How to prepare your COVID Safe plan

4 August 2020

This document outlines the minimum requirements of a Victorian workplace COVID Safe Plan. Depending on the size and complexity of your business, you may wish to tailor your plan accordingly. If your business or organisation already has a COVID Safe Plan, it is your responsibility to ensure that it addresses all the guidance and requirements outlined in this template.

A blank version of the template is available at the Business Victoria Website.

Instructions

1. Understand your responsibilities

Information on public health directions applying to employers is available at:
https://www.business.vic.gov.au/disputes-disasters-and-succession-planning/covid-safe-business/creating-a-covid-safe-workplace.

You can also refer to the following guidance:

- WorkSafe: Managing COVID-19 risks – face coverings in workplaces

- DHHS: Preventing infection in the workplace

- DHHS: Preparing for a case of coronavirus (COVID-19) in your workplace

- DHHS: Planning and responding to cases of coronavirus (COVID-19)

- DHHS: Cleaning and disinfecting to reduce COVID-19 transmission

- WorkSafe: Other relevant industry specific guidance

2. Prepare your plan

Your COVID Safe Plan must set out, at a minimum:

- The process you have in place to keep records of all staff or visitors who attend the work premises

- Your actions to mitigate the introduction of COVID-19 in your workplace

- The level of face-covering or personal protective equipment (PPE) required for your workforce

- How you will prepare for, and respond to, a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 in your workplace

3. Keep your plan up to date and ready

- Your COVID Safe Plan must be reviewed and updated routinely, and when restrictions or public health advice changes. Organisations with multiple premises must complete a COVID Safe Plan for each workplace.

- You do not have to lodge your COVID Safe Plan with the Victorian Government. However, you may be required to provide the COVID safe plan to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) or Worksafe upon request or in the event of a confirmed positive case at your workplace. There will be random business spot checks for COVID Safe Plans.

4. Share your plan

- Your workforce needs to be familiar with this plan. Where possible it is recommended that you discuss the plan with your staff before you finalise it. Once you have completed the plan, share it with your staff and with any employee or occupational health and safety representatives.

Guidance	Actions to consider	Relevant employer obligations
Hygiene		
Provide and promote hand sanitiser stations for use on entering building and other locations in the worksite and ensure adequate supplies of hand soap and paper towels are available for staff.	• *Location of hand sanitiser stations throughout the worksite* • *Ensuring rubbish bins are available to dispose of paper towels* • *Ensuring adequate supplies of soap and sanitiser* • *Ensuring staff have information on how to wash and sanitise their hands correctly*	• *Epar Poster – Sanitiser Station* • *Map the locations and details on the epar SMART Map* • *Epar Stand Up Talk on Hand Hygiene* • *Epar Poster on how to wash hands* • *Epar Inspection checklist to inspect sanitiser stations, soap supplies* • *Ensure SDS on site for sanitiser*
Where possible: enhance airflow by opening windows and adjusting air conditioning.	• *Making sure that windows and air conditioning are set for optimum air flow at the start of each workday or shift*	**Guidance**
In areas or workplaces where it is required, ensure all staff wear a face covering and/or required PPE, unless a lawful exception applies. Ensure adequate face coverings and PPE are available to staff that do not have their own.	• *Identifying face coverings and PPE required for the workplace and describe when and how they need to be worn* • *Monitoring use of face coverings in all staff, unless a lawful exception applies*	• *Epar Stand Up Talk on wearing face masks* • *Epar Stand Up Talk on fitting a face mask* • *Epar SAO (Safe Act Observation) checklist*
Provide training to staff on the correct use and disposal of face coverings and PPE, and on good hygiene practices and slowing the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).	• *Educating staff on hand and cough hygiene, including how to wash and sanitise their hands correctly* • *Reinforcing the importance of not attending work if unwell* • *Ensuring appropriate information on the use of face coverings and PPE*	• *Epar Stand Up Talk on Hand Hygiene* • *Epar poster on respiratory etiquette* • *Epar poster on work entry requirements* • *Epar Face Masks Stand Up Talk*
Replace high-touch communal items with alternatives.	• *Swapping shared coffee and condiments for single serve sachets* • *Installing no touch amenities such as contactless taps, rubbish bins and soap dispensers* • *Avoid sharing of equipment such as phones, desks, headsets, offices, tools or other equipment* • *Provide staff with their own personal equipment, labelled with their name*	• *Display education posters in the workplace* • *Epar Stand Up on How Long Coronavirus can remain on touched surfaces* • *Epar Stand Up Talk - Promoting Hand Hygiene*

