## Traveling for Work - Checklist and Issues for Consideration

**Instructions**

This template checklist provides members with a basic assessment to undertake when employees travel for work including interstate and overseas.

This checklist also assists employers by acting as a record of issues considered and mitigating actions undertaken.

The checklist is not exhaustive and we recommend members consider this template carefully as it contains content that may require customisation before implementation into your business.

On company letterhead/logo.

This assessment should be used in conjunction with any relevant workplace policy, including those implemented in relation to COVID-19.

As always, seek advice from TRMC if necessary.

**Background**

This checklist is to be used by the Company to determine and manage possible risks and issues associated with employees traveling (intrastate, interstate or overseas) for work related purposes particularly as a result of the ongoing and geographically different potential risks from COVID-19.

Additionally, various relevant issues are considered at the end of this checklist that may also need to be assessed. As with all workplace related issues, clear communication with employee is strongly recommended to avoid negative outcomes.

No matter the travel type (interstate, intrastate, overseas) the company should consider its position on COVID vaccinations

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| **Intrastate travel** | |
| Is the travel necessary? | Yes   No |
| Are there any localised and related health restrictions? (wearing of masks, areas of lockdown, travel bans) | Yes  No |
| Do the company need to supply the travelling employee with facemasks, hand sanitiser or other related PPE? | Yes  No |
| Are additional communications necessary between the company, the employee, and sites being visited? | Yes  No |
| Is any accommodation to be used by the travelling employee also used for COVID-19 related quarantine? If so consider making alternative accommodation arrangements. | Yes  No |
| Has adequate discussion been held with the travelling employee over concerns they may have? | Yes  No |
| Is there a need to give the travelling employee a safety related direction relating to their conduct while traveling for work purposes? Has that direction been confirmed in writing? | Yes  No |
| *Other?* | Yes  No |
| **Interstate travel** | |
| Is the travel necessary? | Yes  No |
| Are there any localised and related health restrictions? (wearing of masks, areas of lockdown, travel bans) | Yes  No |
| Does the company need to supply the travelling employee with facemasks, hand sanitiser or other related PPE? | Yes  No |
| Are additional communications necessary between the company, the employee, and sites being visited? | Yes  No |
| Is any accommodation to be used by the travelling employee also used for COVID-19 related quarantine? If so consider making alternative arrangements. | Yes  No |
| Has adequate discussion been held with the travelling employee over concerns they may have? | Yes  No |
| Is there a need to give the travelling employee a safety related direction relating to their conduct while traveling for work purposes? Has that direction been confirmed in writing? | Yes  No |
| *Other?* | Yes  No |
| **Overseas travel** | |
| Is the travel necessary? | Yes   No |
| Does the employee have any additional travel related protocols to be undertaken prior to departure, either from the country of departure and/or the destination country, prior to departure? | Yes  No |
| Are there any localised and related health restrictions? (wearing of masks, areas of lockdown, travel bans) | Yes  No |
| Does the company need to supply the travelling employee with facemasks, hand sanitiser or other related PPE? | Yes  No |
| Are additional communications necessary between the company, the employee, and sites being visited? | Yes  No |
| Is any accommodation to be used by the travelling employee also used for COVID-19 related quarantine? If so consider making alternative arrangements. | Yes  No |
| Has adequate discussion been held with the travelling employee over concerns they may have? | Yes  No |
| Is there a need to give the travelling employee a safety direction relating to their conduct while traveling for work purposes? Has that direction been confirmed in writing? | Yes  No |
| *Other?* | Yes  No |

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| **Employee Feedback** |
| *Keep a record of any employee feedback that arises before or during any work-related travel and any related actions undertaken to correct those issues.* |

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| **Additional Management/Supervisory Comments** |
| *Keep a record of any management/supervisory feedback or issues that arise and any related actions undertaken to correct those issues.* |

**For responsible manager:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Managers name** |  |
| **Manager signature** |  |
| **Date** |  |

**Employee traveling for work - other issues and scenarios to consider**

The following are some examples of issues employers should consider from a risk management perspective when they have employees travelling for work related purposes.

**Has the company taken a position on employees receiving a COVID vaccine prior to traveling for work, particularly overseas?**

Employers have a legal obligation to provide a safe and healthy work environment for all workers. Additionally, workers are required to adhere to WHS related systems and directions. Members should base their workplace approach to a COVID vaccination policy from this perspective. Given the easy transmission of the virus, and the risk it poses to other employees and the business, a requirement that employees be vaccinated may be a reasonable direction. Further, workers are generally obliged to follow an employer’s direction that is ‘fair, lawful and or reasonable’.  
  
However, and whether members attempt to implement a mandatory vaccination direction or choose a voluntary (but encouraged) approach, will need to be well thought and carefully communicated to workers. As part of the process, members will need to consider and address any medical, health or belief related reasons as to why an individual cannot be vaccinated.

**What responsibilities does an employer have if an employee is interstate or overseas for work and a ‘travel bubble’ or border is closed?**

Given the employee is traveling for work related purposes, an employer will be responsible for associated costs incurred by an employee as a result of a travel restriction. This would include paying the employee their usual rates of pay, and additional accommodation costs. Additionally, the employer would be responsible for undertaking all reasonable steps to have the employee returned to their ordinary location as soon as possible. Nonetheless, if an employee is able to work remotely during such a period, an employer could expect the employee to perform work remotely as far as possible.

**What responsibilities does an employer have if the employee contracts COVID while they are traveling?**

Bluntly, if the employee is not able to perform their work duties as a result of illness, such a period would likely be taken as personal leave. However, if the employee caught COVID as a result of them undertaking travel for work related purposes, the issue gets somewhat blurry. Nonetheless, given the potential risk of contracting COVID, the employer will likely be responsible unless the employee has not taken all reasonable care and failed to follow employer related directions. It is therefore recommended that employers discuss related health and safety issues, concerns and expectations of employees prior to them undertaking work related travel.

**What responsibilities does an employer have if the employee is required to quarantine on their return to Australia or their home location?**

Given the quarantine requirement was the result of an employee undertaking work duties, the employer will likely be required to pay the employee their usual rates of pay for the quarantine period. Nonetheless, if the employee is ‘ready, willing and able’ to perform work during the quarantine period they can be directed to perform relevantly appropriate duties during that period.