
Executive Summary for Guideline for Responding to a Confirmed Case of COVID-19 at a Queensland Food Processing Establishment

Version 1.1

Publish date
December 2021

Last updated by
Safe Food Production Queensland





Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide an Executive Summary of the Guideline for Responding to a Confirmed Case of COVID 19 at a Queensland Food Processing Establishment which is the operational guidance for the coordination and management of a response to one or more confirmed COVID-19 cases (an outbreak) in a Queensland food processing establishment. The guideline outlines the roles and responsibilities of relevant parties, escalation procedures and expectations around information collection, sharing and timeframes.

For further details please refer to the [Guideline for Responding to a Confirmed Case of COVID 19 at a Queensland Food Processing Establishment](#) on our [COVID-19 Advice Page](#) on our website.

This guideline provides a framework that businesses can use to ensure that there is a consistent and efficient approach to managing contacts in the workplace. It will allow businesses to report to Queensland Health and/or Public Health Units on their risk response when investigating a positive COVID-19 case at a food processing establishment. The document is provided in a context of current Queensland government approach to COVID-19. As we progress further to the suppression of the virus, the document may be updated to reflect relevant changes.

Objectives

The objectives of this guideline are to:

- ensure worker health and safety following the identification of one or more positive COVID-19 cases within a business workforce
- ensure actions are taken to quickly respond to, and manage the risk of spread of COVID-19 in the business workforce and within the broader community
- ensure efficient, open lines of communication; clarity of roles and responsibilities; and clear escalation points among/between health authorities, businesses, employees and regulators
- assist in facilitating a staged shut-down of processing activities at the site if required
- manage any ancillary issues such as animal welfare

When to implement this guideline

This guideline is triggered when a positive COVID-19 case linked to a worker within a food processing facility is identified. Each outbreak will differ according to the circumstances of the case. This guideline will focus on identifying and understanding the risks of the outbreak in the business at the earliest opportunity to support the response.



Principles

The principles underpinning this guideline are:

- Having policies and procedures in place for protecting employees, the community and the business
- To provide guidance for rapid response and decision making
- To establish processes for timely information sharing and escalation points
- To support business accountability

Contact Exposure Guide

Lower risk Does not indicate that there is no risk	High risk	Higher Risk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Works in a separate area / room of the site (e.g., raw vs cook rooms, kill floor vs boning room, administration office, external maintenance services) ○ Identified via the Check In QLD app outside the business (e.g. low risk contact) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Works in a separate cohort but in the same closed space with adequate PPE ○ Identified via the Check In QLD app outside the business (e.g. <u>casual contact</u>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lives in the same household ○ Travels together (carpool / bus / train) ○ Works in the same cohort ○ Works in the same closed space without adequate PPE ○ Identified via the Check In QLD app outside the business (e.g. close contact)

Note: This categorization is provided as a guide only. The PHU will assess the exposure and other factors (i.e. vaccination, ventilation, size of production environment) relating to cases and contacts to determine management.