Guidance	Actions to consider	Relevant employer obligations
Cleaning		
Increase environmental cleaning (including between changes of staff), ensure high touch surfaces are cleaned and disinfected regularly (at least twice daily).	• *Identify high touch surfaces (lift buttons, door and cupboard handles, kitchen counters, touch screens, shared work equipment)* • *Provide information about workplace cleaning schedule and how to use cleaning products*	• *Epar Cleaning SOP* • *Epar SAO to inspect cleaning and hygiene*

Guidance	Actions to consider	Relevant employer obligations
Ensure adequate supplies of cleaning products, including detergent and disinfectant.	• *Identify which products are required for thorough cleaning* • *Monitor supplies of cleaning products and regularly restock*	• *Use the epar Safety Data Sheet Database for all SDS's for cleaning products used.*

Guidance	Actions to consider	Relevant obligations
Physical distancing and limiting workplace attendance		
Ensure that all staff that must work from home, do work from home.	• *Identify the roles that are required to be performed from home or can be adapted to be performed from home* • *Adapt working arrangements to enable working from home* • *Regularly assess staff in attendance at the workplace to determine whether they are required to be there*	• *Use the epar Work From Home safety checklist* • *Implement the epar Work From Home procedure*
Establish a system that ensures staff members are not working across multiple settings/work sites.	• *Communicate the requirement for employees not to work across multiple sites* • *Adjust rosters and developing procedures to ensure employees do not work across multiple sites* • *Develop a form for employees to declare that they have not worked across multiple worksites*	• *The epar V (Verify) app will track staff locations at work.*
Establish a system to screen employees and visitors before accessing the workplace. Employers cannot require employees to work when unwell.	• *Consider implementing temperature checking.* • *Asking workers to complete a health questionnaire before starting their shift*	• *The epar V app will ask staff to digitally check in and acknowledge COVID safety requirements as they check in.* .
Configure communal work areas so that there is no more than one worker per four square meters of enclosed workspace, and employees are spaced at least 1.5m apart. Also consider installing screens or barriers.	• *Rearrange, remove or cordon off furniture in common areas to ensure physical distancing, stagger seating so staff are not facing one another on break* • *Consider implementing a density quotient or cap in each area (i.e. one person per 4sqm) and put up signage or posters to reflect the new limit*	• *The epar V app has a visitor counter that shows the number of people on site.*
Use floor markings to provide minimum physical distancing guides between workstations or areas that are likely to create congregation of staff.	• *Identify areas that require floor marking, such as lifts, kitchen areas, printer collection areas*	
Modify the alignment of workstations so that employees do not face one another.	• *Identify which workstations need to be modified* • *Reconfigure workstations so that employees do not face one another* • *Ensure workstations are adequately spaced from each other, including the implementation of shields or barriers where appropriate*	

Guidance	Actions to consider	Relevant obligations
Minimise the build-up of employees waiting to enter and exit the workplace.	• *Allocate different doors for entry and exit* • *Use an entry and exit system to the site that is as contactless as possible and quick to enter and exit* • *Use floor markings to provide minimum physical distancing guides at entrances and exits*	• *The epar V app will check in staff and visitors – contactless and no queues.* • *The V app already has their details and they can re-enter the site anytime and the app will log their entry*
Provide training to staff on physical distancing expectations while working and socialising (e.g. during lunchbreaks).	• *Develop and educate staff on strategies and work practice changes to maintain physical distancing* • *Reinforce messaging to staff that physical distancing needs to be maintained during work and during social interactions*	• *Use the epar Stand Up talk on social distancing* • *Display the epar social distancing posters* • *Display the poster – High 5 and handshake free zone* • *The V app will alert management of any social distancing breaches* • *Use the V app to send social distance push up notification on phones to staff*
Review delivery protocols to limit contact between delivery drivers and staff.	• *Establish contactless delivery or invoicing.* • *Display signage for delivery drivers.* • *Identify designated drop off areas.*	• *Use epar Contractor app to obtain contractor policies* • *Use the epar contractor app to send your requirements to your contractors.* • *The contractor app will alert management when a contractor arrives on site and if they have fulfilled your requirements*
Review and update work rosters and timetables where possible to ensure temporal as well as physical distancing.	• *Stagger start and finish times, shifts and break times, to reduce usage of common areas at the same time* • *Encourage staff to minimise time on breaks in shared facilities with others.* • *Consider cohorting of staff (during shift work). Ensure there is no contamination (mixing) of staff across different shifts*	
Where relevant, ensure clear and visible signage in areas that are open to the general public that specifies maximum occupancy of that space, as determined by the 'four square metre' rule.	• *Outlining the maximum occupancy of areas that are open to the general public, and information about signage*	

