

**COVID-19 Protocols**  
for NZ Forestry Industry Operations under Level 3

# Recommended Practices for COVID-19: Harvesting / Engineering Operations

This guidance would also apply if any forestry-related operation was given permission to operate at Level 4.

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# Recommended Practices for COVID-19: **Everyone**

## 1. **Stay at home if you are unwell**

- Everyone must self-assess their health prior to attending work. Anyone who feels unwell should not come to work and should phone Healthline on 0800 358 5453 to seek advice.
- Anyone who has been in another country or has had close contact with a probable or confirmed case, should self-quarantine and not come to work for 14 days.
- Assess worker fitness before work starts each day by asking them:
  - Are you feeling unwell, fatigued or not in a fit state to work?
  - Have you been in contact with anyone who is unwell or who has COVID-19?
- For more information see Appendix 3: Assessing wellness.

## 2. **Minimise numbers on site**

- Only workers necessary to carry out work should be on site. Any worker who can work from home should.
- Visitors to site should be minimised to essential work only.

## 3. **General hygiene**

Practise good hygiene at **ALL TIMES** including:

- Cover your coughs and sneezes with your elbow or a tissue
- Put used tissues straight into the bin
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, including before and after eating and after going to the toilet
- Use hand-sanitiser
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- Clean and disinfect frequently used hard surfaces at regular intervals
- Clean and disinfect frequently used objects such as mobile phones, keys, wallets and work passes.
- Use PPE options as appropriate to the circumstances, which should include providing instruction on correct use
- Form workplace teams (bubbles) and minimise mixing e.g. staggered breaks, defined walkways, separate entry and exit times.

## 4. Have hygiene and cleaning products available on site

All works sites must have the following available:

- Soap and water
- Hand-sanitiser
- Cleaning products for wiping down areas
- Disposable paper towels to wipe down surfaces
- Tissues
- Gloves
- Bins / bags / waste areas to dispose of used cleaning items.

## 5. Physical distancing

Maintain physical distancing between people:

- **Level 3:** 1 metre in a controlled work environment, 2 metres outside home or on public transport
- **Level 4:** 2 metres, unless 1 to 2 metres unavoidable e.g. in processing

Separation can be assisted through staggering start / finish / and meal break times. As far as is possible, people should remain in their work 'bubble'.

General safety provisions need to be in place at all times and it is important that all businesses adapt safety measures to their specific circumstances.

Workers are only allowed to work with physical distancing of less than 1 metre in extraordinary operational circumstances. Additional safety measures such as screens must be applied, and these are described in guidance from Ministry for Primary Industries<sup>1</sup>.

The following requirements for distancing should be discussed and agreed with teams:

- Stagger breaks so that there are no communal lunches, smoko or other gatherings
- Maintain the required minimum distancing
- Handheld two-ways are to be used to reduce close contact between crew and visitors.

## 6. Site register

Ensure you have a register for all workers, including those travelling in work vehicles, visitors and service providers with contact details recorded to ensure contact tracing can be done by Ministry of Health if there is a COVID-19 case at your workplace.

## 7. Case management

Every workplace must maintain and implement processes for managing a positive COVID-19 detection in the workplace. See Appendix 4 for details.

If there is a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 at work or at home contact Healthline on 0800 358 5453.

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<sup>1</sup> Note that requests for evaluation of options other than screens that provide an equivalent level of protection can be put to NZ Food Safety.

## **8. Travel to and from work site**

- Wherever possible employees are to travel individually to and from a work site. Where this is not possible please see Appendix 5 for further details.
- At home maintain good hygiene and follow the latest Ministry of Health guidance on physical distancing, including what social and recreational activities are allowed.

## **9. Shared vehicle (split shifts, different users on different days etc)**

Where a vehicle or machine is shared between different drivers / operators, each user must wipe down at the beginning and end of each use:

- Interior (including high touch areas such as steering wheel, gear shift, seat belt and buckle, radio, window controls etc)
- Any handheld devices left in the vehicle (where possible individuals to retain their own handheld devices)
- Two-way radio
- Exterior high touch areas including door handles
- Keys and or remote sensor.

## **10. Returning home**

- Clean your hands: Avoid touching anything until you wash or sanitise your hands thoroughly
- Remove shoes. Don't walk through the house with your shoes on. Take them off at the door
- Wash clothes: Put your clothes and bags into a separate container from your family's clothes and wash them in a hot washing machine cycle (over 60 degrees)
- Shower: Have a shower and make sure to wash your hands, wrists, neck and anywhere else that has been exposed.

## **11. Fuel purchases**

- Use hand-sanitiser or wash hands with soap and water both before and after refuelling vehicles.

## **12. 'At-Risk' employees**

- Employees who are most at risk (see Appendix 2) should discuss options with their employer. Where appropriate, an employer may recommend such employees are relocated or assigned alternate duties for added protection.

