

Covid Safety Plan

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Introduction

This plan provides members of the Sunrise2Sunrise team guidance on operating in a COVID-safe way, and helps identify and mitigate risks during the ongoing pandemic.

Purpose and objectives

Our organisation is dedicated to the health, safety and wellbeing of all team members, participants, contractors and visitors. In this pandemic environment, we acknowledge additional precautions are required and that these are outlined in this COVID Safety Plan.

Site access and personnel and visitor flow

To control the flow of people into and through all sites, we will:

- encourage online meetings and consultations (where appropriate) for all office sites.

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- check the temperature of each person presenting to each work site. If the temperature registers >37.5°C the person will be asked to not attend the site and reschedule to an online meeting or future date.
- have a management plan in place for participants presenting with symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 which enables immediate isolation of that participant, as well as the requirement that the participant to don of a surgical face mask to reduce risk of transmission were possible.
- display information at the entrance and ensure clear messaging on the website asking visitors to call ahead if they have any symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 to enable appropriate planning and response.
- display information at the entrance outlining the requirements of entry.
- provide access to hand-hygiene products upon entry and exit (and at appropriate locations throughout the site), such as an alcohol-based hand sanitiser or hand-washing facilities.

Physical distancing

While acknowledging the nature of providing supports means maintaining a physical distance of 1.5 m with a participant is not always possible, our sites will put in place physical distancing measure by:

- limiting the number of people on the premises at any one time
- spacing furniture in rooms
- encouraging visitors to book an appointment rather than walk in.

Infection-control training

All members of the practice team, management, and reception and cleaning staff will undertake infection-control training.

All training will be documented and include:

- completion of Department of Health COVID-19 infection control training
- ensure staff are aware of their role when managing a participant presenting with – or exhibiting symptoms suggestive of – COVID-19.

Use of personal protective equipment

Appropriate use of personal protective equipment (PPE) is critical in limiting the spread of COVID-19. All staff will:

- ensure standard precautions, including hand hygiene, cough etiquette and appropriate waste-management techniques, are maintained.
- be trained in donning and doffing PPE
- wear PPE appropriate to the participant presentation and as per advice from the local public health.
- dispose of all used PPE in accordance with standard precautions.
- Wear PPE when exhibiting Covid like symptoms.

Current Advice on masks in Victoria

When to wear a face mask in Victoria

It is recommend wearing a mask:

- for at least 7 days if you have COVID-19 and:
 - you need to leave home
 - you are indoors, or
 - you cannot maintain physical distance.

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- if you are a close contact and you need to leave home
- if you are visiting or working in a sensitive setting such as hospitals and aged care facilities.

Different types of masks provide different levels of protection. Wear the most protective mask you can. Make sure that it fits well and that there are no air gaps on the side.

The following face masks are recommended, 1 being the best protection:

N95 or P2 respirator mask: These are high filtering masks. If they fit correctly, they provide the best protection. Respirator masks with straps that go around the head are likely to fit better and give more protection than respirator masks with ear loops.

KN95 mask or KF94 mask: These are high filtering masks but are not as well fitted as a respirator. They usually have ear loops, so they don't achieve a good seal between the mask and the face as an N95 or P2 respirator mask.

Surgical or medical mask: These provide good protection when worn correctly, fitting snugly over your nose, mouth and chin. You may get a better fit by shortening the ear loops by tying a knot or wearing a cloth mask on top of a surgical or medical mask.

Reusable 3-layer cloth mask: These can provide protection if they are made of tightly woven fabric and are machine-washed every day.

Up to date information can be found on <https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/>

Environmental management and cleaning

Our staff will regularly clean and disinfect shared spaces, surfaces and communal items. Our staff will:

- enhance air flow by opening windows and doors in shared spaces (where and when appropriate) and optimising fresh air flow in air conditioning systems (by maximising the intake of outside air and reducing or avoiding recirculation of air) dispose of all used PPE in accordance with standard precautions.
- minimize the sharing of administrative equipment between staff members where possible.
- adhere to strict environmental cleaning as per the most current advice from the Department of Health's Coronavirus (COVID-19) Environmental cleaning and disinfection principles for health and residential care facilities or our local public health.
- clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces with detergent and disinfectant wipe/solution between each episode of providing supports – using a cleaning detergent followed by a disinfectant, or a two-in-one product with cleaning and disinfecting properties.
- require team members who are cleaning to wear fresh non-contaminated gloves.
- provide training to all staff members on environmental cleaning requirements (this training will be documented).
- maintain a cleaning log.

Record-keeping

To aid contact tracing in the event a participant, team member, contractor or any visitor to a work site tests positive for COVID-19, our staff will:

- maintain a record of all staff and contractors/visitors to the work site, including entry and exit times.
- utilise an electronic system to record contact details, ensuring data is stored confidentially and securely and is only used for the purpose for which it was intended
- maintain these records for a minimum of 28 days.

