

COVIDSafe Plan



About the COVIDSafe Plan

The COVIDSafe Plan has been developed to support businesses to maintain a COVIDSafe workplace and prepare for a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 in the workplace.

In order to be compliant with public health direction:

- All Victorian businesses with on-site operations must complete a COVIDSafe Plan.
- This COVIDSafe Plan should be developed in consultation with workers and any relevant Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs).
- In addition to completing a COVIDSafe Plan, you are still required to meet your obligations under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004.
- You must comply with a request to present or modify your COVIDSafe Plan, if directed to do so by an Authorised Officer or WorkSafe Inspector.
- In addition to the general restrictions for all businesses, some industries require additional obligations due to a higher transmission risk.

High Risk COVIDSafe Plans are no longer mandatory, but industries with higher levels of risk may have additional requirements beyond those listed in this document. For more information, see: coronavirus.vic.gov.au/additional-industry-obligations.

If you have an up-to-date High Risk COVIDSafe Plan, you do not need to write a new COVIDSafe Plan, but you should ensure your existing plan reflects current restrictions.

For information on how to prepare your COVIDSafe Plan or any other questions, please visit coronavirus.vic.gov.au or call the Business Victoria Hotline on 13 22 15.

Your COVIDSafe Plan

Business name: Whitehorse City Council

Plan completed by:

James Thyer – Head of People & Culture


Nathan Moorcroft – Risk, Health & Safety Lead

Date reviewed: 1st May 2021

For the latest information on restrictions in Victoria, visit coronavirus.vic.gov.au




Practise physical distancing

Requirements and recommendations	Action
<p> You must apply the relevant density quotient to configure shared work areas and publicly accessible spaces.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared work areas are only accessible to workers, and should only include workers in the density quotient. Publicly accessible spaces should include members of the public, and may include workers if they share the space on an ongoing basis. Further information can be found at coronavirus.vic.gov.au 	<p>Occupancy limits have been implemented across sites where required including areas such as office spaces, toilets, kitchens, meeting rooms and the staff room, this also includes areas accessible to the public.</p> <p>Common areas/shared spaces and reception areas have been rearranged, furniture removed or cordoned off to encourage physical distancing in line with density requirements.</p> <p>Flexi glass screening has been installed at customer service counters and to separate work areas where social distancing may be comprised or partitions are too low. Visitors are kept back from counters using decals marked on floors or bollards.</p> <p>Physical distancing – floor markings have been installed to keep workers and visitors at least 1.5m apart from each other. Signs have been placed around public access areas. Signs available here</p> <p>Directional flow limitations are in place to control ingress and egress of visitors.</p>
<p>Where possible within the workplace, aim for workers and visitors to maintain physical distancing of 1.5 metres. This can be done by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Displaying signs to show patron limits at the entrance of enclosed areas where density quotients apply for your workplace <p>You may also consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimising the build-up of people waiting to enter and exit the workplace. Using floor markings to provide minimum physical distancing guides. Reviewing delivery protocols to limit contact between delivery drivers and workers. 	<p>Measurement of workplace seating arrangements has been carried out to ensure occupied workstations, where possible, are a minimum of 1.5m.</p> <p>Staggered seating plans have been developed and implemented across sites.</p> <p>Staff rosters have been updated so staff are rostered with the same colleagues each shift to minimise exposure to multiple colleagues where possible.</p> <p>Signage has been installed on all communal or shared areas identifying occupancy limits. Signs available here</p> <p>Physical distancing – floor markings have been installed to keep workers and visitors at least 1.5m apart from each other where possible. Signs have been placed around public access areas. Signs available here</p> <p>Directional flow limitations are in place to control ingress and egress of visitors.</p> <p>Protocols for the use of the lift at the Civic Centre, Box Hill Town Hall and Aqualink Box Hill have been established.</p> <p>Flexi glass screening has been installed at customer service counters and to separate work areas where social distancing may be comprised or partitions are too low. Visitors are kept back from counters using decals marked on floors or bollards. Structured entry and exit systems are in place where appropriate to avoid congregation and queuing.</p> <p>Online/phone booking and payment services are used where appropriate.</p> <p>Staff have limited contact with delivery drivers, paperwork is completed electronically where possible.</p>

