

Townview Policy

DEALING WITH CORONAVIRUS IN THE WORKPLACE POLICY

Dated: 14th March 2020

INTRODUCTION

The Organisation is committed to ensuring the health and safety of all those in the workplace. To this end, this policy sets out steps that the Organisation is taking in order to tackle the coronavirus outbreak, alongside expectations that are placed upon you.

For the safety of yourself and others in the workplace, this policy must be followed at all times.

INFECTION CONTROL MEASURES

We strongly encourage you to follow guidelines from the World Health Organisation on infection control, both whilst at work and in your daily life. These include:

- frequently cleaning your hands by using alcohol-based hand sanitizers or soap and water
- when coughing and sneezing, covering your mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue, throwing this tissue away immediately and washing your hands, and
- avoiding close contact with anyone who has fever and cough.
- While working in the vicinity of others, ensure that you are wearing a face mask. This is to ensure that you do not have contact with others that may be carrying the virus. Also if you are unknowingly carrying the virus and spreading to others. The virus is contactable through the particles of a laugh or sneeze. Wearing a mask will help to prevent this contact. A mask should be replaced minimally on a daily basis.

CORONAVIRUS DIAGNOSIS OR EXPOSURE

If you contract the virus

If you begin to display symptoms of the virus, you must follow Government guidance to find out what to do next. You must seek medical attention and notify your manager at the earliest opportunity.

In order to protect your fellow colleagues, you are required to remain absent from the workplace on personal leave and provide us with a medical certificate. You are required to get a medical clearance from your doctor prior to returning to the workplace.

If you have contact with a confirmed case of the coronavirus

If you have been in contact with someone who has a confirmed case of the coronavirus, you are required to notify management immediately.

In order to protect your fellow colleagues, we ask you to seek medical attention and remain absent from the workplace on personal leave and provide us with a medical certificate. You are required to get a medical clearance from your doctor prior to returning to the workplace.

If you have contact with a suspected case of the coronavirus

If you have been in contact with someone who has a suspected case of the coronavirus, you are required to notify management immediately.

Even if you are not displaying any symptoms, we may take the decision to send you home and require you not to attend work as a safety precaution.

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

The Government is regularly updating the list of countries which are considered to be 'higher risk' and in some cases may require you to self-quarantine if you have been to one of these countries. Ensure that you keep up to date on what countries these are by visiting the Australian Government Department of Health website.

Travel/transit through or contact with someone who has travelled/transited through a higher risk country

You are required to notify your manager if you are going to travel to, or transit through, any higher risk countries.

Upon returning from such travel, we ask that you be considerate of your co-workers and follow Government advice to self-quarantine and remain absent from the workplace by taking personal leave. Ensure that you receive a medical clearance before returning to the workplace. This applies whether or not you are presenting symptoms.

The above likewise applies if you come into contact with someone who has travelled, or transited through, any higher risk countries.

Employees returning from moderate to low risk countries

If you return from a country the Government does not consider to be higher risk, but you are sick, we ask that you be considerate of your co-workers and remain absent from the workplace by taking personal leave. Ensure that you receive a medical clearance before returning to the workplace.

If you return from a country the Government does not consider to be higher risk, and you are not sick, you should be prepared to attend work as normal. However, if there is a reason why you think you may have been exposed to the virus, you should let your manager know before you return to work. The usual sickness notification procedures apply.

Travel plans

The Organisation accepts that you may have plans to travel in the near future, including pre-booked and paid for holidays. Certain countries have been identified as having been severely affected by the virus and we would therefore ask that you consider, for your own health, whether travelling to these areas is the best thing to do. If a decision is made to travel, we ask that you let your manager know of the countries to be visited so that your return can be managed appropriately.

We also ask that you keep yourself up to date with Government guidance on the countries which require self-isolation upon return, and bear in mind that this guidance can change on a daily basis. You should also familiarise yourself with the health and safety recommendations for the country which you are visiting. This could include staying away from farms, touching animals, etc.

If you would like to cancel any pre-booked annual leave, you should discuss this with your manager.

THE CONTINUATION OF BUSINESS OPERATIONS

Attendance at work

It is our expectation that you attend work as normal during this time, unless:

- you are on a period of authorised leave (personal, annual or long service)
- you are not attending work under our specific instruction, or
- there is a safety reason why you cannot be at work that has been discussed and agreed with your manager.

Temporary business closure

As time progresses, it may become necessary for the business to temporarily reduce or cease operations, for example if someone in the workplace is diagnosed with coronavirus.

The Organisation will do everything possible to continue operating in these circumstances, however ultimately will take the action that is necessary to comply with Government advice and ensure safety within the workplace.

In the unlikely scenario of a shutdown, we may have no choice but to place you on an unpaid stand down. For clarity, this will only occur under specific circumstances in line with the Fair Work Act 2009, and all alternatives will be considered prior to taking this step.

Working from another location

The Organisation will take all available steps to maintain normal business operations.

To maintain normal business operations, it may be necessary for us to require you to work from an alternative work location if, for example, instructions from a third party mean that entry into our current workplace is not permitted. Your flexibility in this regard will be required.

Harassment/bullying

We operate a zero tolerance policy to all forms of harassment and bullying in the workplace. We will not tolerate any unacceptable behaviour to colleagues, suppliers, members of the public etc. Any complaints of this nature will be investigated in line with our usual policy and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.
