

COVID-19 Safety Management Plan (COVIDSafe Plan)

This **COVID-19 Safety Management Plan (COVIDSafe Plan)** applies to all Victorian government schools, and outlines key health, safety, and wellbeing hazards that schools should plan for. It links to the strategies described in the [School Operations Guide](#) and safety advice for on-site schooling in the context of coronavirus (COVID-19) that are issued by the Victorian Chief Health Officer, and the central and regional supports available. The latest Coronavirus (COVID-19) advice for schools is available [here](#).

This COVID-19 Safety Management Plan (COVIDSafe Plan) is required to be implemented at each school to:

- address the health and safety issues arising from coronavirus (COVID-19)
- outline the process for record keeping for all workers and visitors attending the school for longer than 15 minutes
- address the level of appropriate PPE to be worn
- outline the process to respond to any suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19

The [School Operations Guide](#) provides more detailed advice and guidance and should be read together with this COVID-19 Safety Management Plan (COVIDSafe Plan).

Principals must consult with their local Health and Safety Representative(s) and Health and Safety Committee(s) (if applicable) to implement the recommended controls to the maximum extent reasonably practicable. In the absence of a school Health and Safety Committee (HSC) or Health and Safety Representative, consultation must occur with school staff. Contact your [Regional OHS Support Officer](#) for assistance with local consultation if required. A [draft agenda](#) has been developed for HSC meetings to assist in facilitating consultation and identifying and managing risks.

COVIDSafe Roles and Responsibilities Posters must be displayed on the school's OHS noticeboard detailing the shared responsibility of health and safety in schools and the health and safety measures that should be applied in schools. Posters will be available in the [communications support pack](#).

The [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) advice for schools](#) is evolving over time and therefore the [OHS guidance and supports](#) will be continually reviewed and updated as required.

Your local [Regional OHS Support Officers](#) and the Department's [OHS Advisory Service](#) continue to be available to provide support to your school, including in implementing the latest guidance, for suggestions on establishing effective controls, or difficulty accessing support resources.

The DET COVID-19 hotline ([1800 338 663](tel:1800338663)) is available for all Department staff, contractors and parents 8.30am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) for any questions, queries or concerns. Employees may also access the guidance at [COVID-19 Advice Line - FAQs](#).

Employees are encouraged to use [EduSafe](#) Plus to report hazards, incidents and mental and physical injuries to ensure effective and timely resolution of OHS issues, as well as escalation for further supports when required. EduSafe reports are being monitored to ensure that support can be provided.

If you or your family need extra support, personalised over-the-phone or video counselling is available 24/7 through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). This service is available to all school staff and their immediate families (aged 18 years and over). Staff can book by calling [1300 361 008](tel:1300361008) or by using the live chat function on the [Lifeworks' Australia website](#).

This plan covers three key areas of risk ('hazard types'):

- Infectious Disease (Infection Prevention and Control)
- Occupational Violence and Aggression
- Mental Health and Wellbeing

Note: Working Alone, in isolation or from Home has been removed.

Hazard Type	Hazard Description	Recommended Controls	Examples of practical solutions
<p>Infectious Disease (Infection Prevention and Control)</p>	<p>Staff, students, and others on-site may come into contact with an individual currently unaware that they have coronavirus (COVID-19), and subsequently contract the virus from them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to the School Operations Guide for advice on supporting COVIDSafe behaviours and activities on school premises. • Provide information, training, and instruction on health hygiene. Refer to maintaining good health hygiene and guidance for wearing face masks in schools (inclusive of staff, students and visitors), as well as DHHS guidance on face masks. Ensure staff complete the School infection prevention and control during coronavirus (COVID-19) elearn module. • Contact the OHS Advisory Service for more detailed risk assessments if required in relation to students with complex needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulate the latest advice to parents (in multiple languages if appropriate), staff and students (where appropriate), including displaying on-site signage. • Consult with staff, including through the elected HSR and/or HSC Committee (if applicable) about the implementation of controls. • Discuss implementation issues for on-site service provision, including planning recesses and lunchtimes, use of alternate spaces to increase physical distancing and supervision of hygiene products. • School staff should refer to the Department guidance for the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) in education to determine when additional PPE is required and for

