



## LIVING ALONE AND WORKING FROM HOME



Most of us have experienced feelings of isolation and loneliness during COVID-19. A higher risk group is people living on their own, including young or older singles, and single parents that are also juggling caring responsibilities and remote learning. While ongoing changes to COVID-19 restrictions and continued lockdowns have impacted everyone's ability to maintain social relationships, people who live alone often rely solely on digital sources for social connection.

For anyone that lives alone or with school-age children, it is important to establish healthy routines that incorporate good nutrition, self-care and exercise, particularly if you're also working from home.

Here are some practical tips for those living alone and working from home.

- **Stay connected.** Reach out to colleagues, friends and family on a regular basis. Remember you can maintain meaningful connections via phone, online or where possible, through visits with family and friends when restrictions permit.
- **Be aware of digital fatigue.** Working and connecting via your phone and computer can take its toll. Speak with your manager about flexible working arrangements to ensure you 'switch off' from work and make time to connect with friends and family.
- **Look after yourself and spend time outside.** Stay active and eat well, make sure you get enough sleep and spend some time outside. Healthy habits help reduce stress, anxiety and support overall wellbeing.
- **Maintain boundaries between work and home life.** Develop a flexible routine that gives you enough time to work and wind down from your day. If you can, set up a defined workspace that is separate to living areas.
- **Be kind to yourself and maintain perspective.** We will not be living and working this way long-term. In the meantime, be kind to yourself, take breaks from work to switch off and take care of your wellbeing.



### This factsheet is designed to help:

- People who live on their own
- Single parents
- Employers and managers.



### Self help tools

- [Beyond Blue Wellbeing Plan](#)
- [My Compass Self-Help App](#)
- [Mindspot Online Mental Health Assessment](#)
- [Mood Gym Interactive Mental Health Program](#)



### For more information

- [Australian Government](#)
- [Health Direct](#)
- [Australian Psychological Society](#)
- [Beyond Blue – looking after your mental health during the coronavirus](#)



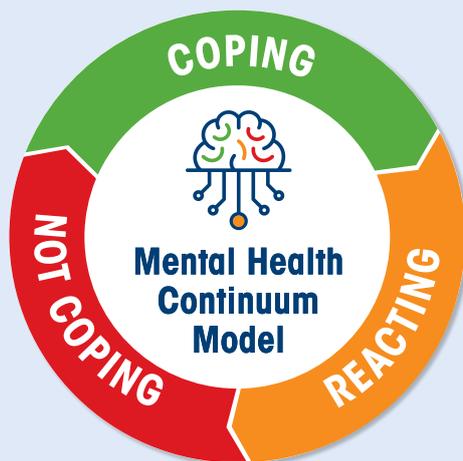
## THE ROLE OF EMPLOYERS AND MANAGERS



You have a critical role to play in supporting workers who live alone. Research shows these workers are at higher risk of working longer hours and blurring the line between work and home life, which makes it so important for establishing open and ongoing communication.

There are some practical ways employers and managers can help people who live alone.

- **Stay connected.** Reach out on a regular basis via phone or online. Managers should set up short daily catch ups to stay in touch and discuss workload.
- **Open communication.** Managers should define clear boundaries between home and work life. Discuss flexible working options to help ensure workers have adequate breaks.
- **Be aware of digital fatigue.** Managers can support workers with flexible routines that ensure there are regular breaks in work-based screen time to give them the opportunity to connect with friends and family.



### Coping

- Coping with normal mood fluctuations
- Able to focus and be productive
- **ACTION:** keep active, eat well and stay connected

### Reacting

- Lonely, anxious or upset
- Unable to focus, sleep or eat well
- **ACTION:** connect with a trusted friend, colleague, health professional or contact your Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

### Not Coping

- Excessive anxiety or sadness
- Unable to cope with isolation or take care of yourself
- **ACTION:** contact your GP, a counsellor or psychologist, the EAP or other support services (see below).



### Support services

- Beyond Blue: 1800 512 348
- Lifeline: 13 11 14
- MensLine Australia: 1300 78 99 78
- Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467
- Emergency Services: 000