

Isolated workplaces



What is remote or isolated work?

If your work is away from the assistance of others due to location, time or nature of the work, you could be experiencing workplace isolation.

Workplace isolation is common for:

- Small business owners operating in rural locations.
- Those who work unusual hours.
- Those with limited contact to others at their place of work, such as delivery drivers.

Working in isolation can lead to:

- Poor access to medical or emergency assistance;
- Limited opportunity for training or supervision; and/or
- Reduced mental health due to feeling fatigued or socially isolated.

It is important to do what is in your control to care for your mental health and wellbeing to prevent and limit these risks.

HINT:

A big part of this is connecting!

Social connectedness

Feeling close and connected to others is good for our physical and mental health.

Living in a remote area or spending large amounts of time in your delivery vehicle with limited interaction with others may mean that it is harder to engage in social connection.

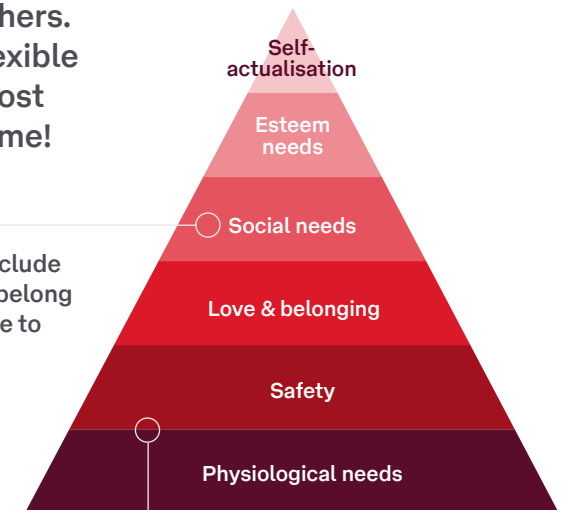
It is always possible to connect with others. Be creative and flexible to find a way to boost your connection time!

Social needs include feeling like we belong and have people to reach out to.

Humans are wired to connect

Being around others provides us with feelings of joy and satisfaction with our lives and successes.

Consider the pyramid below. This is **Maslow's Theory of Needs**; for humans to reach their full potential (i.e., self-actualisation), often the needs that are lower down must first be satisfied.



The first two levels of the pyramid refer to the basic but critical needs for food, water and security, such as having a safe home and financial security.



Australia Post support contacts

Workforce Assistance Program (WAP)
1300 687 327 / convergeinternational.com.au



Emergency contacts – 24 hours

Police and Ambulance: Dial 000

BeyondBlue: 1300 224 636 / beyondblue.org.au

Suicide Call Back Service:
1300 659 487 / suicidecallbackservice.org.au

Creating good work habits

If you work remotely or find that you are often isolated throughout the day, implementing some practical and easy things into your work day can help.

Check in with your colleagues

Reach out to your colleagues, friends, and family members. Just one phone call that boosts connection time can make a huge impact on someone's day as well as your own.

Plan virtual lunches or coffees

Although you may be physically isolated from your colleagues or friends, does that mean you can't enjoy someone else's company over lunch? Why not use the technology available to us and video call a friend during a work break.

Communicate expectations and boundaries with customers, family members and colleagues

Making sure you have time for self-care and connecting with your loved ones is a challenge when work demands increase. Make this a priority by setting clear boundaries and actively communicating this with your team and people in your life.

What does work-life balance look like to you? Talk openly to your family, friends and colleagues about how you can practically and effectively integrate your work and personal life. Try to achieve this with their support.

Work and personal connections are both useful resources to build social connection and increase mental wellbeing.

There are always some ways to increase social connection!

Now that you understand what social connection is and why it is important, you're probably thinking about the barriers your work role may pose. Even when things get in the way, such as not having time in the day, try not to neglect connection.

Use technologies, such as video chat, to easily boost your connection. It can be much less demanding and easier to fit in an online catch up, especially when there is a lot happening in our lives. Incorporate it into your routine by calling a friend when you're exercising, getting ready in the morning, or at lunchtime.