Response Guideline Summary

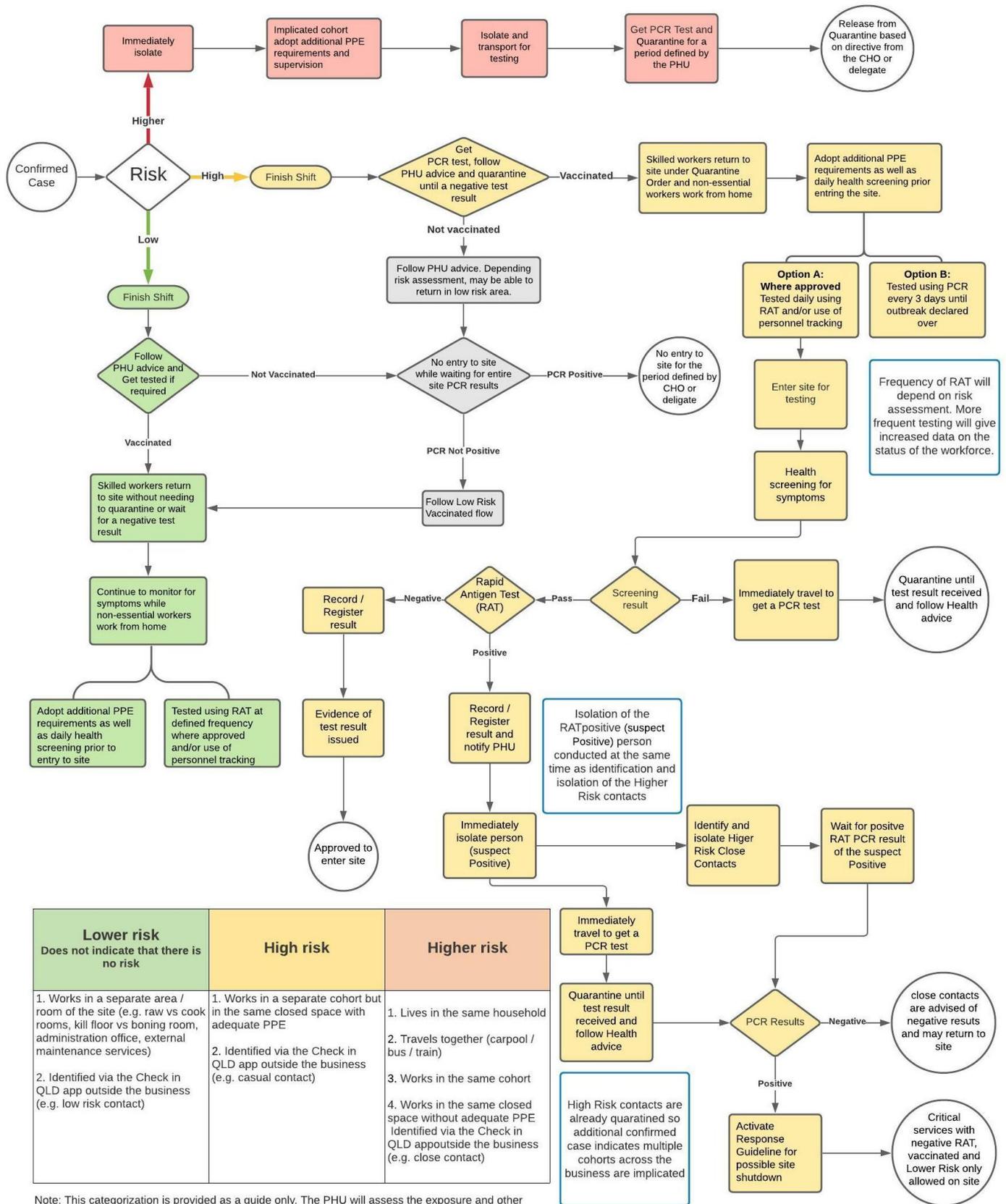
1. Declare	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Outbreak declared due to positive case of COVID-19• 24/7 contact available
2. Initiate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stand up Outbreak Management Team (OMT)• Cross section of business skills and are trained in the Outbreak Management Plan (OMP)• Continuity plans if OMT member tests positive
3. Identify	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commence contact tracing• Identify higher, high and low risk contacts• Prepare documentation (employee contacts, shift roster, work place maps)
4. Isolate/Quarantine	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Isolate/Quarantine Higher Risk contacts• Higher Risk contacts to quarantine for period defined by PHU• Area available in the facility for isolation
5. Test	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Test Higher Risk contacts immediately• Test remaining staff• Self-isolate until test results are known• Determine if on-site testing is possible
6. Enhance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement enhanced infection controls• Ensure staff are trained (e.g. PPE)
7. Restrict	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lockdown the site and prevent entry and exit• Ensure inputs (e.g. livestock transport) are notified to cease• OMP identify critical services and external contractors to maintain facility
8. Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transport Higher Risk contacts to medical centre for testing• Avoid using public transport• Procedure documented and trained for taxi / ride share services if needed
9. Communicate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Internal and external• Timely, clear, concise, and accurate• Recommend staff avoid posting on social media• Prepare media statements
10. Clean	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct clean• Non-food contact areas (e.g. common areas, amenities, control panels)• Ensure cleaning staff have adequate PPE
11. Maintain	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain process control• Continue conducting production monitoring, including animal welfare
12. Monitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check on staff wellbeing in quarantine and at work• Quarantine staff to be retested at a period defined by PHU• Use of RAT or electronic devices to monitor staff movement on site
13. Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure support is available for staff during the outbreak• Casual employees may be more impacted in a facility lockdown
14. Re-commence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No new cases within 14 days of the last positive case• Declare outbreak over in consultation with PHU and OMT• OMT to debrief and review outbreak



Flow Chart for Classification of Contacts

Flow Chart A

Site response to a positive case of COVID-19. (where no or low community transmission)



