



## Fact Sheet: COVID Safe planning for charter fishing businesses

As at 6 August 2020

Advice for  
businesses providing  
charter fishing and  
fishing guide  
activities in  
Queensland

### More information

For more information you  
can visit [covid19.qld.gov.au](https://covid19.qld.gov.au).

For general information  
about the Queensland  
Government's response to  
COVID-19 you can call  
**134 COVID (13 42 68)**.

## Do I need to develop a COVID Safe plan for my charter fishing business?

All charter fishing and fishing guide businesses need to have a COVID Safe business plan in place to ensure they keep their business, staff and customers safe.

Charter fishing and fishing guide businesses must follow the [Queensland Tourism and Accommodation COVID Safe Industry Plan](#) to operate for more than 50 customers.

Should your business provide food, you must also comply with the [Retail Food Services COVID Safe Industry Plan](#) or, if less than 50 customers, the [COVID Safe Checklist for Seated dining and drinking](#).

[COVID Safe business plans](#) should support the four criteria for a safe return to business:

1. Promote and facilitate pre-screening to prevent potentially infected staff and customers from attending.
2. Alter business practices where relevant to ensure physical distancing in line with government health guidelines.
3. Enhance cleaning and hygiene practices to reduce the risk of infection.
4. Establish and maintain COVID Safe procedures aligned to Work Safe Queensland guidelines.

### Stage 3: up to 50 customers

Checklist should be completed and read in conjunction with the COVID Safe Principles outlined in the [Queensland Tourism and Accommodation Industry COVID Safe Plan](#).

You can have up to 50 customers on your day trip vessel by following the [checklist for vehicles and vessels for up to 50 people](#).

You must also follow the occupant density rules:

- no more than 1 person per 2 square metres for venues or spaces of 200 square metres or less or
- no more than 1 person per 4 square metres for venues or spaces of 200 square metres or more.

### Stage 3: more than 50 customers

If you want to operate with more than 50 customers under Stage 3 easing of restrictions, you will need to:

- complete an individual [COVID Safe business plan](#) — you do not submit your individual plan to Queensland Health for approval, however is required for compliance checking purposes
- complete the [Statement of Compliance](#) and display in a prominent location for patrons to see.



All businesses must also update their work health and safety plan (or safety management system for vessel-based charter fishing) to reflect COVID-19 requirements. More information on risk management regarding COVID-19 is available from [Worksafe Queensland](https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au).

**Please note:** All vessels must continue to abide by Australian Maritime Safety Authority domestic commercial vessel marine safety requirements.

## Which COVID Safe plans and/or checklists do I need to follow?

Ensure you regularly visit the COVID-19 website to check for updates to COVID Safe Industry Plans and Checklists. Do not use Google search to find plans and checklists as the search may return old versions.

Depending on what sort of fishing experience you provide, there are different plans you need to follow:

- **All charter fishing and fishing guide businesses** must follow the [Queensland Tourism and Accommodation COVID Safe Industry Plan](#) (a [Word template](#) is also available). When following this industry plan, your business is also required to develop a [COVID Safe business plan](#).
- **All charter fishing and fishing guide businesses** hosting up to 50 people need to comply with the [COVID Safe Checklist for vehicles and vessels for up to 50 people](#).
- If you **provide food to fewer than 50 customers** as part of the experience, you must comply with the [COVID Safe Checklist for seated dining and drinking](#).
- If you **provide food for more than 50 customers**, you must comply with the [Retail Food Services COVID Safe Industry Plan](#).
- If you **provide an overnight stay option on your vessel**, you are considered to be an accommodation provider and you must comply with the relevant [public health directions](#).
- If you **provide an overnight stay option on your vessel and you have shared facilities**, you are considered to be an accommodation provider, you must comply with the [public health directions](#) which includes preparing a [Accommodation and Transport Health Management Plan](#) and having a COVID Safe plan that complies with the [Queensland Tourism and Accommodation COVID Safe Industry Plan](#).

**Please note:** Due to the unique environment in which charter fishers operate, additional measures are required to control the risk of infection and demonstrate the operator has gone above and beyond work health and safety requirements.

However, when determining the maximum number of customers on board, you should also consider where customers might be during inclement weather to avoid crowding, and how to maintain a distance of 1.5 metres between customers and the skipper (if possible).



## What is an 'approved option'?

COVID Safe industry plans include 'approved options' that allow for reduced physical distancing in a range of unique environments, including vessels, buses, boats, aircraft, gondolas and other vehicles. As charter fishing business are an approved option, you will need to demonstrate in your COVID Safe business plan that you have increased emphasis on the following mitigation strategies:

- Time within the confines of the vessel or transport vehicle will be limited where practical.
- Pre-screening is enhanced to ensure that prior to boarding passengers and staff are asked about symptoms and risk factors for COVID-19, and if any are present, they are told they cannot continue and should seek medical advice.
- Hand hygiene will be enforced upon entry and businesses will provide a mechanism whereby this is observed and enforced regularly.
- Businesses will provide masks wherever possible for passengers who prefer to use them. For people who are or become unwell in transit, masks should be supplied both for the person exhibiting symptoms and everyone within a 1.5 metre radius (including any staff attending to them).
- Undertake enhanced cleaning between trips with particular attention to high-touch surfaces.
- Businesses will comply with social distancing wherever practical, acknowledging that it may be necessary to reduce passenger loads.

