**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**SECTION 2: RISK**

**BUSINESS CONTINUITY – PANDEMIC PLAN**

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| **Plan statement and objectives**  This template provides an outline for the key items to consider in establishing an organisational Pandemic Plan | [organisation] is committed to its members, employees, suppliers and stakeholders. This Pandemic Plan integrates with the Business Continuity Plan. The Purpose of the Pandemic Plan is to ensure employee and stakeholders safety is put first while the provision of essential products and services continue (as provided in the BCP), at each stage of the Pandemic.  This Pandemic Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Organisations Business Continuity Policy and Pandemic Policy.  Where possible, this plan is to be made available to all staff. The key objectives include:   * Essential services continue to be delivered to the best level possible during any disruption arising from a pandemic, while not compromising health and wellbeing of staff. This is critical to ensure as much of a sense of normal as possible, during whatever abnormal circumstances may be at play. Documenting this ensures everyone has a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities. * The possibility of workplace closure is addressed. * Risks of contagion to people in the workplace are managed, ensuring the health and wellbeing of employees. * Ministry of Health directives are the initial basis for decision making in the event of a pandemic, such as directives regarding self-isolation and gatherings of people. * Employees and volunteers are expected to continue to attend the workplace in line with their usual arrangements, except where alternatives are activated. * Employees and volunteers are expected to remain working during a pandemic, unless they are on agreed leave. * Communication plans are considered |
| **Review Protocol** | Plan Reviewed By: Audit, Finance & Risk Committee  Date Reviewed: [Date]  Next Review Date: [Date]  Revokes Plan Reviewed: [Date] |

**Introduction**

This Pandemic Plan (PP) addresses how the organisation will bolster the provisions of the Business Continuity Plan, in the event of a Pandemic. This plan is not to be used in isolation. To ensure all areas of risk are addressed the Business Continuity Plan must be used in conjunction with this Plan.

It outlines items that require consideration to ensure the organisation can continue to perform core activities while maintaining health and safety of employees and stakeholders.

**Elements of the Pandemic Plan**

In addition to the items outlined in the organisation’s Business Continuity Plan, the following factors are to be considered in the event of disruption caused by a Pandemic.

* Minimising risks of contagion to people in the workplace and ensuring the wellbeing of employees.
* Planning for scenarios arising from Ministry of Health directed measures such as quarantine and compulsory self-isolation, or event cancellation.
* Workforce planning including:
  + Ensuring employees can continue to attend the workplace in line with their usual employment arrangements, except where alternatives are activated.
  + Ensuring employees able to remain working during a pandemic, unless they are on agreed leave.
* Agree communication protocols

**Workforce Pandemic Management Team**

In accordance with the Pandemic Policy, the Audit, Finance and Risk Committee have established the Workforce Pandemic Management Team. The members of this team follow:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Team member** | **Job title** | **Contact details** |
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ITEM ONE: Managing contagion risk

Minimising risks of contagion to people in the workplace and ensuring the wellbeing of employees

**HYGEINE CONSIDERATIONS**

The Ministry of Health recommend basic hygiene measures are the most effective way to stop the spread of infections in the workplace. These include:

* Hand hygiene - washing hands regularly with soap and water, or cleansing with hand sanitiser
* Staying at home if you are sick
* Coughing or sneezing into a tissue or your elbow and then performing hand hygiene
* Cleaning surfaces regularly

The following list outlines initiatives to support these hygiene measures

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| **Hygiene initiatives** |
| Provide guidance on effective handwashing procedures in all bathroom and kitchens |
| Use disposable paper towels to dry hands |
| Placement of hand sanitiser around areas of high traffic or where people first come into contact with the building |
| Use of signage at entry points to the building asking those who are unwell not to visit the premises |
| Communicate with staff that if they are unwell, they should stay home from work |
| Provide tissues |
| Ask cleaners to increase attention to touch points (door/cupboard handles, reception areas, lift buttons) |
| Ask landlord to increase hygiene provisions in common areas |
| Provide immunisation to employees (if available) |
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ITEM TWO: Travel arrangements

Planning for scenarios arising from Ministry of Health directed measures such as quarantine and compulsory self-isolation

**REGISTER OF UPCOMING BUSINESS INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL**

Following is a register of upcoming international business travel. In the event of a government directive for self-isolation after travel, arrangements are to be discussed with the employee. Generally, employees who are required to self-isolate after business travel should not be required to use personal leave and other provisions and arrangements should be agreed.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Employee** | **Date of travel** | **Destination** | **Arrangements** |
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**REGISTER OF UPCOMING PERSONAL INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL**

Following is a register of upcoming personal travel. In the event of a government directive for self-isolation after travel, arrangements are to be discussed with the employee in terms of whether they will work from home, take additional leave, or take sick leave on their return.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Employee** | **Date of travel** | **Destination** | **Date booked** | **Arrangements** |
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Staff will be advised to cease making travel arrangements after the self-isolation directive comes into force. Arrangements with these employees should be discussed on a case by case basis.