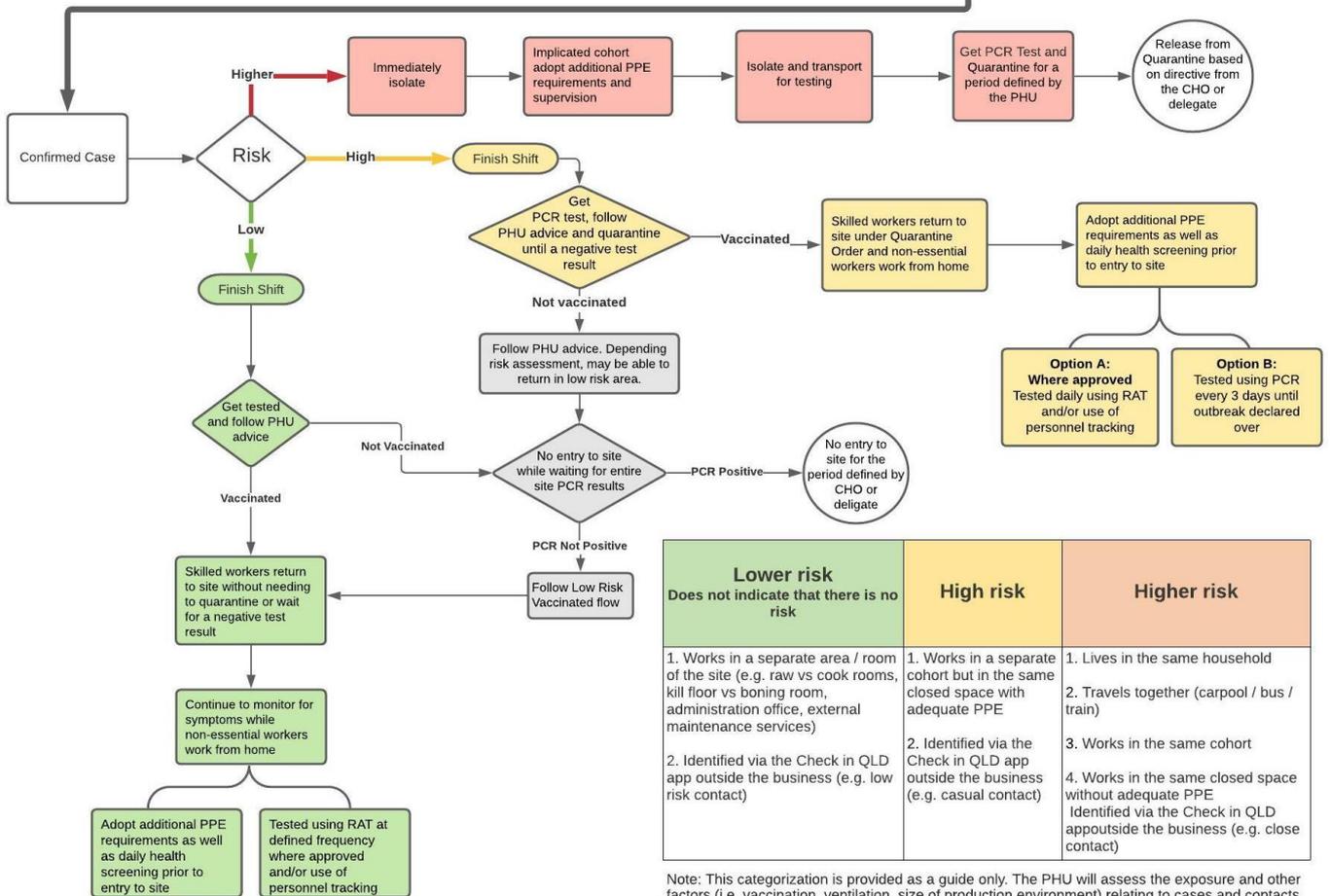
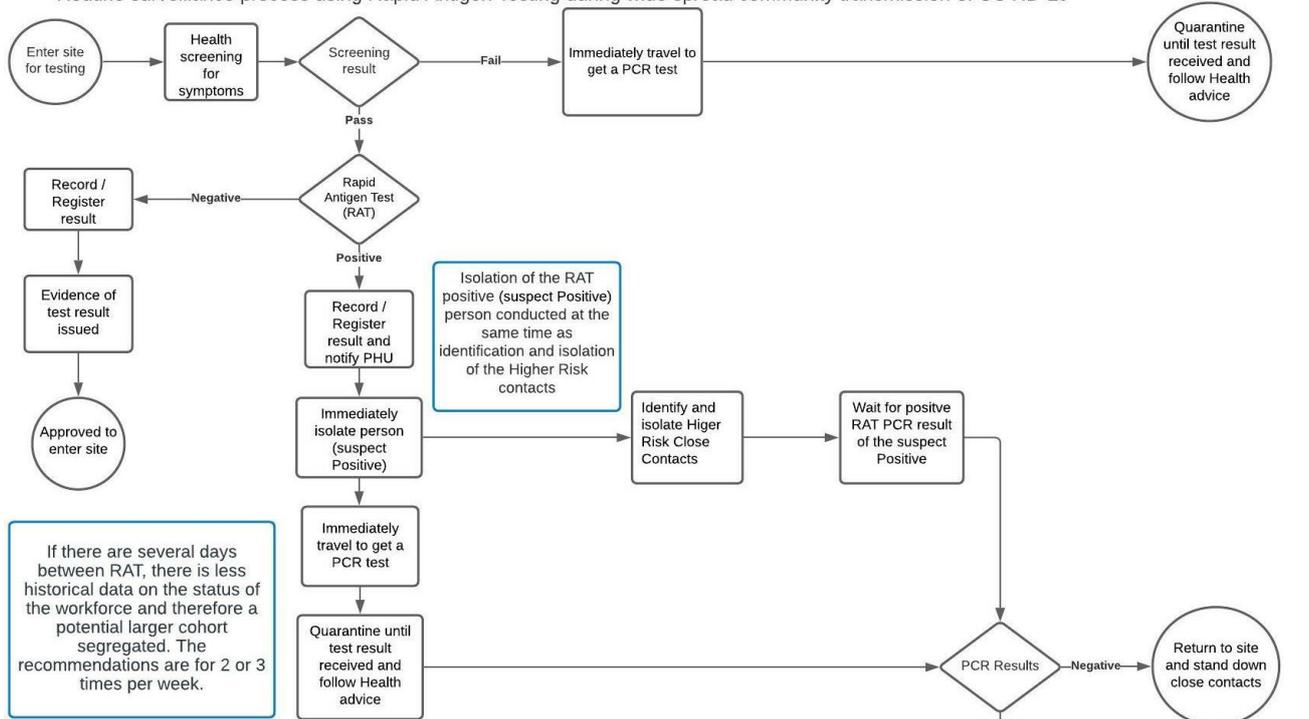
Lower risk Does not indicate that there is no risk	High risk	Higher risk
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Works in a separate area / room of the site (e.g. raw vs cook rooms, kill floor vs boning room, administration office, external maintenance services) Identified via the Check in QLD app outside the business (e.g. low risk contact) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Works in a separate cohort but in the same closed space with adequate PPE Identified via the Check in QLD app outside the business (e.g. casual contact) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Lives in the same household Travels together (carpool / bus / train) Works in the same cohort Works in the same closed space without adequate PPE Identified via the Check in QLD app outside the business (e.g. close contact)

