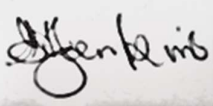


COVID MANAGEMENT PLAN

Date approved	10/8/22	Signature by Management representative	
Previous titles	N/A		Chairperson, Suzanne Jenkins
Previous versions	27/6/22, 6/5/22, 22/2/22, 24/1/21, 5/1/21		



COVID MANAGEMENT PLAN

Internal ECS References	
<i>In S:\0 CURRENT POLICY & PROCEDURES:</i>	<i>In S:\1 CURRENT FORMS:</i>
WHS Policy	Incident Report Form
ECS COVID Risk Matrix	
WHS Policy	various signs/posters, floorplans in S:\000 COVID WHS
Duty of Care Policy	letters & emails to ECS workers in H:
COVID Safety Plan 2021	bulk letters to ECS clients in S:\000 COVID WHS
Pandemic Plan	various articles in S:\2 NEWSLETTERS
	information on https://www.ecs.org.au/ & https://www.facebook.com/ECS2233/
	H:\Client Vaccinations certificates
	S:\0 current data base

External References	
Child Safe Standards at https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/resources	Aged Care Quality Standards at https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/providers/standards
DCJ support for COVID Mgmt Plan.pdf	https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/stay-safe/rules/face-mask-rules
https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19	https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/business/nsw-rules
https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2011-010	https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/management/people-exposed-to-covid
https://www.health.gov.au/routine-environmental-cleaning-and-disinfection-in-the-community	

Table of Contents					
1.	POLICY STATEMENT	2	5.2	At the ECS Community Centre	6
2.	GENERAL POLICY	2	5.3	Face Masks	6
2.1	Definitions	2	5.4	Check-in & Contact Tracing	7
2.2	Acronyms	2	5.5	Hygiene & Cleaning	7
3.	ASSESSING RISK	3	5.6	Density & Distancing	8
4.	VACCINATION POLICY & PROCEDURES	4	6.	RESPONDING TO POSITIVE CASES OF COVID	8
4.1	Legal Obligations	4	6.1	Close Contacts	8
4.2	WHS Obligations	4	6.2	ECS Team members with COVID-19	8
4.3	Operational Issues	4	6.3	ECS clients with COVID-19	9
4.4	Vaccination Policy & Procedures	4	6.4	Workplace Action	9
5.	CENTRE OPERATIONS	5			
5.1	Workforce Continuity	5			

1. Policy Statement

ECS is committed to providing community supports to eligible clients in a manner that is lawful, ethical and safe for ECS workers and visitors to ECS, as well as clients themselves.

2. General Policy

In the current environment of a worldwide pandemic, this also requires ECS to manage the risks posed by the COVID-19 virus and resulting variants, while continuing to meet funding agreements and contracts.

This policy follows and links to previous and continuing COVID Safety Plans and ECS' Service Continuity Policy, as well as overarching policies relating to governance, workforce, health and safety, and delivery of client services. It covers:

- ECS' legal responsibilities, including compliance with existing Work Health and Safety (WHS) laws, public health orders and other directions relating to COVID-19
- ECS' use of a risk assessment as a core review and planning tool
- ECS' approach to vaccination and other protections against COVID-19
- ECS' response to a positive case of COVID-19 among persons who attend the ECS centre or activities

This policy acknowledges the rapidly changing environment of COVID-19, and will be reviewed from time to time for relevance, but the risk assessment process will not change. It includes links to external websites for regular review, along with legislation, Australian Government and NSW Health information, advice and specific instructions by ECS funders that ECS receives on a daily basis in emails, newsletters, webinars and official correspondence, directly and via peaks' memberships.

Processes described in this *COVID Management Plan* are based on the following facts:

- COVID-19 is a virus spread predominantly through close contact between individuals; the consistent advice to reduce the spread is related to people mixing and congregating in groups, as well as use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- All administrative and organisational structures at ECS are supported by paid staff; these systems can be maintained remotely via appropriate Information Technology (IT)
- ECS has not received additional funding for PPE and has been instructed by funding bodies to halt delivery of specific types of services [ie. face-to-face] during particular times due to COVID
- ECS is funded to provide basic and entry level services of a social and information support nature to autonomous clients who live independently in the community [ie. no complex care, case management or emergency services]; short term reductions will not pose a threat to an individual's survival or health
- All face-to-face ECS services in the community and some in the ECS centre are provided by volunteers; only limited support [ie. types and hours] can be substituted by staff in the absence of volunteers
- Some social support and information services can be provided by ECS staff without having physical contact with clients, from the office or remotely, by email and phone

