



# &DhPEpidemic/Pandemic Policy

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**Approved By:** Puckapunyal and District Neighbourhood Centre Committee  
**Endorsed By:** The Executive Committee, **24<sup>th</sup> March 2020.**  
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## Introduction

From time to time infectious diseases develop into epidemics or pandemics, and create increased risks for the community. These occasions require specific policies targeted at the particular disease in question and general efforts at preparedness.

1. Puckapunyal and District Neighbourhood Centre wishes as far as possible to protect its members, its staff and its volunteers from infection or contagion by epidemics and/or pandemics.
2. Puckapunyal and District Neighbourhood Centre will facilitate, through its policies and procedures, strategies designed to reduce risks to its members, its staff and its volunteers.
3. Puckapunyal and District Neighbourhood Centre will comply with all directions from authorised public health officers and recognised medical authorities in relation to the epidemic or pandemic.

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the strategies and actions that Puckapunyal and District Neighbourhood Centre intends to take to prevent the transmission of infectious diseases that are epidemics or pandemics, and control the transmission of infectious diseases when a case/s is identified.

**For the purpose of this policy, infectious diseases** mean diseases caused by pathogenic microorganisms, such as bacteria, viruses, parasites or fungi; the diseases can be spread, directly or indirectly, from one person to another. This policy is focused on infectious diseases that are declared to be an epidemic or pandemic.

## Scope



This policy applies to:

- Employees
- Committee Members
- Volunteers
- Members of the Puckapunyal and District Neighbourhood Centre

## **Policy**

Puckapunyal and District Neighbourhood Centre will as far as possible plan for and make advance preparations for the possibility that its operations will be affected by an epidemic or pandemic.

In the event of an epidemic or pandemic, Puckapunyal and District Neighbourhood Centre will, as far as possible:

- Assist its staff, volunteers and members as relevant, to minimise their exposure to the illness concerned.
- Encourage and assist those who have reason to believe that they are at risk of contracting the epidemic or pandemic to obtain a diagnosis.
- Support employees, volunteers and members to take reasonable precautions to prevent infection or contagion.

In the event of an infectious disease being declared an epidemic or pandemic, Puckapunyal and District Neighbourhood Centre requires people covered by this Policy to take the following precautions:

- Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water.
- Maintain at least 1.5 metre social distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, or shaking hands with others.
- Make sure you follow good hygiene, and encourage others to do the same. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze, and disposing of used tissues immediately.
- If you are or are likely to be contagious, notify the Centre Manager or Executive Committee as soon as possible. It may be possible or necessary for you to self-isolate by staying at home until you recover.
- Seek medical advice promptly and follow the directions of your local health authority.

## **Leave and Flexibility**

- Puckapunyal and District Neighbourhood Centre recognises that staff may request or require paid and unpaid leave when they are unwell, at risk of or vulnerable to infection, and at risk of infecting others.
- Workers may make use of leave consistent with Puckapunyal and District Neighbourhood Centre leave policy, relevant industrial instruments and the National Employment Standards (including access to unpaid leave).
- Puckapunyal and District Neighbourhood Centre may, at its discretion, direct those affected or reasonably at risk of being affected by the pandemic or epidemic, to remain away from the workplace or work remotely.

## **Notes**

In carrying out the procedures listed below, Puckapunyal and District Neighbourhood Centre will be guided by the information and directions provided by local health authorities and the World Health Organisation, and its occupational health and safety obligations.

## **Above and beyond provisions**

- Puckapunyal and District Neighbourhood Centre may subsidise any reasonable medical expenses incurred by any workers directed by Puckapunyal and District Neighbourhood Centre to obtain medical clearance for the infectious disease before returning to work.
- Puckapunyal and District Neighbourhood Centre may, at its discretion offer any staff member who is diagnosed with the infectious disease in question additional paid Epidemic Leave entitlements to cover any period the person is required to spend in quarantine or self-quarantine, presuming that person cannot carry out their duties remotely.
- Where possible during an epidemic or pandemic, Puckapunyal and District Neighbourhood Centre will aim to provide workers with flexibility to work remotely and to attend medical appointments.

## **Responsibilities**

The **Executive Committee** is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the organisation's Leave and Workplace Health and Safety policies are consistent with the intention of the Epidemic Policy
- In the event of an epidemic or pandemic,
  - Giving notice to staff, committee members, volunteers, members, and any persons likely to be affected that epidemic or pandemic procedures are in effect
  - Bringing into operation the epidemic or pandemic management procedures specified below
  - Instituting any administrative measures necessary to reduce the impact of the vulnerabilities detailed above

**The Manager** are responsible for:

- Ensuring that staff and volunteers are aware of the epidemic procedures in effect at any time.

**Employees/volunteers** are responsible for:

- Abiding by the epidemic procedures specified below, when informed by authorised staff that epidemic or pandemic procedures are in effect

**The Manager** is responsible for:

- Working with the Executive Committee on the preparation of a comprehensive epidemic plan
- Advising the Executive Committee on when epidemic procedures should be activated
- Familiarising staff with recommended procedures regarding epidemic avoidance

## **Procedures**

The following procedures apply in the event of the Executive Committee giving notice that epidemic or pandemic procedures are in effect.

### **Events**

- The Executive Committee, with the advice of the Manager, will consider on a continuing basis whether any events involving the attendance of staff or members of the public should be changed, rescheduled or cancelled to minimise the risk of infection.

### **Work procedures**

- The Executive Committee, with the advice of the Manager, will consider on a continuing basis whether:
  - It is necessary or appropriate for nominated staff/volunteers to work from home.
  - Staff/volunteer travel, (or other activities that may cause them to come into contact with other people in Australia or overseas) should be modified or terminated.
  - Arrangements for staff/volunteers who work with clients or the public should be modified to minimise risks for all parties.
- The Executive Committee, with the advice of the Manager, may require any member of staff to not attend the workplace, and/or to work from home, or, if this is not feasible or appropriate, to take paid Personal Leave.
- The Executive Committee, with the advice of the Manager, may require any member of staff to provide satisfactory evidence that they are fit to return to work.

## **Health Messaging**

The Executive Committee shall familiarise staff/volunteers and others, As relevant, with recommended procedures on epidemic avoidance Guidelines (e.g. handwashing) as appropriate.