



Epidemic/Pandemic Policy

Approved/effective date	130520
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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 Torquay Community House 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.
- 1.2 Torquay Community House will facilitate, through its policies and procedures, strategies designed to reduce risks to its clients, its staff, its volunteers, and the general public.
- 1.3 Torquay Community House 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 Torquay Community House 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

This policy applies to:

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

4. Policy

- 4.1 Torquay Community House 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, Torquay Community House 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 those who have reason to believe that they are at risk of contracting the epidemic or pandemic to seek medical attention and 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 standard precautions such as personal protective equipment (e.g. masks, soap, and gloves).
 - 4.2.5 Maintain its services and operations throughout the period of concern.
- 4.3 In the event of an infectious disease being declared an epidemic or pandemic, Torquay Community House requires people covered by this Policy to take the following precautions recommended by the World Health Organization.
 - 4.3.1 Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water.
 - 4.3.2 Maintain at least 2 metre (10 feet) 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 at home if you feel unwell. If you are well enough to work but would like to minimise the risk of infecting others, ask your coordinator whether you can temporarily work from home.

- 4.3.6 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 places - especially if you are more at risk.
- 4.3.7 If you are or are likely to be contagious, notify your coordinator as soon as possible. It may be possible or necessary for you to self-isolate by staying at home until you recover.

5. Leave and Flexibility

- 5.1 Torquay Community House 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. See award 33.1.5 for details.
- 5.2 Workers may make use of leave consistent with Torquay Community House's leave policy, relevant industrial instruments and the National Employment Standards (including access to unpaid leave).
- 5.3 Torquay Community House 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, Torquay Community House 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 Where possible during an epidemic or pandemic, Torquay Community House will aim to provide workers with flexibility to work remotely and to attend medical appointments.