2.1 Definitions

close contact = a person who usually lives with or who has visited the same household for more than 4 hours as a COVID-19 case during their infectious period

high-risk groups = immunocompromised, unvaccinated, aged over 65 years

low-risk workers = not immunocompromised, at least double-vaccinated, aged under 65 years

mask = under the public health order, a 'fitted face covering' means a mask or other covering that fits securely around the face and is designed or made to be worn over the nose and mouth to provide the wearer with protection against infection

specific conditions = where social distancing or masks are possible, less than 4 hours in enclosed space

specified individuals = person is vaccinated and not an isolating contact, distressed and/or vulnerable client at risk of harm

vaccination = you are fully vaccinated if you have had 3 doses of a COVID-19 vaccination

2.2 Acronyms

COVID = Coronavirus disease (COVID-19)

ECS = Engadine Community Services

HR = Human Resources [ie. workers]

SWP = Safe Work Procedure

WHS = Work Health and Safety

COVID MANAGEMENT PLAN

3. Assessing Risk

ECS will comply with the requirements of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (WHS Act)* to eliminate, or if not reasonably practicable to eliminate, then to minimise risks to health and safety as far as is reasonably practicable. Therefore, ECS will identify, assess and minimise the risk of COVID-19 as much as possible. ECS is required to continue core operations at all times, in order to be available to vulnerable clients and to meet funding agreements. The level of operations will change according to risk of people acquiring COVID-19 and the likelihood of it impact on their lives.

ECS Manager and the relevant coordinator/s will work through *ECS COVID Risk Matrix* for specific situations as necessary, considering both environment and people. The completed document is the plan of action and saved in s drive.

Risk Matrix for: _____ Date completed: _____

Service area: _____ Completed by: _____

ECS COVID Risk Matrix	Consequence							
Likelihood	Minor –suspected case	Moderate – illness requiring medical treatment	Major – illness requiring hospitalisation	Severe – illness resulting in death				
Almost certain	M	H	VH	VH				
Likely	M	M	H	VH				
Possible	L	M	M	H				
Unlikely	L	L	M	H				
Risk levels:	L	Low	M	Medium	H	High	VH	Very High

Indicate the Risk Level :

Very High

High

Medium

Low

Determine Prevention / Control Options & Consult with Staff	(How, Who, When)			
Not applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	Action	Who	When	Review
Do not Undertake the Activity of Risk				
Attend the activity of risk with HR changes eg. staff, low-risk volunteers				
Attend the activity of risk environmental changes eg. utilising technology				
Attend the activity of risk with set parameters - consultation/education/ Documentation				
Attend the activity of risk with Personal Protective Equipment				

COVID MANAGEMENT PLAN

When using the *ECS COVID Risk Matrix* for ECS, it is agreed that the Likelihood of contracting COVID-19 is:

Almost certain with no mask, no vaccination, no social distancing, more than 4 hours in a closed space, contact with virus suspected or known	Likely with no mask, no vaccination, no social distancing, more than 4 hours in a closed space, contact with virus suspected
Possible with no mask, no vaccination, no social distancing	Unlikely with mask, full vaccination and booster, with social distancing

The sections below describe processes and activities specifically required by NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) in the ECS COVID Management Plan:

- Processes and activities to respond to a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 in the workplace **in 4.**
- Processes and activities for supporting a client who is unvaccinated **in 2. and 3.**
- Processes and activities for supporting a client with a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 **in 4.**
- Processes for recording, monitoring compliance and managing medical exemptions if vaccination is a requirement to control COVID-19 risk **in 2.**
- Processes for record visitors to the workplace, including the use of QR codes **in 3**
- Processes for supporting testing/tracing/isolating workers and clients exposed to COVID-19 in line with public health requirements **in 3. and 4.**

4. VACCINATION POLICY & PROCEDURES

ECS developed this policy when re-opening after NSW lockdown in June to September 2021. There were many considerations when ECS decided it was a reasonably practicable step to require ECS workers and clients to get vaccinated against COVID-19.

