



Australian
National
University

COVID-19 FAQs

Stay At Home Orders FAQs for residential halls

A guide to keeping our community safe

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SAHO FAQs for residential halls

The COVID-19 health situation and the resulting restrictions in the ACT are new for us: The Stay at Home Order (SAHO) is different to both Quarantine and Self-Isolation. We need a clear understanding of this to provide clear information to staff, residents and contracted service providers and operate our on campus residences safely.

The difference between Quarantine/Self Isolation/Stay at Home Orders and practical examples can be found here: [Quarantine, isolation and stay at home - COVID-19](https://covid19.act.gov.au) (covid19.act.gov.au)

On top of understanding the principles guiding our safety precautions, and the ANU approach to assessing and mitigating risks, we need to appreciate that we are trying to keep a much bigger community or 'household' safe. A rule that makes sense in a family of 4 might be impossible in a hall with 100 or more people - even if it's just for a brief time.

- Further information is available in the ANU *Fact Sheet: Stay at Home Orders in Student Accommodation available on the ANU COVID-19 Guidelines webpage*

Key messages:

People completing a SAHO are low risk for community transmission of COVID-19. The restrictions on their activities, movement and contact with others are a safety measure that is necessary and proportionate.

People completing a SAHO are not in the same area at the same time as other residents in their Hall, Lodge, House or College.

We will do our best to explain the rules. Then we will try our best to answer the questions that have been asked about how these rules work in your Hall, Lodge, House or College.

- **If people are well** and haven't been exposed to risk, they are living in their usual residence under usual rules and keeping safe – which means being aware of distance, washing hands regularly, wearing a mask according to ACT Health and University directions, be aware of touchpoints, sanitising surfaces regularly and getting tested if they develop symptoms.
- **If people have been directed to complete a SAHO**, they have been assessed by ACT Health as low risk for community transmission of COVID-19 so are living in their residence under restrictions that are designed to keep others safe – which means they wear a mask at all times outside their room, have very restricted access to common areas and going outside according to ACT Health and University directions, keep distance by staying in their room and not interacting with people who are not under SAHO when in corridor or common area, wash hands regularly, be aware of avoiding touchpoints, sanitise surfaces regularly and get tested if they have symptoms. They will receive no contact deliveries and online and non-physical engagement and support from their ANU community
- **If people have been directed to Quarantine** they are separated from others. They keep distance by staying in their room, they do not leave except for in emergencies, they wear a mask if they need to leave their room for an emergency, and they observe strict hygiene and get tested if they have symptoms. They will receive no contact deliveries and online and non-physical engagement and support from their ANU community
- **If a person has been directed to Self Isolate** they would be separated and moved to a designated facility on or off campus that complies with ACT Health requirements. They would still receive online and non-physical engagement and support from their ANU community.

When we **understand the level of risk** and the measures in place to prevent outbreak, we can assure people who are not under SAHO that we are able to keep all residents safe whilst enabling students to complete a SAHO in their home on campus.

Community FAQs

How many people are doing the Stay At Home Order (SAHO)?

We currently have around 180 residents completing a SAHO across the campus. These residents are under strict directions from ACT Health and the ANU COVID Response Office. Residence teams are working hard to make them as comfortable as possible and to support the safety and wellbeing of all students in their community.

What if someone got COVID?

If this happens, the individual concerned would be immediately put into self-isolation. Beyond this it would be ACT Health's call as to how the rest of the SAHO group is managed but it is most likely that they will be considered close contacts and have to quarantine for 14 days from the last time they interacted with the COVID-19 positive person.

Do I have to wear a face mask in the kitchen?

You do have to wear a mask in the kitchens but you can take your mask off when you are eating.

Do I have to wear a face mask in the corridors or when going to the bathroom?

Yes. You do not need to wear a mask when you are moving on the floor where you live or in your multishare apartment. You do need to wear a mask in all other areas of the residence.

Do all residents cook in masks in the kitchen and take them off to eat?

Yes! In shared spaces, masks are only removed when eating.

Will COVID come to Canberra?

The ACT does not, as of 29 June 2021, have any active cases of COVID-19. ANU has an alert system that is guided by ACT Health public health orders. ANU is confident in our risk management and in the ability of our community to keep themselves and others safe.

When will I be able to use facilities as usual?

The residences have worked hard to limit the restrictions on students who are not required to complete a SAHO. The restrictions and requirements are the minimum needed to keep each other safe at the level of risk we are managing. We do not know how long this period of restriction will be, but we will keep the residential community informed of all requirements and timelines.

Can SAHO residents use a section of the kitchen or dining hall?

Yes but the space people on a SAHO will use will be a designated space only for their use. People on SAHO will not be in the kitchen at the same time as non-SAHO people. There will be

additional cleaning regimes after people completing a SAHO have used a space. Please be familiar with and follow your hall schedule. You can also do your part by sanitizing the surfaces you use.