ITEM THREE: Event management

Planning for scenarios arising from Ministry of Health directed measures such as event cancellation

**REGISTER OF UPCOMING BUSINESS EVENTS AT RISK OF CANCELLATION OR POSTPONMENT**

In the event of a government directive to cancel events and gatherings of a certain size, the following events may need to have action plans to minimise risk and disruption from cancellation or postponement. The event plans should be updated to include risk management considerations arising from the Pandemic

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Event** | **Date and Location** | **Event manager** | **Arrangements** |
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ITEM FOUR: Workforce planning

Planning for scenarios arising from the impact on an employee’s ability to perform employment duties on site

Workforce matters to plan for impacts on an employee’s ability to work on site are outlined below. These are taken from the State Services Commissions Agency guidelines and are widely used in the public sector.

All arrangements with employees are to be agreed on a good faith basis and legal advice is recommended when there is disagreement.

**Workplace or work is inaccessible**

During a pandemic there may be circumstances where the organisation is unable to provide work at the local workplace. For example, a Board may need to close the workplace, public transport access to the workplace is restricted, or an employee is self-isolated either voluntarily or by direction from the employer in accordance with advice from the Ministry of Health. In these circumstances:

* Employees should work remotely (usually from home) wherever practicable (see below); or
* Where it is not possible for an employee to work remotely, consideration should be given to special paid leave

If an employee becomes ill normal sick leave entitlement provisions apply, for example sick leave should be used. Where there is no sick leave, normal organisational sick leave policies apply.

**Work is available but the employee is unable to work due having to care for dependents**

During a pandemic, employees may be unable to work due to sickness or a requirement to care for dependants who are sick, or home from school during school closures. Arrangements will be made with the employee to support their ability to work from home, while taking health and wellbeing of the dependent into consideration. Provisions for down time will be incorporated and, in these circumstances, sick or dependant leave (if available) can be used.

**Employee refuses to attend the workplace**

During a pandemic there may be circumstances where an employee may not wish to attend work because they feel it puts them at risk. For example, an employee may be concerned about the risk of contracting an infection even if there are no cases identified in the workplace. In these circumstances:

* Employers must consider the employee’s concerns in good faith and determine an appropriate response in line with employer and employee duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, and advice from the Ministry of Health.
* Employees must comply with the employer’s policies and procedures for managing the risk of transmission in the workplace.
* Employers should consider in good faith any request to work remotely, including from home.

**Working from home**

Enabling employees to work remotely, including from home, is an integral part of business continuity planning. Employers must ensure they are satisfied that they have all the necessary arrangements in place now to achieve this.

This may be to cover situations such as where:

* Ministry of Health recommends increases in social distancing in the workplace and remote working allows this to be implemented.
* Public transport is closed, and some employees cannot reasonably get in to work, or the risk of people in the workplace being infected through the use of public transport cannot be reasonably managed.
* The workplace itself has been isolated/quarantined by a Medical Officer of Health.
* The worker requests or has been asked to self-isolate.

Where employees work remotely, existing health and safety polices continue to apply.

**Return to work**

Employers should ensure that employees are fully recovered before they return. Employers have the right to make proper enquiries to make sure that their employees are fit to work and to ensure they meet obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.

Leave provisions should be applied in a way that does not lead an employee returning to work too early and placing others at risk.

**Other workers**

In line with obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, employers will need to ensure consideration is given to other workers in the workplace such as contractors, labour hire company employees and volunteers. This may include supporting them to work off site

Consideration will need to given to volunteers relative to the role they perform, and the implications of disruption to services in the event of a Pandemic on BAU. This will assist in determining whether they are able to or need to work offsite, and what other arrangements can be made, while ensuring their wellbeing and health and safety.

Employers should engage these workers, or the workers’ employer as applicable, in their planning. In particular, employers should work with labour providers to ensure the provider’s approach supports their employees not to be in the workplace when they may be at risk or place others at risk.

ITEM FIVE: Communication plan

Agreeing the communications plan upfront will assist with keeping employees and stakeholders informed through the course of a pandemic

**COMMUNICATION PLAN WITH EMPLOYEES AND STAKEHOLDERS**

In the event of a business disruption due to a Pandemic, effective communications strategies will assist the overall success of the Business Continuity Plan.

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| **Stakeholder** | **Purpose of communication** | **Method of communication** |
| Employees | General updates | Email |
| Urgent updates | Email, text, social media, phone calls |
| Q&A | Email and intranet posting |
| Business disruption | Meetings, telephone conferences, video conferences |
| Stakeholders | General updates | Email auto reply  Pre-recorded voice mail messages  Email circulations |
| Major disruption | Notices on the premises  Email audit reply  Email circulations |