



# CORONAVIRUS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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| <b>Policy Number:</b>      |                             | <b>Version:</b>               | 5         |
| <b>Drafted by:</b>         | Strategic Finance Executive | <b>Board approval on:</b>     | June 2023 |
| <b>Responsible Person:</b> | Strategic Finance Executive | <b>Scheduled Review Date:</b> | June 2024 |

## INTRODUCTION

Big Yellow Umbrella has a responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of all staff, students, volunteers, clients, and children who participate in the programs offered by Big Yellow Umbrella.

Since the World Health Organisation has declared the Coronavirus a PANDEMIC and the Australian and NSW Governments have implemented new strategies and laws, Big Yellow Umbrella needs to urgently introduce additional policies and procedures which will address our preparedness to deal with potential outbreaks and to assist with the prevention of future outbreaks.

This Policy and Procedure needs to operate in conjunction with advice from the Australian Government-Department of Health, NSW Health, the World Health Organisation and directions from Big Yellow Umbrella's management and board, all of which can change regularly on matters such as this.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to recognize that Big Yellow Umbrella has a role to play in the implementation of emergency management plans that follow Australia's emergency management cycle of:

- Prevention and preparedness
- Response
  - Initial action
  - Targeted action
- Recovery

## POLICIES

### Facts About Coronavirus

The Commonwealth Department of Health and NSW Health have advised that COVID-19 (coronavirus) spreads from person to person in a similar way to flu:

- From close contact with an infected person.
- From touching objects or surfaces contaminated with the sneeze or cough of an infected person and then touching your eyes, mouth, or nose.
- COVID-19 can cause varying symptoms and severity like flu, depending on the variant including:
  - fever
  - cough
  - sore throat
  - tiredness
  - shortness of breath

Most people will experience mild to moderate symptoms from which they will recover. However, some people develop more serious illnesses with pneumonia and other complications. The elderly, those with chronic medical conditions and those with weakened immune systems are at increased risk of serious illness.

The Australian government and health authorities continue to encourage the practice of Social Distancing and the wearing of Facemasks and their benefits in slowing the spread of the virus.

Anti-viral medication is now available to certain people within the community that contract COVID.

## **Social Distancing**

Social distancing includes ways to stop or slow the spread of infectious diseases. It means less contact between you and other people.

Social distancing is important because COVID-19 is most likely to spread from person-to-person through:

- direct close contact with a person while they are infectious or in the 24 hours before their symptoms appeared.
- close contact with a person with a confirmed infection who coughs or sneezes, or
- touching objects or surfaces (such as door handles or tables) contaminated from a cough or sneeze from a person with a confirmed infection, and then touching your mouth or face.

Social distancing in public means people:

- keep 1.5 metres away from others.
- avoid physical greetings such as handshaking, hugs, and kisses.
- use tap and pay instead of cash.
- travel at quiet times and avoid crowds.
- avoid public gatherings and at-risk groups during significant outbreaks.
- practice good hygiene

## **Hygiene**

Regular washing of hands, using hand sanitisers and keeping all shared spaces clean after every session is vital to reducing the risk of COVID.

## **Wearing Facemasks**

Fitted face masks are still being recommended to slow down the spread of COVID but are only mandatory in certain places where at risk people attend, such as some doctor's surgeries. BYU no longer mandates facemasks in the workplace or when working with clients unless a major outbreak was to occur.

Facemasks must cover the mouth and nose.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

- All staff, student, and volunteers are to be highly conscious of their health and to test for COVID and refrain from attending work if unwell with cold, flu like symptoms, runny nose, and temperature.
- In the case of a worker being tested positive for COVID-19, it is important to ensure the safety of the workplace and workers by cleaning and disinfecting all areas used by the person who tested positive.
- The Chief Operations Manager and the Strategic Finance Executive are responsible for the implementation and monitoring of all aspects of this policy and procedure.

- All staff, students and volunteers are responsible for ensuring they fully comply with this policy and procedure.
- Any breaches of the above stated policies must be reported to management either in person or by phone as soon as they become known.

## **PROCEDURES**

The following procedures (which are subject to change at short notice) will come into effect from business opening January 2023. They apply to all staff, students, volunteers, and clients.

Please note: COVID-19 Return to Operation Policy will replace general procedures as noted below and will cover vaccination rules.

### **General:**

- Staff will keep up to date on any future changes at <https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert>
- Fully vaccinated staff will no longer work from home and will be required to perform their working hours as agreed in their employment contract. Programs will commence to the public in accordance with our COVID Safety Plan, COVID Risk Assessment and relevant social distancing, hygiene, and facemask rules. Clients are no longer required to be vaccinated.
- Staff must not attend work if:
  - They have been showing symptoms of cold, fever or cough and have not done a RAT test.
  - They are not fully vaccinated.
  - If they have been diagnosed with COVID-19 through a RAT test
  - Staff, student, and volunteers who need to self-quarantine should notify management and stay away from work. They should seek immediate medical attention if they become ill during the quarantine period.

## **COVID-19 Health Self Isolation Guidelines**

If you live with someone who has COVID-19 or have had close contact with someone with COVID-19, then you should assess your personal risk and symptoms before coming to work to prevent the spread of COVID across the BYU team. This assessment must include performing a RAT Test.