Guidance	Actions to consider	Relevant obligations
Record keeping		
Establish a process to record the attendance of customers, clients, visitors and workplace inspectors, delivery drivers. This information will assist employers to identify close contacts.	• *Establish a process to collect records from staff attendance (including labour hire, external contractors, cleaners, delivery drivers), including areas of the workplace accessed during each shift or visit. Where possible, consider implementing a contactless system* • *Review processes to maintain up-to-date contact details for all staff* • *Provide information on protocols for collecting and storing information*	• *Staff and guests register their email, name, and telephone number in epar V app. They only do it once and when they enter the site the app will auto check them in – contactless check in.*
Provide guidance to staff on the effective use of the workplace OHS reporting system (where available).	• *Educating staff on how to meet OHS requirements, including recording information about any incidents*	• *Open the epar Incident Management App and train staff in how to use the app to report, log and investigate an incident.*

Guidance	Actions to consider	Relevant obligations
Preparing your response to a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case		
Prepare or update your business continuity plan to consider the impacts of an outbreak and potential closure of the workplace.	• *Identify the roles and responsibilities of employer and employees.* • *Prepare for absenteeism of staff members required to quarantine or isolate* • *Describe key dependencies (e.g. third party providers)* • *Describe how you will continue to deliver essential services* • *Plans to communicate with customers, suppliers, stakeholders in the event of a positive case* • *Establishing processes for managing perishable stock*	• *The epar V app has a messaging and alerts features. This enables open messaging with any person who downloads the app.*
Prepare to assist DHHS with contact tracing and providing staff and visitor records to support contact tracing.	• *Establish a process and ensure readiness to provide records to DHHS and contact relevant staff members, including rosters and employee details* • *Outline key responsibilities and process for engaging with DHHS and undertaking employer-led contact tracing*	• *The epar V app data is secured and available to DHHS if required.* • *If a COVID case is suspected the app has a feature to message every person who has been on site.* • *Train staff in the epar online course – What to do in the event of a case or suspected case of COVID.*
Prepare to undertake cleaning and disinfection at your business premises. Assess whether the workplace or part of the workplace must be closed.	• *Implement a process for the cleaning and disinfection of employee's workspace and high touch surfaces, including use of service providers* • *Establish a process for determining whether closure or part closure of the business and/or implementation of other control measures are required to manage risk*	• *Use the epar Cleaning SOP.* • *Follow the epar protocol – what to do in the event of a COVID case or suspected case.*
Prepare for how you will manage a suspected or confirmed case in an employee during work hours.	• *Identify an appropriate area to isolate staff members* • *Communicate with the employee about the requirement to self-isolate and be tested* • *Describing arrangements to isolate and transfer an unwell staff member from the premises to go home or get tested* • *Outlining responsibility and process for entering details into relevant OHS system*	• *Train staff in the epar online course – What to do in the event of a case or suspected case of COVID.*
Prepare to notify workforce and site visitors of a confirmed or suspected case.	• *Regularly update and manage a list with the contact details and date of attendance of visitors to the workplace, including staff and customers* • *Establish an effective way of quickly communicating with visitors to a workplace where there is or has been a suspected or confirmed case*	• *Use the epar V app or the epar Connect Alert app to communicate messages to staff and / or visitors.*
Prepare to immediately notify WorkSafe Victoria on 13 23 60 if you have a confirmed COVID-19 case at your workplace.	• *Establish a process and responsibility for notifying WorkSafe*	• *Use the epar Information document sent to customers on 30 July detailing the COVID reporting requirements for each Australian State.*

Guidance	Actions to consider	Relevant obligations
Confirm that your workplace can safely reopen and workers can return to work.	• *Establish a process for confirming that a workplace is safe to reopen, in line with advice from DHHS* • *Establish a process for confirming a worker (with a suspected or confirmed case) does not have COVID-19 before returning to physical worksite* • *Establish a process for notifying DHHS and Worksafe that the site is reopening*	• *Use the epar Risk Assessment document – COVID Probability and COVID Mitigation to gain a complete understanding of your status before opening. This assessment details requirements and provides identification of gaps that need to be addressed.*