

COVID-19 Safety Plan, including COVID-19 Emergency Plan, for the Multicultural Council of Tasmania and the Multicultural Hub

Latest update: 23 September 2020. To be updated as circumstances change.

Background

The Multicultural Council of Tasmania (MCOT) occupies office space at 65 Hopkins Street in Moonah and manages the Multicultural Hub at the same address. The building is a workplace, community facility and place for religious ceremonies and worship.

This COVID-19 Safety Plan relates to both MCOT's office operations and the operation of the Multicultural Hub. Compliance with the Safety Plan is important for MCOT staff and Hub attendees. The Safety Plan includes an Emergency Plan in the event of a MCOT staff member or Hub attendee becomes aware of having contracted COVID-19.

COVID-19 is potentially lethal.

COVID-19 can be transmitted directly from an infected person to another person. This can happen even when the infected person experiences no symptoms of COVID-19. As such, any interaction with other people involves a risk of contracting COVID-19.

COVID-19 can also be transmitted via surfaces. For instance, when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks, they may generate droplets containing the virus. These droplets can settle on surrounding surfaces. If other people touch these surfaces, they may contract COVID-19.

Advice from the Tasmanian Government available on 24 June 2020 (at coronavirus.tas.gov.au) was that: "The number of people permitted at businesses/activities (other than households) will increase from 12pm Friday 26 June 2020 as Tasmania moves to Stage 3 in its Roadmap to Recovery. Gathering sizes will increase to a maximum of 500 people in an undivided space outdoors and 250 people for an undivided space in an indoor premises. Maximum density limits will move from 4sqm per person to 2sqm. Where the number of people permitted according to the density limit is less than the gathering limit, the lower number applies."

MCOT staff and the professional cleaner contracted by MCOT will be consulted on this Safety Plan and on future iterations. MCOT staff, the professional cleaner contracted by MCOT, and anyone who hires the Hub, will be provided with this Safety Plan.

The CEO will encourage and seek information on compliance with this Safety Plan and will task staff to collate information on compliance.

Staff wellbeing

The CEO will regularly inquire with each staff member about their mental health and will encourage each staff member to contribute to a supportive workplace culture. External service providers such as Lifeline (13 11 14) and Beyond Blue (1300 22 4636) are also available to staff members.

The CEO will inquire with each staff member about whether they consider themselves to be vulnerable, because of a chronic medical condition or compromised immune system. In cases of vulnerability, the CEO will discuss special arrangements.

The CEO will advise MCOT staff to stay abreast of official Tasmanian Government COVID-19 information on coronavirus.tas.gov.au, including information on the risks of COVID-19 and associated control measures.

Working from home

As at 21 September 2020, the State Government advises that “all businesses and workplaces are now permitted to operate” and no working-from-home requirements are imposed. Any staff members who face difficulties with working at the office should contact the CEO to discuss. Any changes to State Government advice on this issue will be reflected in updates to the Safety Plan.

Entry to the building

At no time shall a person (other than emergency personnel) enter or remain in the building if the person:

- is aware of having any flu-like symptoms, however minor, including fever, cough, sore throat and shortness of breath; or
- has been directed to be in isolation or quarantine.

In recognition of the importance of contact tracing in the event that a person who attends the building contracting COVID-19, a person (other than emergency personnel) shall only enter the building if the person has provided MCOT staff with their name and contact details. An exception will apply for those who do not wish to provide their name and contact details, provided that the person agrees to carry a device with the COVID-Safe App. A sign in sheet for visitors will be provided at the entry to the building.

The CEO shall communicate this to each staff member. Anyone who hires the Hub shall be advised of this, and signs advising of this will be posted outside and inside the building.

Cleaning

Professional cleaning on a weekly basis:

A professional cleaning service will clean and disinfect all table tops, counters, desks, door handles, cupboard handles, light switches, phones, keyboards, EFTPOS machine, toilets and taps. MCOT staff will be advised of the scheduled time of cleaning. MCOT will provide cleaning equipment including disinfectant and disposable gloves.

Responsibilities of the person who hires the Hub, before, during and after each booking/activity:

The person who hires the Hub will be responsible for ensuring that all surfaces and handles in the publicly accessible areas are cleaned, and will be advised as such. MCOT will provide cleaning equipment including disinfectant and disposable gloves.

Upon arrival and departure at the Hub office and after the attendance of other people:

Each staff member who attends the office should clean frequently touched surfaces such as doors, door handles, light switches, counters, the EFTPOS machine and furniture. MCOT will provide cleaning equipment including disinfectant and disposable gloves.

Physical distancing

The floor area of the MCOT office (excluding the side storage area) is 18m². This means that no more than 9 people may be in the MCOT office at any time. If that number is in the MCOT office, the doors to the MCOT office must be locked, and any visitor or visitors must be attended to outside of the MCOT office.

The distance between the three seats in their usual positions behind the desks in the MCOT office exceeds 1.5m, so working in those positions is permissible. Each staff member will maintain the one specific workstation. The CEO will advise MCOT staff to maintain a distance of at least 1.5m from other people in the office.

The floor area of the MCOT meeting room (excluding the side storage area) is 18m². This means that no more than 9 people may be in the MCOT meeting room at any time. MCOT will advise anyone who hires the Hub of this restriction.

The floor area of the hall is 173m². This means that no more than 86 people may be in the hall at any time. MCOT will advise anyone who hires the Hub of this restriction.

Handwashing/Hygiene

The CEO will advise each MCOT staff member that they are required while at the office to:

- wash their hands with soap or to use hand sanitiser upon entry and at regular intervals over time; and
- avoid touching their face, eyes, nose or mouth.

MCOT will advise anyone who hires the Hub of this requirement. Signs advising of this will be posted inside the building, including signs in the toilets about correct hand washing.

Inquiries and visits

The building will be closed other than for MCOT staff, attendees at a Hub booking, and a person with whom a necessary appointment has been previously arranged. People wishing to make inquiries with MCOT or about the Hub will be encouraged to make those inquiries by phone or online. This will be communicated on the MCOT website and a sign advising of this will be posted outside the building.

Emergency Plan

If any MCOT staff member becomes aware that a person who has been at the building since reopening of the Hub on 18 May 2020 has tested positive to COVID-19, that staff member will advise all other staff members including the CEO. The CEO will then advise all staff members and the professional cleaner. The CEO will ensure that Public Health has been called on 1800 671 738 to advise of the person's attendance at the building and to obtain any directions from Public Health. Until any such directions are obtained, the CEO will close the building to all.

Signs will be posted inside and outside the building asking anyone who learns of an attendee at the building testing positive to COVID-19 to contact the CEO, with the CEO's contact details to be provided on the signs.