

EPIDEMIC/PANDEMIC POLICY

1. 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.

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

2. Purpose

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to outline the strategies and actions that Maldon 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.

3. Scope

3.1 This policy applies to:

Employees	Directors	Officers	Contractors (including employees of contractors)	Volunteers	Suppliers	Consultants	Participants
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

4. Policy

4.1 Maldon 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.

4.2 In the event of an epidemic or pandemic, Maldon Neighbourhood Centre will, as far as possible:

4.2.1 Assist its clients, staff, volunteers and others, as relevant, to minimise their exposure to the illness concerned.

4.2.2 Encourage and assist those who have reason to believe that they are at risk of contracting the epidemic or pandemic to obtain a diagnosis.

4.2.3 Support employees, volunteers, contractors and clients to take reasonable precautions to prevent infection or contagion.

4.2.4 Provide personal hygiene equipment (e.g. sanitiser, soap, paper towel and gloves).

4.2.5 Where possible, maintain its services and operations throughout the period of concern whilst following all Government directives.

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

4.3.1 Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with soap and water or with an alcohol-based hand rub.

4.3.2 Maintain at least 1.5 metre distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing.

4.3.3 Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, or shaking hands with others.

4.3.4 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.

4.3.5 Stay home if you feel unwell. If you are well enough to work but would like to minimise the risk of infecting others, seek permission to temporarily work from home.

4.3.6 Avoid unnecessary travel

4.3.7 If you are or are likely to be contagious, notify MNC Coordinator/MNC Committee as soon as possible. It may be possible or necessary for you to self-isolate by staying at home until you recover.

4.3.8 Seek medical advice promptly and follow the directions of your local health authority.

5. Leave and Flexibility

5.1 Maldon 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.

5.2 Workers may make use of leave consistent with the NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSES AND ADULT COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTRES COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT 2016 and the National Employment Standards (including access to unpaid leave).

5.3 Maldon 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.

6. Notes

In carrying out the procedures listed below, Maldon 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.

7. Above and beyond provisions

7.1 Maldon Neighbourhood Centre may offer any staff member who is diagnosed with the infectious disease in question additional paid 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.

7.2 Where possible during an epidemic or pandemic, Maldon Neighbourhood Centre will aim to provide workers with flexibility to work remotely and to attend medical appointments.

8. Related Documents

8.1 Australian Health Management Plan for Pandemic Influenza (AHMPPI) Vic - Victoria

8.2 Trusted Information Sharing Network (TISN) for Critical Infrastructure Resilience: Template Pandemic Emergency Management Plan

9. Legislation & Industrial Instruments

This policy & procedure is not intended to override any industrial instrument, contract, award or legislation.

- Biosecurity Act 2015 (Commonwealth)
- Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)
- Fair Work Regulations 2009 (Cth)
- NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSES AND ADULT COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTRES COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT 2016