Requirements and recommendations	Action
<p>You should provide training to workers on physical distancing expectations while working and socialising. This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informing workers to follow current public health directions when carpooling. This can be found at coronavirus.vic.gov.au 	<p>Induction materials and videos have been produced to inform staff of changes in the workplace. Available here and via managers/supervisors.</p> <p>Area-specific induction and operation manuals have been developed. Hard copies are available for employees who do not have access to the intranet. These are distributed by the Manager/Supervisor.</p> <p>Intranet – Covid-19 working on site section provides a suite of documents available for staff. Including a personal Hazard checklist to ensure staff adhere to the requirements.</p> <p>Whilst avoided where possible, whenever two people are in a vehicle, they are to open windows or use the fresh air function on vehicle air conditioning and the occupants encouraged to wear masks.</p>
<p>You may be required to reduce the number of workers or the number of members of the public at your work premises in accordance with current directions.</p>	<p>Staff rosters have been updated so staff are rostered with the same colleagues each shift to minimise exposure to multiple colleagues where possible.</p> <p>A staggered shift structure has been implemented where possible to limit staff numbers within the workplace.</p> <p>Signage has been installed on all communal or shared areas identifying occupancy limits. Signs available here.</p>



Wear a face mask


Requirements and recommendations	Action
<p> You must ensure all workers adhere to current face mask requirements, as outlined at coronavirus.vic.gov.au/face-masks</p>	<p>Face masks to be carried at all times and worn in line with current requirements, refer to coronavirus.vic.gov.au/face-masks</p> <p>Where required staff are updated with any changes to the mandatory requirement for face masks, areas of high face to face contact are provided with the relevant PPE as per the advice of DHHS, Chief Medical Officer, Municipal Health Officer and the relevant advisory sources.</p> <p>Additional layers of protection with face shields (in addition to masks), gowns and gloves are used for activities where there is an increased risk of exposure due to proximity to others.</p> <p>Centralised provision of recommended PPE usage in line with DHHS and other relevant regulatory or governing bodies has been established.</p>
<p>You should provide training, instruction and guidance on how to correctly fit, use and dispose of PPE.</p> <p>You should inform workers that reusable face masks should be washed each day after use. However, if during the day the face mask is visibly dirty or wet, it needs to be replaced with a clean face mask immediately.</p>	<p>In addition to work-specific PPE training, guidance material and videos have been produced for P2, N95, Surgical and reusable masks. They have been circulated throughout the organisation and available on the intranet here.</p> <p>Staff in areas of higher person to person contact are required to complete COVID-19 infection control online training available here</p> <p>COVID-19 Health and Safety FAQ have been developed for staff - available here.</p> <p>Area-specific induction and operation manuals have been developed.</p>

If your industry is subject to additional industry obligations, you may also be required to:

<p>Adhere to additional face mask requirements.</p>	<p>Surgical face masks continue to be used in face to face interactions in WHACS, Maternal and Child Health and Immunisation as well as during First Aid incidents across Council facilities'</p>
---	---