Most people who test positive to a RAT test will no longer need to confirm their results with a PCR test or register with Service NSW. If you require further information or need to register, use your My Service NSW Account or call Service NSW on 13 77 88.

7 days isolation is no longer required after a positive COVID-19 case before you can return to work, however a negative COVID RAT Test is required.

If workers have symptoms at any time, they must conduct a RAT test before continuing to work. High risk settings such as hospitals and aged care should be avoided until a negative test is done.

## **Big Yellow Umbrella leave arrangements due to COVID-19**

Employees have a responsibility, under workplace health and safety laws, to take reasonable care not to adversely affect the health and safety of others at work. This means that an employee can't be dismissed or injured in their employment if they need to quarantine or self-isolate to avoid the risk of spreading the virus in the workplace.

Big Yellow Umbrella will aim to support staff, students and volunteers who are unwell with COVID-19 or are a close household contact with a positive COVID-19 case. COVID-19 specific leave does not exist, which means that all leave needs to fit within the framework of your normal leave agreement. The following rules apply:

## **Staff choosing to self-isolate due to a close contact.**

- Staff can attend the workplace and so will be required to take paid or unpaid leave if they wish to take this course of action.

## **Staff with a positive COVID-19 test result (either RAT or PCR).**

- Staff are unable to attend the workplace and can use paid sick leave, annual leave, or unpaid leave to cover this period. A doctor's certificate is required as per normal sick leave.

## **Staff taking leave to care for a family member with COVID-19.**

- Paid carer's leave can be used to care for a family member if available.

Due to the changes in operations at Big Yellow Umbrella, all activities and programs will from January 2022 be open and available to clients face to face. For this reason, we will no longer be offering working from home arrangements, unless under extreme circumstances. Casual staff will be recruited to support the service delivery where necessary.

## **Health & Hygiene**

To reduce the spread of germs in the workplace:

- Staff must regularly and thoroughly wash hands and with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- Keep the workplace clean and hygienic. Regularly cleaning of high-touch surfaces such as door handles and workstations to help prevent contamination.
- Hand sanitizers must be used when it is not possible to use soap and water or after using soap and water when in contact with high-risk places such as toilets, door handles and people showing any flu like symptoms.
- Touching your eyes, nose and mouth should be avoided.
- Cover your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the tissue immediately.
- Consider opening windows and adjusting air conditioning for more ventilation.
- Adhere to the social distancing rules above by maintaining at least 1.5 metres distance between yourself and anyone else to limit the potential to catch and spread the virus. People in offices environments must follow the one person per 2 meters square rule.
- Stop handshaking, hugging or kissing as a greeting.
- Display posters on handwashing and respiratory hygiene along with guidance around social distancing
- Stay at home if you are sick.
- Assess risk when working with vulnerable people such as those in aged care facilities or hospitals, infants, or people with compromised immune systems due to illness or medical treatment or engaging them in our activities.

## **Programs & activities**

- Clients are no longer required to be fully vaccinated to participate in Big Yellow Umbrella's programs and activities.
- Staff must consider innovative, flexible service styles where possible to ensure service can continue to be delivered to our vulnerable clients who are unvaccinated.
- Consider where possible the use of digital teleconferencing / Skype / Zoom and developing the most effective platform for our clients and our stakeholders.
- To assist with engagement and breaking isolation Big Yellow Umbrella will run activities for child, youth, family, and community through face-to-face program delivery if all workers are fully vaccinated and control measures are in place to manage risk. See attached [COVID Risk Assessment](#).

- Playgroups will operate face to face with vaccinated workers and control measures to minimise risk.
- A comprehensive service referral directory will be developed so that Big Yellow Umbrella staff can provide quality referrals.
- Food relief will be delivered using effective risk management. Big Yellow Umbrella is committed to continue service in a safe way to these vulnerable community.
- All Big Yellow Umbrella's funders and clients are kept notified of changes in service delivery through the COVID Management Plan and risk assessment.
- Big Yellow Umbrella will send out regular correspondence to our members and stakeholders which will keep everyone up to date with changes to our programs and services. This will also be available on our website [www.yellowumbrella.org.au](http://www.yellowumbrella.org.au) and our Facebook page.

| RELATED DOCUMENTS                                                              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Australian Government Department of Health                                     |
| Code of Conduct Policy                                                         |
| Confidentiality and Declaration Policy                                         |
| COVID Return to Operation Policy                                               |
| Fitness to Work Policy                                                         |
| Home Working Arrangements Policy                                               |
| NSW Health Resources: <a href="http://www.health.gov.au">www.health.gov.au</a> |
| Playgroup Policy                                                               |
| Recruitment Policy                                                             |
| Risk Management Policy (COVID assessment)                                      |
| Safe Work NSW                                                                  |
| Staff Induction Policy                                                         |
| Staff Leave Policy                                                             |
| Volunteer Management Policy                                                    |
| WHS Policy                                                                     |
| World Health Organisation                                                      |

## AUTHORISATION

The Board of Big Yellow Umbrella has reviewed and approved this policy.

Signature of Board Secretary:

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Date of approval by the Board:

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On behalf of the Big Yellow Umbrella