

NZ Safety Alert

14 February 2020

Let's work together to keep ourselves and our workers safe

Don't work if you are not well

A worker started work feeling unwell but did not mention it to fellow workers or their supervisor. After vomiting in a rubbish bin, the worker took sick leave and left the site.

A fellow worker cleaned up the office. This worker called in sick the following day with a similar illness. It is believed that the second worker caught it from cleaning up the work area, even though gloves and disinfectant were used to clean the area.

Influenza is the most common virus and 3 people died of influenza in New Zealand during 2019. Other viruses such as SARS and Coronavirus are less common but are spread easily between humans.



You need to ensure that:

1. Policies are in place that require workers to advise their supervisor of poor health, medication being taken and any other issues that may affect their fitness for work.
2. Workers, including contractors, are not permitted to work on site unless they are fit for work.
3. Workers suffering viral infections or unknown causes of ill health are removed immediately from site and not in contact with other workers.
4. Hand cleaning and sterilizing products are available to all workers to avoid the spread of disease.

With the flu, you're contagious from 1 day before you have any symptoms. You stay that way for 5 to 7 days after you start feeling sick. It is possible for children and adults to spread the virus for even longer, until all of their symptoms fade.

Know of an incident or near miss? Please share the learnings with us.