



## EPIDEMIC - PANDEMIC POLICY

### Organisational Area

ORGANISATION

### Authorisation

This policy was reviewed and adopted by the Park Orchards Community House & Learning Centre Incorporated (POCH&LCI) on 2<sup>nd</sup> of March.

### Review Date

This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if required.

### Scope

This policy applies to all staff, Board, volunteers and visitors.

This policy also applies to all students enrolling and undertaking courses at POCH&LCI and families using the POCH&LCI Childcare service.

### Objective

The objective of this policy is to outline the strategies and actions that POCH&LCI 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.

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.

- POCH&LCI wishes as far as possible to protect its clients, its staff, its volunteers, and the general public from infection or contagion by epidemics and/or pandemics.
- POCH&LCI will facilitate, through its policies and procedures, strategies designed to reduce risks to its clients, its staff, its volunteers, and the general public.
- POCH&LCI will comply with all directions from authorised public health officers and recognised medical authorities in relation to the epidemic or pandemic.
- POCH&LCI 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.



## Policy

In the event of an epidemic or pandemic, POCH&LCI will, as far as possible:

- Assist its clients, staff, volunteers and others, 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, contractors and clients to take reasonable precautions to prevent infection or contagion.
- Provide standard precautions such as soap, hand sanitiser and disinfectant sprays.
- Maintain its services and operations throughout the period of concern.
- In the event of an infectious disease being declared an epidemic or pandemic, POCH&LCI 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 (5 feet) 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.
  - Consider staying home if you feel unwell. If you are well enough to work but would like to minimise the risk of infecting others, ask your manager whether you can temporarily work from home.
  - Keep up to date on the latest hotspots (cities or local areas where the pandemic or epidemic is spreading widely). If possible, avoid traveling to these places - especially if you are more at risk.
  - If you are or are likely to be contagious, notify the Manager 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

- POCH&LCI 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 POCH&LCI leave policy, relevant industrial instruments and the National Employment Standards (including access to unpaid leave).



- POCH&LCI 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.
- Where possible during an epidemic or pandemic, POCH&LCI will aim to provide workers with flexibility to work remotely and to attend medical appointments

POCH&LCI 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.

## Definitions

**Epidemic** - a widespread occurrence of an infectious disease in a community at a particular time.

**Pandemic** - a disease prevalent over a whole country or the world.

## Related Documents

Student Welfare Policy  
Emergency Management Plan  
Workplace Health & Safety Policy  
Refund Policy

Australian Health Management Plan for Pandemic Influenza ([AHMPPI](https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ohp-ahmppl.htm))  
<https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ohp-ahmppl.htm>

Victorian Government's health Management Plan  
<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/emergencies/emergency-type/infectious-diseases/pandemic-influenza>

## Document Locations

Policies and Procedures Manual  
Website

## Related Legislation

Victorian Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004  
Neighbourhood Houses and Adult Community Education Centres Agreement 2010

## Area of Compliance



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Date reviewed	Version	Details of changes (if any)	Date of next review
12/03/2020	1	Original document	12/03/2023
21/04/2020	2	Change distance from 1 metre to 1.5 metres	21/04/2023
2/03/2022	3	Remove reference to VRQA	2/3/2025

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