



A MANAGER'S GUIDE: WHEN YOUR TEAM MEMBER IS ILL DURING COVID-19

The most important thing to remember is your team member will need reassurance it is OK and that it is important they stay at home while they recover.

be prepared yourself, as they may be emotional or upset

Before you approach the person ask yourself:

- Am I in a good headspace?
- Am I willing to genuinely listen?
- Can I give as much time as needed?

if they have called in sick

- Pause and breathe before you respond to their news
- Listen to their explanation with no judgement

navigating the conversation for either situation

- Reassure them that not coming to work while sick is a practice supported by the organisation.
- Have a conversation about their situation, including whether there is a requirement to self-isolate.
 - Self-isolation for a period of 14 days applies to all people who have returned from overseas (from the date of their return), or those who have come into contact with a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19.
 - All other employees can return to work once their symptoms cease.
- Establish with the employee how long the period of absence is likely to be, based on their situation.
- Agree how would they like to stay connected, stay up-to-date about what support they may need. Check-in (not check-up) on their overall wellbeing, their absence and their expected return to work date.
- Continue to monitor the situation with the employee and plan for any staffing implications.
- If you are unsure, consult your leave guidance or speak to your HR consultant or business partner.

after the conversation

Take a moment to think about the conversation and work through any feelings you may be experiencing yourself.



the follow up phone call

- Prepare yourself again.
- Remember that Raise is available to any member of staff for personal and confidential support.
- Schedule reminders to make follow-up phone calls to stay connected with your team member.
- Have a conversation along the lines of the above.

Adapted from Mental Health Foundation: A 'how-to' on having mental health conversation in the workplace
<https://www.mentalhealth.org.nz/home/our-work/category/40/open-minds>