

SWRP11

COVID-19 Policy

The Port Douglas Community Service Network Inc (PDCSN) has a primary duty of care to ensure workers and others at the workplace are not exposed to a risk to their health and safety. Under the model Work Health and Safety (WHS) laws PDCSN is required to eliminate, or if that is not reasonably practicable, minimise the risk of exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace (Safe Work Australia, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic and any other community transmitted diseases require a uniquely focused approach to work health and safety. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that we identify and control risks to workers, and other persons connected to the workplace, arising from exposure to communicable diseases and to have infection control processes in place.

The PDCSN will make resources available to comply with relevant Acts and Regulations associated with COVID-19 and to ensure that the organisation's workplaces are safe and without unnecessary risk to health.

Record of policy development

Version	Date approved	Date for review
V1 2022	20 January 2022	As Required

Responsibilities and delegations

This policy applies to	The Management Committee, staff, volunteers, visiting services and service users.
Specific responsibilities	The Management Committee will ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of their responsibilities in line with this policy. The Manager or delegate will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation, and ensure that all staff understand and comply with the requirements of the COVID-19 Policy. All staff and volunteers have responsibility for understanding the policy and report any issues to the Manager or delegate.
Policy approval	The Port Douglas Community Service Network Inc, Management Committee.

Policy context – this policy relates to:

Standards	The Management Committee, staff and volunteers to adhere to the requirements of the Workplace Health & Safety Policy and follow guidelines provided by Worksafe QLD.
Legislation	The Work Health & Safety Act 2011 (Qld), The Fair Work Act 2009, The Privacy Act (1988), and Information Privacy Act 2009 and all relevant legislation, including the requirements of ASIC and ACNC. In addition to the requirements of the Commonwealth Department of Social Services, Queensland Department of Communities, Disability Services & Seniors, Good Shepherd Microfinance, Douglas Shire Council, other funding organisations and any other organisations having contact with our services.

Contractual obligations	WorkCover Queensland, The Commonwealth Department of Social Services, Queensland Department of Communities, Disability Services & Seniors, Good Shepherd Microfinance, Douglas Shire Council, other funding organisations and any other organisations having contact with our services.
Organisation policies	Policies and Procedures as approved by the Management Committee, based on standards recommended by Queensland Health and the Department of Health.
Forms, record keeping, other documents	Forms and documents for record keeping, to include the appropriate wording to comply with this policy. This policy is to be read in conjunction with the PDCSN COVID Workplan.

PDCSN will:

- ✓ Closely monitor official advice and updates from all relevant Health Departments and the WHO and/or relevant authorities
- ✓ Regularly review our policies and measures for infection control, including educating our employees and volunteers on best practice
- ✓ Provide clear advice about actions you should take if you become unwell or think you may have the symptoms of coronavirus or any other illness or disease that may present a risk to others in the workplace
- ✓ Undertake contingency planning to manage staff absences and plans to manage increased workloads
- ✓ Provide staff and volunteers with information and links to relevant services should you require support
- ✓ Provide PPE as necessary to reduce and minimise spread (ie face masks, hand sanitiser)
- ✓ Make and communicate timely decisions in relation to changes to the organisation's activities in accordance with the PDCSN COVID Workplan.

Staff and Visitors whilst at the workplace must:

- ✓ Take reasonable care for your own health and safety including ensuring good hygiene practices, such as frequent hand washing and physical distancing to protect and minimize spread and risk of infection
- ✓ Comply with any reasonable instruction that is given by PDCSN
- ✓ Not come into the workplace if you are or feel unwell
- ✓ Leave the workplace if you become unwell
- ✓ Advise management if you suspect you have come into contact or been exposed to a COVID-19 or any other disease that may reasonably be transmitted in the workplace (community transmitted disease)

Vaccinations

Neighbourhood Centres are places of universal access. PDCSN will continue to offer Neighbourhood Centre activities and services to vaccinated and unvaccinated members of the community with appropriate safety measures in place.