Practise good hygiene


Requirements and recommendations	Action
<p> You must take all reasonable steps to frequently and regularly clean and disinfect shared spaces, including high-touch communal items such as door knobs and telephones.</p> <p>You should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean high-touch surfaces with appropriate cleaning products, including detergent and disinfectant. • Replace high-touch communal items with hygienic alternatives, for example single-use or contactless options, where possible to do so. • Clean between shifts. 	<p>Hygiene and Infection Control Procedures have been developed and adopted including cleaning frequency and materials used.</p> <p>Given the use of vehicles in essential work at council a Cleaning and Hygiene of Council Vehicles procedure has also been developed and adopted.</p> <p>Alcohol-based hand sanitiser kits have been provided at each work location.</p> <p>Alcohol-based hand sanitiser stations have been provided to all work locations and are available on building entry (out of reach of children).</p> <p>Staff are encouraged to wash their hands with soap and water for 20 secs where possible as an alternative to hand sanitiser.</p> <p>Frequently touched surfaces including counters, handrails, doors, phones, desks, IT equipment and EFTPOS facilities are regularly cleaned.</p> <p>Posters on hand washing are prominent and hand washing facilities are available in staff and public bathrooms.</p> <p>A staff hand hygiene video has been produced and circulated to staff on the intranet - here.</p> <p>Staff information is available on the intranet and shared by managers on the requirements around visitors to Council facilities available here.</p> <p>Additional contracted cleaning is being undertaken</p> <p>Employees who indicate they have a history of dermatitis or allergy to alcohol have been provided with alternatives in line with the Hygiene and infection Control Procedures.</p>
<p>You should display a cleaning log in shared spaces.</p>	<p>Hygiene and Infection Control Procedures have been developed and adopted including cleaning frequency and materials used.</p> <p>Given the use of vehicles in essential work at council a Cleaning and Hygiene of Council Vehicles procedure has also been developed and adopted.</p> <p>Cleaning supplies are available in all communal areas and protocols have been developed on when and how to use these supplies.</p>
<p>You should make soap and hand sanitiser available for all workers and customers throughout the worksite and encourage regular handwashing.</p>	<p>Sanitations stations and kits at each work location and areas where the public can access (e.g. front foyers). Kits are replenished by designated staff and reviewed within the hazard inspection program.</p> <p>Alcohol-based hand sanitiser is provided at all work stations and on entry to buildings.</p> <p>Posters on hand washing are prominent and hand washing facilities are available in the bathrooms. Available here</p>



If your industry is subject to additional industry obligations, you may also be required to:

<p>Ensure all areas where workers are working are cleaned at least daily.</p>	<p>Hygiene and Infection Control Procedures have been developed and adopted including cleaning frequency and materials used.</p> <p>Given the use of vehicles in essential work at council a Cleaning and Hygiene of Council Vehicles procedure has also been developed and adopted.</p> <p>Additional contracted cleaning is being undertaken.</p> <p>Frequently touched surfaces such as counters, handrails, doors, phones, desks, keyboards etc. are regularly cleaned.</p> <p>Factsheet cleaning and disinfecting local council https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/factsheet-cleaning-and-disinfecting-local-council</p>
<p>Adhere to additional hygiene training requirements.</p>	<p>High contact areas have required staff to complete Infection control training at https://www.skills.vic.gov.au/s/free-infection-control-training</p>



Keep records and act quickly if workers become unwell

Requirements and recommendations	Action
<p> You must support workers to get tested and stay home even if they only have mild symptoms.</p>	<p>Attestation questions have been implemented across services, including on rosters and manual system sign in.</p> <p>Signage has been placed at the entrance doors of all Council facilities request that anyone experiencing COVID-19 symptoms should not enter the facility.</p> <p>In face-to-face services, clients and visitors are requested to advise if they have been unwell or are experiencing symptoms.</p> <p>Staff communications (including CEO updates and in the event of changes to restrictions) are sent to all staff to advise that any staff experiencing symptoms must not attend the workplace.</p> <p>Council has implemented Covid-19 Leave for staff to use whilst awaiting test results or a confirmed Covid-19 result is received.</p>