## **13. All meetings to be conducted remotely or to use physical distancing**

- All meetings should be conducted using either phone conference, video conference or other technologies which can be set up to be accessed by laptop, tablet or smartphone

- All communications for onsite meetings such as tailgate meetings should now take place in a way that maintains physical distancing or via phone or radio with participants.

## **14. Training**

- Any non-essential face to face training should be suspended. If training must be provided, then COVID-19 protocols must be met.

## **15. Work from home where possible**

- While this will not be an option for many employees, businesses must identify work from home options.

## **16. Worker engagement**

- Ensure your workers are involved in implementing these protocols and have a way to provide feedback on how things are working and when / if things need to change.

## **17. Working alone procedures**

- Review your working alone procedures and ensure they are fit for working in these circumstances.

## **18. Review and monitoring**

- Ensure you have processes in place to review and monitor the protocols you have implemented.

## **19. Emergencies**

- In an emergency the usual procedures apply but take extra diligence to minimise your risk to COVID-19.

### **KEEP YOURSELF AND OTHERS SAFE**

- **Maintain physical distancing: LEVEL 3: Stay 1–2 metres apart; LEVEL 4: 2 metres apart**
- **Wash hands for 20 seconds regularly with soap and dry thoroughly, or use sanitiser**
- **Clean and disinfect common contact surfaces frequently and keep other surfaces clean.**



# Recommended Practices for COVID-19: **Harvesting / Engineering Operations**

## 1. **Re-induction of everyone on site**

- Each worker to be re-inducted on the new practices for COVID-19 for the work site
- Each individual to possess individual PPE that includes a bottle of sanitiser, soap and paper towels, individual water bottles and toilet paper. These are not to be shared
- Subcontractors and service agents must also be fully re-inducted.

## 2. **Wipe down, disinfect and disposal**

- Frequently wipe down and disinfect frequently used and communal surfaces
- Each work site must have a disposal procedure for used paper towels.

## 3. **Wash hands**

- Wash hands with soap or sanitise regularly and thoroughly
- For example; after every sneeze or cough; before and after eating, using the toilet, refuelling vehicles, opening or closing a forest gate, touching something 'communal', upon entering a machine / vehicle and after any contact with another person or pet.

## 4. **Travel**

- Workers are to travel to work individually as a single occupant where possible. Leave home / work and return directly to your bubble. Do not sightsee or make unnecessary stops to / from work.
- If a driver is required to collect a passenger, then both occupants must maximise their separation distance while in the vehicle. Both workers must thoroughly wash or sanitise their hands on entering and exiting the vehicle. Appendix 5.

## 5. **Physical distancing**

- **Maintaining physical distancing is a critical health practice.** Individuals must maintain physical distancing for any activity that requires interaction between 2 or more people (e.g. toolbox meetings, maintenance) Your physical distancing plans must take into account the likelihood of wet weather.

## **6. Meetings**

- If wet, use radio communication (either handheld or in machines / vehicles) to communicate
- At the end of each toolbox meeting and once all plans have been discussed, Foreman are to ask all workers individually by name for an affirmation that they understand the work plan, and then sign off the Daily Toolbox Book on their behalf
- Each person should be asked at each toolbox meeting if they are “feeling right and not exhibiting any COVID-19 symptoms”.

## **7. Work bubble – Machine operation**

- Sanitise machine prior to starting work at the beginning of the day; wipe down all switches, door / window handles, seatbelts, controls, radio, seat, roof and all surfaces
- Once cleaning is completed, hands must be washed for 20 seconds with soap and dried thoroughly OR sanitised
- If an operator needs to switch machines for operation or maintenance during the day, then they need to sanitise the machine prior to use as above
- If they are the only user of both machines, then a daily high touch area wipe-down is all that is required to maintain a healthy work bubble.

## **8. Work bubble – Other activities**

- Stay isolated for rest breaks. There are to be no communal lunches. Do not share any food or water. Maintain physical distancing. Wash hands before and after eating
- First Aid kits on site and in vehicles to be allocated to each person as the ‘holder’ of that kit. It will be that person’s responsibility to ensure that used items are replenished.

## **9. Work bubble – Visitors**

- Any visitors to site should notify the crew in advance of their visit. No surprise visits
- The visitor will be informed of the check-in procedure prior to arriving on site and must have an RT radio
- Visitors will not enter the crew container unless instructed to do so
- Sign in will be via verbal affirmation with the crew foreman
- Maintaining a physical distancing with any person on site is paramount
- All visitors must have their own hand-sanitiser as part of their compulsory PPE to enter the site
- Any sub-contractor or service agent visiting the site to undertake work must provide their own business’s COVID-19 health and safety procedures
- Any rubbish brought on site by a visitor must be removed by that visitor
- A register must be kept that includes each individual who was on site that day and when (arrival to leaving) for contact tracing purposes if a COVID-19 case occurs

- In an emergency the usual procedures apply but take extra diligence to minimise your risk to COVID-19.

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