Note: This categorization is provided as a guide only. The PHU will assess the exposure and other factors (i.e. vaccination, ventilation, size of production environment) relating to cases and contacts to determine management



Flow Chart B

Routine surveillance process using Rapid Antigen Testing during wide spread community transmission of COVID-19



Lower risk Does not indicate that there is no risk	High risk	Higher risk
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Works in a separate area / room of the site (e.g. raw vs cook rooms, kill floor vs boning room, administration office, external maintenance services) Identified via the Check in QLD app outside the business (e.g. low risk contact) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Works in a separate cohort but in the same closed space with adequate PPE Identified via the Check in QLD app outside the business (e.g. casual contact) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Lives in the same household Travels together (carpool / bus / train) Works in the same cohort Works in the same closed space without adequate PPE Identified via the Check in QLD app outside the business (e.g. close contact)

Note: This categorization is provided as a guide only. The PHU will assess the exposure and other factors (i.e. vaccination, ventilation, size of production environment) relating to cases and contacts to determine management



Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 2.5 Australia (CC BY-NC-SA 2.5 AU)

You are free to:

Share — copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format

Adapt — remix, transform, and build upon the material

The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms.

Under the following terms:

Attribution — You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.

Non-Commercial — You may not use the material for commercial purposes.

ShareAlike — If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the same license as the original.

No additional restrictions — You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits.

Notices:

You do not have to comply with the license for elements of the material in the public domain or where your use is permitted by an applicable exception or limitation.

No warranties are given. The license may not give you all of the permissions necessary for your intended use. For example, other rights such as publicity, privacy, or moral rights may limit how you use the material.