Requirements and recommendations	Action
<p> You must develop a business contingency plan to manage any outbreaks. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a plan to respond to a worker being notified they are a positive case or a close contact while at work. • Having a plan in place to clean the worksite (or part) in the event of a positive case. • Having a plan to contact the Department of Health and notify the actions taken, provide a copy of the risk assessment conducted and contact details of any close contacts • Having a plan to immediately notify WorkSafe Victoria on 13 23 60 if you have identified a person with COVID-19 at your workplace. • Having a plan in the event that you have been instructed to close by the Department of Health. • Having a plan to re-open your workplace once agreed by Department of Health and notify workers they can return to work. 	<p>The Crisis Management Plan, Disaster Recovery Plan and Departmental Business Recovery plans, which are reviewed at least annually, have been actioned.</p> <p>Council has a Pandemic Emergency Management Plan for the community.</p> <p>A detailed and generic Pandemic Action Plan is being developed based on experiences from the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Council has established an Organisation wide Pandemic Recovery group and specific operation/function Pandemic Recovery Groups to ensure best practice, consultation and communication across department and work groups.</p> <p>Departments annually review their Departmental Business Recovery plans and as needed and Council seeks guidance from the Victorian Chief Medical Officer, DHHS, Council's medical Officer of Health and Municipal Association of Victoria as required.</p> <p>A Managing Covid-19 in the workplace standard operating procedure has been developed, adopted and shared with all managers and is available on the intranet.</p> <p>Hygiene and Infection Control Procedures have been developed and adopted and includes cleaning frequency and materials to be used based on DHHS guidance.</p> <p>Escalation to the Head of People and Culture/Risk, Health and Safety is a documented requirement in the event of a confirmed case.</p> <p>The relevant Department Manager, in consultation with Risk, Health and Safety, Environmental Health and Strategic Marketing and Communication teams, investigate and notify any impacted employees.</p>
<p> You must keep records of all people who enter the workplace for longer than 15 minutes for contact tracing. Electronic record keeping using the free Victorian Government QR Service or a Victorian Government API (Application Programming Interface) linked digital system is mandatory for some businesses. See https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/qr-codes-and-digital-record-keeping-contact-tracing for more information.</p>	<p>QR Codes and/or sign in documents are located at the entrance of all sites and all visitors and staff must sign in (including staff from other sites or otherwise those who would normally be working from home).</p> <p>Council utilises the Victorian Government QR Service at all Council sites and events.</p>



Avoid interactions in enclosed spaces

Requirements and recommendations	Action
<p>You should reduce the amount of time workers are spending in enclosed spaces. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabling working in outdoor environments. • Moving as much activity outside as possible, including serving customers, meetings, tearooms, lunchbreaks and locker rooms. • Enhancing airflow by opening windows and doors. • Optimising fresh air flow in air conditioning systems. 	<p>Where appropriate, doors remain open to encourage air flow and minimise points of contact.</p> <p>Air conditioning systems are regularly serviced and adjusted to meet hygiene and safety requirements.</p> <p>Whilst discouraged and to be avoided where possible, whenever two people are in a vehicle, they are to open windows or use the fresh air function on vehicle air conditioning.</p> <p>Where possible, Outdoor meetings are encouraged with tables and chairs made available.</p>

If your industry is subject to additional industry obligations, you may also be required to:

<p>Ask workers to declare in writing before each shift that they are free of symptoms, have not been in contact with a confirmed case and have not been directed to quarantine or isolate.</p>	<p>Rosters within WHACS require daily attestation sign in.</p> <p>Prior to logging in, staff must acknowledge they are symptom free</p>
--	---



Create workforce bubbles

Requirements and recommendations	Action
<p>You should consider keeping groups of workers rostered on the same shifts at a single worksite and avoid any overlap of workers during shift changes where it is practical to do so.</p>	<p>Staff rosters have been updated so staff are rostered with the same colleagues each shift to minimise exposure to multiple colleagues where possible.</p> <p>A staggered shift structures has been implemented where possible for staff to limit staff numbers within the workplace.</p>

If your industry is subject to additional industry obligations, you may also be required to:

<p>Limit or cease the number of workers working across multiple work sites where reasonably practical.</p>	
<p>Maintain records of all workers who have disclosed that they are working for different employers across more than one work premises.</p>	<p>WHACS maintains records of Support Workers with alternate employment in aged care (community and/or residential) for risk management purposes if there is a need to re-introduce single-site work arrangements in the event of an outbreak.</p>