**Please note:** Robust pre-screening and complete adherence to enhanced cleaning and hygiene practices is essential.

## What hygiene and physical distancing rules do I need to follow?

**Hygiene:** You must provide additional time, training and materials for enhanced hygiene procedures, such as regular cleaning of high-touch surfaces, touch-free payment and ticketing options, encouraging regular hand hygiene for staff and customers, and taking steps to prevent crowding. Read the federal government's [Environmental cleaning and disinfection principles for COVID-19](#).

**Physical distancing:** Most vessels will be able to maintain 1.5 metre physical distancing between people with a reduced number on passengers on board. If this is not possible, **you cannot take away an individual's choice to maintain a physical distance of 1.5 metres** and you must:

- advise potential customers that you may not have the space available for them to maintain physical distancing before taking their booking
- have a COVID Safe business plan in place demonstrating the measures you have put in place to minimise the potential for infection
- undertake robust pre-screening of staff and passengers and keep records.

You should remind customers of their responsibility to maintain the 1.5 metre physical distance on board. Other recommended measures to reduce physical contact include not shaking hands, sharing fishing gear or food, and limiting face-to-face contact to less than 15 minutes.



**Staff safety:** In addition to adhering to social and community health guidelines relating to the COVID-19 pandemic, business owners and staff are responsible for ensuring a safe workplace. In the context of COVID-19, the responsibility for staff safety belongs to both the business owners/operators and individual staff members.

## Why should I pre-screen staff and customers?

Pre-screening is required for all 'approved options' and is a good way to minimise the risk of infection by helping to identify potential infections early. It's best to get as much information as possible by phone or email prior to any face-to-face engagement. It is critical to keep pre-screening records to help health authorities complete contact tracing if required. Pre-screening also helps increase staff and customer confidence. Pre-screening protocols are included in the [Queensland Tourism and Accommodation Industry COVID Safe Plan template](#).

You should update your online information so customers are aware of changes in response to COVID-19, including the right of refusal of entry to customers refusing to comply with the conditions of your COVID Safe plan. Customers and staff must be made aware that they are not to attend the charter if they have any symptoms.

**Please note:** Border closures and [COVID-19 hotspots](#) are declared to stop people who have travelled to high-risk areas entering Queensland without first completing a 14-day [quarantine](#). You must ensure ALL customers booking activities have not been in a hotspot within the last 14 days prior to the activity.

## Staff training

Staff must be trained in the implementation of your COVID Safe plan, hand hygiene practices, use of personal protective equipment, what to do if someone presents with COVID-19 symptoms, and record-keeping requirements. Training records must be kept, including dates and staff signatures.

If food is served as part of the fishing experience, staff must complete mandatory online training within two weeks of your business opening or reopening, any new staff must complete this training before commencing duties. Find out more about [approved training programs](#).

## Record keeping

All COVID Safe plans, supporting documentation and records of implementation of risk control measures **must** be available to Workplace Health and Safety Queensland or other Queensland Government officials if requested. For vessel-based charter fishing businesses, it is advisable to keep these with your safety management system.

You must keep contact information about all customers and staff for contact tracing purposes—this must include name, phone number, email address (residential if not available), the date and time period of patronage (i.e. duration). The information should be securely stored, not used for any other purpose, and deleted after 56 days. If requested, this information must be provided to public health officers within a stated time. The information should be readily available to ensure your business can fulfil this request.



Guidance information on mandatory [collection, storage, and destruction of personal information](#) in accordance with the Chief Health Officer's direction is available on the COVID-19 website.

## Other resources

- Frequently asked questions are available in the [Queensland Tourism and Accommodation COVID Safe Industry Plan](#) and by searching for FAQ on the [COVID-19 website](#).
- [COVID Safe business plan template](#) is available in the [Queensland Tourism and Accommodation COVID Safe Industry Plan](#) on the COVID-19 website.
- [Statement of Compliance](#) for downloading, completion and display.
- Guidance information on mandatory [collection, storage, and destruction of personal information](#) in accordance with the Chief Health Officer's direction.
- [Safe Work Australia](#) has printable posters and information on workplace mental health and what to do if a staff member has COVID-19.
- Download [printable posters](#) to show your customers and staff the actions you are taking to stop the spread of COVID-19.
- Refer to updates to the [health direction for business](#).