**PANDEMIC POLICY**

1. **Overview**

Practice name seeks to provide a safe workplace protected from the health effects of pandemics.

The aim of this document is to outline strategies for limiting transmission of disease, responding to government shutdowns, and managing the broader economic impacts of pandemics. If you have any queries or specific situations that are not covered please speak to Staff name.

1. **Principles**

The principles that guide this policy are:

* A proactive approach to limiting disease transmission during work.
* A considered approach to responding to government shutdowns.
* A commitment to preserving the financial health of our business during pandemics.
1. **Hygiene at work**

While at work, please practice good hygiene to protect against infection. Good hygiene means you:

* Wash your hands frequently. As a minimum, this should be every time you enter the studio from outside, before and after meals, after using the toilet and after coughing or sneezing. Washing is ideally done with soap and warm water, though alcohol-based hand sanitiser is a good substitute.
* Maintain social distancing between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing. A safe distance is more than 1m.
* Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
* Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough with your bent elbow or a tissue. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately.
* Wipe down your desk, keyboard, mouse and telephone with disinfectant at the end of each day.

Please encourage everyone else you interact with at work to also follow these guidelines, so we all help to protect each other.

1. **Travel**

During pandemics, work-related travel is to be:

* Cancelled if international.
* Conducted with precautionary good hygiene if interstate or local.

If possible, personal travel internationally is to be cancelled. If this is not possible, you are required to stay at home under self-quarantine upon your return to Australia for 14 days.

Travel restrictions recommended by health authorities are to be followed for personal travel interstate.

1. **Meetings**

Unless the studio is closed during pandemics, internal meetings are conducted as per normal. External meetings are to be:

* Conducted via video conference where possible.
* Conducted face to face but with good hygiene protections if the meeting is essential and a video conference is not possible.
* Cancelled if the meeting is not essential and a video conference is not possible.

Prior to organising a meeting, please consult with Staff name to confirm which category it falls into.

1. **If you get sick**

If you experience any symptoms associated with the pandemic, please stay at home and seek medical care early. The World Health Organisation recommends you call your local doctor in advance and then follow their directions.

*Symptoms associated with the Covid-19 pandemic include:*

* *Fever*
* *Coughing*
* *Sore throat*
* *Fatigue*
* *Shortness of breath*

If your local doctor identifies you as being at risk of pandemic infection, please continue to stay at home while you wait for your official test results and diagnosis.

If your test is negative, you may return to work. Please carefully monitor your health for the next 14 days and report any new or returning to symptoms to your doctor, as well as to Staff name.

If you test is positive, follow your doctor’s advice and let Staff name know that you have the pandemic virus. You may return to work when your doctor advises that it is safe to do so.

1. **If someone close to you gets sick**

If your partner, close relative, housemate or other person with whom you have regular contact is diagnosed with the pandemic virus, please stay at home under self-quarantine for a period of 14 days.

During this period, you may work from home and communicate with the studio via videoconferencing, teleconferencing and Slack.

If you are symptom-free after the quarantine period, you may return to work.

1. **Studio closure**

Unless ordered to close by health authorities, Practice name is to remain operational during pandemics with work undertaken at the studio.

Should schools, universities and other major institutions be closed, Staff name is likely to spend fewer hours in the studio in order to care for children. The studio is to continue to remain open but operate according to a school holiday timetable.

If someone at Practice name is diagnosed with the pandemic virus or health authorities issue a general recommendation requiring relevant businesses to close, the studio will close and work will be undertaken by all staff from home.

If you are required to work from home:

* You are to take your computer and other essential work items home.
* Working hours are to remain the same as per normal.
* Weekly team meetings are to be conducted using video- or teleconferencing tools.
* Daily communication is to be conducted using Slack and /or teleconferencing tools.
1. **Dress code**

During any work undertaken from home, the Practice name dress code is relaxed to permit business pyjamas.

1. **Leave entitlements**

If you become sick with the pandemic virus or experience associated symptoms, you are entitled to take paid sick leave during your absence from work. If you have no sick leave left, you are entitled to take unpaid sick leave.

If you are required to care for a family member or member of your household who is sick with the pandemic virus, you are entitled to take paid carers leave during your absence from work. If you have no carers leave left, you are entitled to take unpaid carers leave.

If you are unable to re-enter Australia or are required to stay home under self-quarantine as a result of personal travel, you are required to take annual leave or leave without pay.

If the Practice name studio is closed and your work is undertaken from home, you will be paid as per normal.

If you wish to stay home under voluntary self-quarantine as a precaution, please speak with Staff name to come to an arrangement that best suits your needs and the needs of Practice name.

1. **Resources**

The following organisations were consulted in preparing this policy, who provide further resources that may be of value to you:

* [Australian Department of Health](https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov#prevention)
* [Australian Fair Work Ombudsman](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/website-news/coronavirus-and-australian-workplace-laws)
* [Safe Work Australia](https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-pcbus)
* [World Health Organisation](https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public)
1. **Updates to policy**

Practice name reserves the right to update this policy at any time. You will be notified of any changes within 14 days of their enactment.