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to School Operations Guide for guidance on use of shared equipment and other school activities (e.g. playgrounds, shared resources and excursions). Refer to ChemWatch (login required) to access hand sanitiser safety data sheet. Ensure adequate supervision and safe storage of supplies. Record the attendance of employees, students, and visitors who are on site for more than 15 minutes. Schools can use existing mechanisms such as visitor sign-in procedures, student attendance records and staffing rosters to record this information. The collected information must include the person's first name and surname, a contact phone number, the date and time the person attended the school and the areas within the buildings that the person attended (attendance records for capital works should be managed by the principal contractor). The Victorian Government QR Code Service can be the method used to record attendance. 	<p>information on the correct and safe use of PPE.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Display information and signage at school entrances and in communal areas such as density signage indicating the maximum number of members of the public that may be present in the space at a single time. Posters are available in the communications support pack. Conduct regular inspections of the workplace to check that recommended risk controls are implemented and working effectively. Use teaching strategies and communications resources to remind staff and students to wear face masks (in accordance with the guidance in the School Operations Guide) and to practice good hand hygiene. Ensure sign in requirements are followed by all contractors and visitors attending site. Escalate issues to the OHS Advisory Service if issues cannot be resolved locally. Schools are strongly encouraged to increase outdoor

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the advice in the School Operations Guide to minimise contact with delivery personnel. <p>Visitors to schools and events/activities on school premises (including Open Days and Sporting events)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitors to school grounds must comply with physical distancing and face mask recommendations set out in the School Operations Guide, and practise good hand hygiene. Schools should refer to the advice in the School Operations Guide when planning for a safe event on school premises. Schools must also refer to the Public Events Framework when an event on a school site is publicly advertised. For information and training relating to the correct use of PPE, school staff should refer to the guidance for staff on the use of PPE in education settings. Staff are also encouraged to watch the education video on donning and doffing PPE. 	<p>air ventilation whenever possible and to maximise the use of outdoor learning areas or environments.</p> <p>Visitors to schools and events/activities on school premises (including Open Days and Sporting events)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The density limit of 1 person per 2 square metres should be applied to any school spaces accessible to the public. The density limit applies to all persons in the space, including students. For these public spaces, signage must be displayed to indicate the maximum number of persons that may be present in the space at a single time. Refer to the School Operations Guide in relation to requirements for seated events involving external visitors. Record keeping for contact-tracing purposes is required for public events in school environments. Schools are strongly encouraged to use the free Victorian Government QR

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to personal hygiene products, including sourcing and procurement tips for high demand items. Refer to the advice in the School Operations Guide with respect to outdoor air ventilation and use of outdoor spaces. Physical distancing should be encouraged where possible, and density limits for areas accessible by the public be implemented in accordance with the School Operations Guide <p>Excursions (off school premises)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to the School Operations Guide and Excursion Policy on PAL for guidance on process and requirements related to excursion planning. Refer to the School Operations Guide and School Camps During COVID-19 webpage on guidance for participating school groups on health and safety measures recommended to manage risks associated with COVID-19. 	<p>Code Service for attendees to 'Check-in' to school events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to the School Operations Guide for guidance on the use of face masks in schools. School Principals should ensure appropriate cleaning requirements are in place, including the timing of any additional professional cleaning services required. <p>Excursions (off school premises)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School staff and students should ensure they continue to practise appropriate safety measures while at the external venues, such as physical distancing, regular hand hygiene, and wearing a face mask in line with health advice. Most excursion venues are required to use electronic record keeping for contact-tracing purposes in line with current public health directives. An electronic or hard copy list of staff and student's first name and surname including contact numbers should be provided to the venue at the time of the excursion.

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	<p>Staff and students may contract disease by touching surfaces contaminated with coronavirus (COVID-19), following exposure from someone with the virus.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to the advice with respect to environmental cleaning services and access to cleaning supplies and services. For advice about the use of playgrounds please refer to School Operations Guide Schools should refer to the COVIDSafe routine cleaning guidelines for advice on cleaning requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchase of supplies through the State Purchase Contract supplier, Complete Office Supplies (COS), or retail outlets. Schools may continue to use their usual supplier: Schools should contact the Department at cleaning@education.vic.gov.au.
	<p>Vulnerable workforce (higher risk of serious illness).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to the advice in the School Operations Guide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure consultation with your elected Health and Safety Representative and staff and incorporate into workforce planning.
	<p>A suspected case may occur among staff and students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to the managing suspected cases advice in the School Operations Guide. Also see the advice in the Operations Guide regarding management of unwell students and staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circulate expectations to the school community and communicate the protocols to staff. Refer to the communications support pack for resources to communicate with your school community. Stay in contact with affected staff or families remotely.
	<p>A confirmed case (or a close contact of a confirmed case) may occur</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to the managing suspected cases advice in the School Operations Guide. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circulate expectations to the school community and

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	among staff, students, or the school community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Also see the advice in the Operations Guide regarding management of unwell students and staff. • Contact the Department by calling 1800 126 126 to report an IRIS incident alert if a student or staff member tests positive to COVID-19. Schools do not need to take further action until directed to do so. • The Department will notify WorkSafe on behalf of the affected school. • WorkSafe may be in contact with the affected school to ensure the school is following the health and safety guidance outlined in this document and has implemented their COVID-19 Safety Management Plan. Please contact the OHS Advisory Service (1300 074 715) for support in managing occupational health and safety matters. • Please refer to the Cleaning and Disinfection Guidelines for advice on cleaning and disinfection when a confirmed case of COVID-19 has 	<p>communicate the protocols to staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to the communications support pack for resources to communicate with your school community. • Stay in contact with affected staff or families remotely.

