

EPIDEMIC/ PANDEMIC POLICY

Policy Declaration

The purpose of this policy is to outline the strategies and actions Prahran Place intends to take to prevent the transmission of infectious diseases declared epidemics or pandemics, and control the transmission of infectious diseases when a case/s is identified.

Policy Description

Application:

This policy applies to all Prahran Place staff, tutors, volunteers, contractors and Prahran Place CoM members.

Background:

From time to time, infectious diseases develop into epidemics or pandemics, and create increased risks for the community. These occasions require specific policies targeted at the particular disease in question and general efforts at preparedness.

PRAHRAN PLACE will:

- Act as far as possible to protect its clients, its staff, its volunteers, and the general public from infection or contagion by epidemics and/or pandemics.
- Facilitate, through its policies and procedures, strategies designed to reduce risks to its clients, its staff, its volunteers, and the general public.
- Comply with all directions from authorised public health officers and recognised medical authorities in relation to the epidemic or pandemic.

Objectives:

Prahran Place will, as far as possible, plan for and make advance preparations for the possibility its operations will be affected by an epidemic or pandemic.

In the event of an epidemic or pandemic, Prahran Place will, as far as possible:

1. Assist its clients, staff, volunteers and others, as relevant, to minimise their exposure to the illness concerned.
2. Encourage and assist those who have reason to believe they are at risk of contracting the epidemic or pandemic to obtain a diagnosis.
3. Support staff, volunteers, contractors and clients to take reasonable precautions to prevent infection or contagion.
4. Provide standard precautions such as personal protective equipment (e.g. masks, soap, and gloves) where needed.
5. Maintain its services and operations throughout the period of concern, subject to health directives to close.

Leave and Flexibility

Staff may request or require paid and unpaid leave when they are unwell, at risk of or vulnerable to infection, and are at risk of infecting others.

Workers may make use of leave consistent with Prahran Place leave policies, relevant industrial instruments and the National Employment Standards (including access to unpaid leave).

Prahran Place may, at its discretion, direct those affected or reasonably at risk of being affected by the pandemic or epidemic, to remain away from the workplace or work remotely/work from home.

Where possible during an epidemic or pandemic, Prahran Place will aim to provide workers with flexibility to work remotely and to attend medical appointments.

Related Policies and Procedures:

- Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy
- Child Safe Code of Conduct Policy
- Safe Workplace Policy
- Flexible Working Arrangements Policy
- Overtime and Time off in Lieu Policy
- Leave and Wellbeing Policy
- Event Management Policy
- Strategy, Business and Risk Management Policy
- Health Policy
- Incident Reporting and Response Policy
- Emergency Management Policy

- Privacy Policy
- Volunteer Policy

Related Documents:

- National Employment Standards (NES)
- Awards and Collective Bargaining Agreements
- Business Continuity Plan DRM5
- Pandemic Emergency Management Plan DRM4
- Emergency Management Plan DRM6
- Risk Management Plan DRM8
- Critical Incident Reporting Form DRF6
- Leave Application Form DRF9
- Working From Home Safe Workplace Assessment Form
- Staff Access and Equipment Request Form
- Working From Home Checklist

5.15.1 Epidemic/Pandemic Procedures

In carrying out the procedures listed below, Prahran Place will be guided by the information and directions provided by local health authorities and the World Health Organisation, and its occupational health and safety obligations.

Responsibilities

The PEO will be the Epidemic Officer, or if the PEO is absent, the PEO will appoint an Epidemic Officer.

The Epidemic Officer is responsible for:

- Ensuring the organisation’s Leave and Safe Workplace policies are consistent with the intention of the Epidemic /Pandemic Policy.
- Assessing the organisation’s vulnerabilities, in the light of the epidemic or pandemic, to human resources, suppliers of goods and services and facilities
- Preparing a comprehensive Business Continuity Plan DRM5 and other required health plan.
- In the event of an epidemic or pandemic,

- Giving notice to staff, volunteers, clients, and any persons likely to be affected that epidemic or pandemic procedures are in effect.
- Bringing into operation the Emergency Management Plan DRM4 for an epidemic or pandemic and the management procedures specified below.
- Instituting any administrative measures necessary to reduce the impact of the vulnerabilities detailed above.
- The Epidemic Officer shall familiarise staff/volunteers and others, as relevant, with recommended procedures on epidemic avoidance guidelines (e.g. handwashing, soap, sneezing policy) as appropriate.
- Working with all sectors of the organisation to identify mission-critical staff and functions.

Staff/volunteers are responsible for abiding by the epidemic procedures specified below, when informed by authorised staff that epidemic or pandemic procedures are in effect.

The following procedures apply in the event of the PEO giving notice that epidemic or pandemic procedures are in effect.

Events

The PEO will consider on a continuing basis whether any events involving the attendance of staff or members of the public should be changed, rescheduled or cancelled to minimise the risk of infection.

Work procedures

The PEO will consider on a continuing basis whether:

- It is necessary or appropriate for nominated staff/volunteers to work from home.
- Travel, (or other activities which may cause staff to come into contact with other people in Australia or overseas) should be modified or terminated.
- Arrangements for staff/volunteers who work with clients or the public should be modified to minimise risks for all parties.

The PEO may require any member of staff to not attend the workplace, and/or to work from home/work remotely, or, if this is not feasible or appropriate, to take leave

as per the Leave Policies. The PEO may require any member of staff to provide satisfactory evidence they are fit to return to work.

Contractors and suppliers

The PEO will consider on a continuing basis whether arrangements with existing contractors and suppliers need to be modified or supplemented to ensure uninterrupted service delivery.

General Requirements

In the event of an infectious disease being declared an epidemic or pandemic Prahran Place requires people covered by this Policy to take the following precautions.

1. Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water.
2. Maintain regulated distance between yourself and anyone else.
3. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, or shaking hands with others.
4. Make sure you follow good hygiene and encourage others to do the same. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze, and disposing of used tissues immediately.
5. Stay home if you feel unwell. If you are well enough to work but would like to minimise the risk of infecting others, ask your [manager/ supervisor] whether you can temporarily work from home.
6. Keep up to date on the latest hotspots (cities or local areas where the pandemic or epidemic is spreading widely). If possible, avoid traveling to places - especially if you are more at risk.
7. If you are or are likely to be contagious, notify the PEO as soon as possible. It may be possible or necessary for you to self-isolate by staying at home until you recover.
8. Seek medical advice promptly and follow the directions of your local health authority.
9. Follow any additional instructions from the PEO as legally required for each specific epidemic or pandemic.
10. When possible work from home.