Why are the Sydneysiders being allowed to quarantine at the hall + leave their rooms for exercise?

The SAHO is a new system – it is not quarantine.

The SAHO restrictions ACT Health has put in place are different from quarantine restrictions that were in place in the beginning of 2021 or are in place for people who have been deemed close contacts in an exposure site. Anyone who has returned from Sydney since 21 June 2021 are currently under ACT Health stay-at-home restrictions which allow them to leave their rooms for exercise and essential reasons. More information about the difference between quarantine, stay-at-home, and isolation can be found on the ACT Health website: <https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/stay-safe-and-healthy/quarantine-and-isolation>

Is it safe for SAHO people (e.g. from Sydney or Wollongong) to be mingling in a designated common room?

The overall risk of the students in SAHO is relatively low as they have not been to any close contact locations. As long as the group practices COVID-safe behaviour whenever they are mingling, the risk remains low.

What if Wollongong got taken off the list?

It is unlikely that restrictions loosen at short notice. But if any area gets taken off the list, they will be free to leave SAHO.

Why do we have to wear masks but the cleaning staff doesn't?

The cleaning teams will follow the directions provided by ACT Health and by their employer regarding masks and other Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). If you are concerned about their safety or yours, please talk with your Head of Residence.

Are those in SAHO getting tested?

Yes, students who are completing a SAHO are able to get tested. Some students were tested before they entered the residence, others will be supported to access the ACT Health testing sites.

Questions about Stay at Home Order arrangements:

How do I get rid of my rubbish?

Be guided by your Head of Residence and hall updates.

How do I do my laundry?

Be guided by your Head of Residence and hall updates.

Can I exercise with other SAHO people?

You can do outdoor exercise with up to 5 other SAHO within your SAHO group in your residence, not with people in SAHO in other residences. This reduces the risk of exposure if any person becomes unwell or is identified as a close contact. Please behave with caution and follow social distancing and hygiene protocols when exercising. If you are feeling sick, do NOT leave your room for non-urgent reasons until you get a COVID-19 test.

How do I get the meal packages?

Ursula Hall Catering is able to provide breakfast, lunch and dinner at a cost of \$9.00 per meal (to be charged at the end of the SAHO) to all residents. If you would like to order a homemade meal, contact your residence and you will be given a Catering Request Form with ordering and payment instructions.

What can I do if I am struggling with the isolation and with following restrictions?

A member of your residence team will be in contact each day to see how you are going and to provide individual support. A Winter Break program of online activities will be provided soon. Evidence from reviews of wellbeing of people who have time in quarantine has shown that setting a structure in your day is very important. Please know that we encourage you to make use of the no cost support services available to all ANU students:

<https://www.anu.edu.au/covid-19-advice/wellbeing-and-support/reach-out-for-support>

<https://www.talkcampus.io/australian-national-university>

ANU Student Wellbeing and Support 24 hour phone and text service:
Phone: 1300 050 327 and SMS Text message service: 0488 884 170

<https://www.anu.edu.au/students/health-safety-wellbeing>

How do I sign up to Interhall Winter Break online activities?

Links will be available to you from your residence pastoral care team very soon! They will give you access to virtual activities across campus for those under SAHO. This could include origami at Bruce Hall, B&G yoga, tutorials and more.

If you would like to lead an online activity, please let your SR know. They will work with the residence staff to include your activity in the whole of campus program.

Can I use a common room?

Follow Head of Residence direction

How many people can be in a shared space?

Only students from within the same SAHO group can share the SAHO designated common spaces.

Can I use the lift?

It is best not to. Please maximise your use of the fire exit to move up and down the building.

Can I get financial assistance?

If any student is experiencing financial hardship as a result of being required to Stay at Home, e.g. not able to work, extra costs for meal deliveries rather than self catering, you are able to apply for financial assistance:

<https://www.anu.edu.au/study/accommodation/financial-support>

<https://www.anu.edu.au/covid-19-advice/wellbeing-and-support/financial-support#student>

FAQs about work and study

Can I go to work? What if my boss says I'll lose my job

You are only allowed to go to work if it is a role that is classified as essential work (<https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/updates/covid-19-areas-of-concern/essential-work>). Note that hospitality and retail jobs are not listed as essential work by ACT Health. If your role is classified as essential you also will have to obtain permission from your employer and discuss your requirements with the ANU COVID Response Office COVIDResponseOffice@anu.edu.au. If you are approved to go to work, please also advise your Head of Residence what dates and times you will be absent from your residence.

If you are experiencing any problems with your employer regarding the SAHO restrictions, contact ANUSA in regards to advice on the Fair Work Act here: [ANUSA Legal Service for Employment Law](https://www.anusa.com.au) (anusa.com.au)

What do I do if I am under a SAHO and am enrolled to do a Winter intensive face to face course?

You are not able to attend the course face to face during your SAHO. Please contact your course convenor and ask them to arrange online access for you to participate. Your residence staff team can assist you to resolve problems with arranging this access.