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		been identified in a Victorian Government School.	
	Non-DET contractors and their staff may need to enter school grounds to carry out work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to the advice in the School Operations Guide regarding visitors and contractors attending school sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools should ensure contractors (such as Casual Relief Teachers (CRTs)) receive appropriate induction.

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Occupational Violence and Aggression	Online, over the phone or other remote threatening or aggressive behaviour by students, parents/carers, school staff or other members of school community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to the Occupational Violence and Aggression Policy, which covers online and on-site behaviour. Consider whether any student supports, including Behaviour Support Plans, require revision in consultation with Student Support Services. Also, refer to Creating Respectful and Safe School Communities (including template Statement of Values), the Respect for School Staff local policy template, and resources available through 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure on-site staff are ready to manage the students that will be attending and that student supports, including Behaviour Support Plans, are up to date. If wearing a mask when working with students at risk of grabbing or pulling it, use a mask that will release easily, e.g. with hooks over the ears rather than ties around the back of the head. Regularly and explicitly teach students not to touch or attempt to remove others' masks.
	On-site violence, bullying or harassment by students, parents/carers, school staff or other members of school community.		

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	<p>Staff experiencing stress or anxiety stemming from exposure to increasing onsite or online occupational violence and aggression from parents.</p> <p>Many parents/carers are likely to be anxious during this time.</p>	<p>Respectful Relationships and Schoolwide Positive Behaviour Support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proactive and open communications with parents and carers is important to prevent an escalation in behaviours. Refer to Coronavirus (COVID-19) advice for parents, carers and guardians, and to the communications support pack. Escalated referrals will be managed by the Employee Wellbeing Response Team, and Complex Matter Support Team. Refer to the mental health and wellbeing advice on the OHSMS COVID-19 Employee supports page, and the relevant policy and procedure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set expectations for behaviour with the school community and promote appropriate ways for parents to raise their concerns. Discuss extra supports or strategies for staff who engage with anyone known to present a risk. Encourage staff to report incidents in eduSafe and IRIS as appropriate, de-brief, and seek escalated support (e.g. through EAP) if required.

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<p>Mental Health and Wellbeing</p>	<p>Leaders managing the anxiety and mental health of others – including students, staff, and members of the school community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to the mental health and wellbeing advice on the OHSMS COVID-19 Employee supports page, and the relevant policy and procedure. Encourage staff to access MyWellbeing Program by contacting employee.wellbeing.response.team@education.vic.gov.au Refer to the Return to Work Coordinator Portal. Refer to the Principal Health and Wellbeing services on the OHSMS COVID-19 Employee support page. Refer to DET Flexible Work Policy. Refer to School Operations Guide Video-counselling is available via the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for all staff and their immediate family (aged 18 years and over). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult (check-in) with your staff on how they are feeling with the current situation, encourage managers to be flexible. Have regular conversations to provide as much clarity and flexibility as possible about tasks, priorities and the way work can be delivered (e.g. pre-recorded lessons). Allow time for staff to access the relevant information, instruction and training Encourage staff to use EAP, for themselves and their immediate family, as well as the other supports and resources available, and , promote the ability to access individualised supports through a referral to MyWellbeing, by contacting employee.wellbeing.response.team@education.vic.gov.au
	<p>Staff experiencing changes to workload (increase/decrease) from modifications in tasks and priorities.</p>		
	<p>Balancing non-work-related demands (e.g. caring responsibilities).</p>		
	<p>Staff experiencing disengagement and low morale regarding clarity of tasks, team roles and evolving priorities.</p>		
	<p>Staff experiencing uncertainty, stress, anxiety from the transition to an altered working environment</p>		
	<p>Staff experiencing uncertainty and anxiety about the COVID-19 risks to their personal health (especially if working onsite).</p>		

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	<p>Staff experiencing isolation and changes in levels of support from leaders and colleagues as a result of the changed arrangements.</p> <hr/> <p>Aggravation of stress caused by pre-existing conditions (e.g. existing mental health conditions, disabilities, vulnerable cohorts, and staff on leave, including Workers' Compensation or sick leave, etc.).</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure there are adjusted return to work strategies for people on sick leave or Workers' Compensation leave.