Community](#)
- › [Latest NSW Government COVID-19 advice](#)
- › [NSW Government employment arrangements during COVID-19](#)
- › [Member Portal – Vaccination Status Reporting](#)

Important Notes

- › **Member responsibility** – each member must ensure they comply with [RFS P3.4.2 COVID-19 Vaccination](#) and keep up to date with NSW Health communications.
- › **Isolation requirements** – there is no need to isolate unless you are a confirmed COVID-19 case, have symptoms, are an identified close contact, or are instructed to isolate by NSW Health.
- › **Medical advice** – where a member received a specific instruction from a medical practitioner or NSW Health, follow that advice.
- › **Exclusion of members from RFS locations** is to occur in suspected or confirmed cases.
- › **Site and appliance cleaning** – refer to [COVID-19 Fact Sheet – NSW RFS Site and Appliance Cleaning](#)
- › **Mandatory vaccination status reporting** – all RFS members (staff and volunteers) are required to report their vaccination status in the SAP/Member Portal.

Staff member provisions

- › Where a staff member is a confirmed COVID-19 case, is experiencing symptoms, and is unfit for work or unable to work from home, sick leave entitlements and conditions apply. A medical certificate, positive PCR result, or evidence of a positive RAT entered into the Service NSW website can be used as evidence for sick leave. If sick leave is exhausted, the Commissioner may grant special sick leave on a case by case basis.
- › Where a staff member is not sick but is required to isolate, reasonable adjustments may be considered such as working from home. Where this is not viable, staff members are to be paid as normal and placed on paid special leave for up to 20 days.
- › Up to 20 days special leave will be provided, before other leave entitlements need to be accessed by staff members who are unable to work because they are caring for sick family members, caring for family members due to closure of schools and caring facilities, or unable to attend work due to transport disruptions. No medical certificate is required for these circumstances, but other evidence may be requested.