

# MAKING SPACE ON SITE:

## A homeowners guide to manage COVID-19 during home building work



These guidelines are aimed at providing information to assist homeowners working with a builder or a tradesperson to build a new home or carry out a home renovation or repair project.

By providing you with this factsheet and the *HIA Making space on site guidelines* for your project, your builder or trade contractor is showing you they are committed to making safety the highest priority for their workers, clients and the public.

The Guidelines set out how your builder can meet the Government's separation and distancing requirements.

### Home building work is permitted to continue

The Federal and State governments have agreed the construction industry is an essential service and it is not subject to the current restrictions on non-essential public gatherings. This means that homeowners are also permitted to attend a building site with their builder for any required inspections of completed work.

### Renovation and repair work

If you are undertaking renovation or repair work in your home during this period, the builder will need to work with you and your family to manage how you continue living in the house.

Your renovation builder will work with you to minimise the potential exposure to COVID-19 for all parties. Renovation builders have extensive experience in carrying out work in existing dwellings and can managing the unique challenges this presents.

### New home construction

New home building sites can meet and exceed the Government's separation and social distancing requirements. The reasons for this include the small number of workers on a housing site at any one time, each typically travelling to work in private or business vehicles with construction following a standard sequence of work activities which can be managed to reduce the number of workers on site.

## How can I assist my builder complete my home building work in a COVID-19 environment?

### 1 Talk to your builder

- Discuss the **processes they have in place** to ensure the site is safe and that work is being carried out in line with the Government's COVID-19 requirements.
- **Share any concerns** you might have about how COVID-19 could affect your building work.

### 2 Be patient as works may be extended

- The **scheduling and staging** of building work may need to be changed in order to comply with the Guidelines and Government health requirements. Also, agreeing to extensions of time (if requested) will help provide certainty regarding the ultimate timeframe for completion of the work.

### 3 Attend inspections as required

- This is particularly important to ensure handover can occur when the work is complete. The **HIA contract handover process** gives the homeowner an opportunity to have a final inspection. Attending the final inspection gives the homeowner and builder a chance to make sure the building work is completed as required by the contract and can facilitate the making of the final payment. The process for final payment differs in each state so your builder will advise you on this process in accordance with your contract.
- If you are not living onsite, HIA understands that **you are permitted to leave your place of residence and travel to these inspections** as they are necessary for the carrying out of construction work, which is recognised as an essential service.
- As the home owner, you may also plan to have **other inspections** of the building work (for example, building consultants). This must be arranged through the builder to ensure that no person enters the site without authorisation and that no person enters the site at a time when other workers are on site who need to be able to maintain separate and space.

### 4 Comply with the Government health and hygiene requirements

- The builder and the homeowner need to follow all current Government guidelines for **COVID-19 safety measures**.
- The builder and the homeowner are responsible for advising the other party should a person normally on site be identified as being **at risk of, or confirmed to have, COVID-19**.

### 5 Keep connected with your builder

- Remaining in contact with your builder via **phone and email** is important and can help everyone understand who will be on site at any time and how building work can be safely managed to deliver the finished new home or renovation for the home owner.
- If you are responsible for providing any building materials for use in the building work ensure that these are purchased and provided to the builder in a timely manner, taking account for potential delays in availability.

Our priority is to keep our workers, our clients and our community safe.