PDCSN has a duty under the model Work Health and Safety (WHS) laws to eliminate, or if that is not reasonably practicable, minimise the risk of exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace (Safe Work Australia, 2021) and therefore advocates optimum uptake of available vaccines in the context of informed choice.

PDCSN provides 1.5 hours of paid time per occurrence to allow staff to receive COVID-19 Vaccinations. Time to be noted on the relevant time sheet for approval by the manager.

The Privacy Act 1988 will apply to protect personal information relating to vaccinations in the workplace and will treat all health information as sensitive and strictly confidential. PDCSN will not pass on details to any third party unless lawfully required to do so for example where an outreach site requires all attendees to be vaccinated. PDCSN may maintain confidential registers of all who choose to disclose their status of vaccinations, which will only be accessed by limited key personnel.

PDCSN supports individual choices of its staff and volunteers and recognises and supports any person who may be prevented or choose not to be vaccinated due to health and/or other reasons. Noting there may be instances where government public health directives or requirements of outreach or external meeting locations mean that those unable to meet vaccination mandates will be unable to attend. Where an inability to attend locations with mandated vaccination requirements reduces the ability of the unvaccinated staff member to perform work, hours may be reduced in line with the obligations contained in the Fair Work Act 2009 and the relevant Award.

Vaccination information will be used by management for the sole purpose of assisting PDCSN to manage its business operations and comply with Public Health directions. Future decisions for consideration may include (but not limited to) travel and attendance at the office. The primary goal of such decisions will always be to protect the health and safety of all workers and the wider community. If anyone has concerns about the safety of the workplace, they should raise their concerns as soon as possible with either the manager or their Management Committee delegate.

PDCSN invites all staff and volunteers to notify of their vaccine status for COVID-19 as: unvaccinated, fully vaccinated or booster shot and for Influenza if vaccinated. This is entirely voluntary. Those who choose to disclose their status as fully vaccinated may be asked to provide a copy of their vaccination certificate or other evidence of their vaccination status, such as a copy of their record in the National Vaccination Register.

Procedure

If you are unwell or show any signs of illness do not come to the workplace.

Notify your manager if you:

- are unwell with symptoms associated with COVID-19 or any other illness that may be transmitted in work settings
- have been in direct close contact with someone who has been diagnosed as positive for COVID-19 and/or
- have been in contact with someone who has been overseas in the past 14 days and/or
- have been in contact with someone who is showing signs (flu like symptoms) of illness.

And:

- If you are unwell and unable to work, contact your manager to advise. Process your leave request through your time sheet.
- If you display cold or flu-like symptoms but feel well enough to work and have the capacity and duties able to be completed from home, you may do so in agreement with your manager. To assist with the approval of time sheets please text or email the manager advising when you log in and log out.
- If you have any known symptoms no matter how mild you are advised to get the relevant test (ie for COVID-19).
- If you have been tested for COVID-19 or any other community transmitted disease and are awaiting results, you are instructed not to attend the workplace until you receive a negative result or have completed isolation requirements as covered by public health directives. In the interim you must self-isolate but may work from home if well enough.
- Provide evidence of your COVID-19 test result.

Any staff member who has symptoms of illness in the workplace will be instructed to go home:

- If you appear to be or fall ill in the workplace, you will be provided with any necessary PPE (i.e. face mask) and instructed to return home to isolate and seek medical attention.
- Please advise your manager, first aid officer or a member of staff that you are unwell
- In the case of an emergency dial 000
- Transport will be arranged for you to go home if you are unable to drive or travel
- You may be required to undergo a COVID test and wait for a negative result and clearance before you are able to return to the workplace and provide evidence of your test result.

Any staff member who tests positive for COVID-19 or any other community transmitted disease whether asymptomatic or not must immediately advise their manager.

Any staff member who has been diagnosed as positive for COVID-19 or any other community transmitted disease must isolate in accordance with public health directives and can return to work only when they have fully recovered and met the criteria for clearance from isolation.

COVID-19 outbreaks will be managed in accordance with the PDCSN COVID-19 Workplan and relevant federal and state government Public Health Directives.