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Staff management and limiting interactions in closed spaces

To reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission between staff members, we will:

- regularly communicate with all staff members regarding the requirement to not attend work if they have any symptoms consistent with COVID-19, regardless of how mild, and will encourage testing in line with local public health advice
- check the temperature of each staff member on commencement of work. Where the person registers a temperature $>37.5^{\circ}\text{C}$ they will not enter the site and will be asked to seek further medical review
- support any staff member who tests positive for COVID-19, or is identified as a close contact or is required to self-isolate – including by making them aware of their leave entitlements.
- where a staff member typically works across a number of sites within the business, minimise movement between sites by scheduling shifts at one location (where possible).
- encourage physical distancing in common areas (i.e. tea room), through organisation of furniture and signage.
- require all team members to thoroughly clean communal items (e.g., cutlery) immediately after use by washing with hot water and detergent.

Responding to a positive case, or close contact, in the practice team

If a staff member tests positive to COVID-19, our team will:

- implement 'close contact' requirements as outlined by our state health department, including contact tracing if any participant or team member meets the criteria for being a 'close contacts'
- ensure the team member does not return to work until they meet the criteria for returning to work, and as per local requirements.

When a participant is a close contact or Covid Positive

When an NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme) participant is COVID-19 positive, it's crucial for support workers to take precautions to protect themselves and prevent the further spread of the virus. Here are some guidelines to help support workers stay safe:

1. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

- Wear appropriate PPE, including masks, gloves, gowns, and eye protection, as recommended by health authorities. The type of PPE may vary based on the level of care and contact with the participant.

2. Hand Hygiene:

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after any contact with the participant or their environment. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

3. Physical Distancing:

- Maintain physical distance of at least 1.5 meters (or as recommended by local health authorities) from the COVID-positive participant whenever possible.

4. Minimize Close Contact:

- Limit close physical contact with the participant. Only provide essential support, and avoid any non-essential activities.

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5. Respiratory Hygiene:

- Encourage the participant to cover their mouth and nose with a tissue or their elbow when coughing or sneezing. Properly dispose of tissues and clean hands immediately.

6. Regular Cleaning and Disinfection:

- Frequently clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that are touched regularly, both in the participant's environment and in your workspace.

7. Reduce the Number of Caregivers:

- Limit the number of support workers in direct contact with the COVID-positive participant to minimize the potential for exposure.

8. Health Monitoring:

- Monitor your own health and that of other support workers for symptoms of COVID-19, including fever, cough, and difficulty breathing. If you or a coworker show symptoms, report it to your supervisor and seek medical advice.

9. Self-Isolation and Testing:

- If you develop symptoms or have been in close contact with a COVID-positive individual, self-isolate and get tested for COVID-19 as soon as possible.

10. Communication:

- Maintain open and clear communication with the participant and their healthcare team regarding their condition and any changes in care plans.

It's essential for support workers to stay informed about the latest guidelines and recommendations from health authorities and NDIS. Every situation may vary, so it's important to adapt the approach based on the specific circumstances and the participant's needs. Always prioritize the safety and well-being of both the participant and yourself.

For staff if you are a close contact or covid positive

If you test positive for COVID-19:

- You are strongly encouraged to immediately self-isolate in line with the Victorian Government's checklist for COVID cases, and notify your household and social contacts (including workmates).
- Even if you do not fully isolate, you are strongly encouraged to stay away from work for at least 5 days and not return until you are symptom-free
- Notify the Sunrise2Sunrise Head office on 03 91883499, and
- All staff, please inform your supervisor or manager. If you have questions about leave or other concerns, please speak with your supervisor in the first instance.

Find out if you are eligible for antivirals from your healthcare provider to potentially limit the severity of your illness.

- If further information is required, a member of the senior management team may contact you.

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- You should fulfil the requirements of the Victorian Government checklist for COVID cases and any Sunrise2Sunrise requirements before returning to work.

Isolation

You are strongly encouraged to isolate for at least 5 days and not work in or visit a designated sensitive setting for at least 7 days. If you must attend a worksite for an activity that cannot be undertaken elsewhere during this time, please:

- only attend any site if you are symptom-free
- wear a face mask
- undertake a RAT before attending Sunrise2Sunrise locations, sensitive settings or visiting people at higher risk of severe illness – if you test positive, please stay away.
- You cannot enter or work in government-designated sensitive settings such as hospitals, residential aged care or disability care services
- follow any other advice from the Public Health.

Plan Review

This plan will be reviewed every 6 months to ensure it reflects the current processes and procedures of Sunrise2Sunrise and current legislation requirements and public health directives. The plan will be reviewed on or before **4/3/2024**.

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