4.1 Legal Implications

As employers, service providers can require their workers to be vaccinated where:

- a specific law (such as a state or territory public health order) requires a worker to be vaccinated
- the requirement is permitted by an enterprise agreement, other registered agreement or employment contract
- it would be lawful and reasonable for an employer to give their workers a direction to be vaccinated

4.2 WHS Obligations

These include situations where ECS must maximise efforts to ensure the safety of the workplace for ECS workers, contractors, clients and visitors, including thought about:

- the nature of each workplace (for example, the extent to which workers need to work in public-facing or face-to-face roles, whether social distancing and alternatives to face-to-face service delivery are possible, whether services are provided in communal settings, and whether staff work across multiple worksites)
- the extent of community transmission of COVID-19 in the location where the direction is to be given, including the risk of transmission of variants among workers, clients or other members of the community
- any public health orders in place and where the workplace is located
- each worker's circumstances, including their duties and the risks associated with their work
- whether individuals have a legitimate reason for not being vaccinated (for example, a medical reason), and vaccine availability and eligibility

4.3 Operational Issues

These were considerations to give ECS the best chance of continued delivery of services during the pandemic:

- staff and volunteers need to feel valued, and able to return to work when asked
- a balance is required in terms of workload and resources for ECS workers and clients in recordkeeping systems
- everyone must feel safe and welcome at ECS

4.4 Vaccination Policy & Procedures

ECS is committed to supporting the community and helping people in need whenever it is possible to do so in a safe manner and in accordance with the law and funding contracts. The organisation is also aware that the current health advice, including vaccination against COVID, aims to reduce the spread and effects of the disease.

COVID MANAGEMENT PLAN

In order to operate during the pandemic, and minimise risk of the spread to our vulnerable clients, the ECS management committee requires the following:

- ECS workers and contractors must be fully vaccinated against COVID or have medical exemption before they return to work at the maximum level to which they are eligible (currently two vaccinations plus booster for most people); new boosters for eligible people may be delayed by a wait for an appointment
- Evidence of vaccination/exemption must be provided by ECS workers and contractors when they return, and certificates will be scanned into confidential HR files; information also entered on *ECS Data Base*
- Aged Services clients will be asked to provide proof of vaccination/exemption before attending group activities or having contact with ECS workers; ECS will seek to scan certificates into confidential *Client Files*, knowing that we may also need this to use buses and external venues
- ECS clients will be informed of our workforce vaccination levels, as well as funding bodies, when required
- ECS workers can choose whether to attend external meetings where organisers cannot guarantee all people would be fully vaccinated
- Casual visitors to ECS will not be questioned regarding their vaccination status [unless in periods of High Risk or Very High Risk per 3. below], but NSW Health Orders are always a requirement of entry to the building

The needs of ECS workers and clients who have been unable to receive vaccinations due to complex personal issues, including mental health, will be addressed following review through the *ECS COVID Risk Matrix*.

5. CENTRE OPERATIONS

Where possible, ECS staff will continue to work their funded hours. The primary focus of their efforts will always be the care of clients and the wellbeing of volunteers, and no one will ever be asked to compromise their safety.

Using the *ECS COVID Risk Matrix*, considering both environment and people, in general ECS will operate as follows:

LEVEL OF RISK	CENTRE OPEN	CLIENTS IN CENTRE	WORKERS IN CENTRE	AGED SERVICES PROVISION	CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES PROVISION
Low Risk	Yes	Masks may be required in foyer	No restrictions	Masks may be required in buses & some public places	No restrictions
Medium Risk	No Front door locked	Yes, with restrictions	Maximum 3 staff + 3 low-risk volunteers only	High-risk groups in specific conditions only Individuals in specific conditions only	High-risk groups in specific conditions only Individuals in specific conditions only
High Risk	No Front door locked	No, unless specific conditions	Maximum 3 staff + 1 low-risk volunteer only	No high-risk groups Individuals in specific conditions only	No high-risk groups Individuals in specific conditions only
Very High Risk	No Front door locked	No	No, unless specific conditions	No groups Specified individuals only	No

Definitions:

'Low-risk workers' = not immunocompromised, at least double-vaccinated, aged under 65 years

'High-risk groups' = immunocompromised, unvaccinated, aged over 65 years

'Specific conditions' = where social distancing or masks are possible, less than 4 hours in enclosed space

'Specified individuals' = person is vaccinated and not an isolating contact, distressed and/or vulnerable client at risk of harm

During periods of **Very High Risk**, or if instructed by Health Order, the ECS office will remain closed; if well and able, staff will work from home via the internet and phone, and only visiting for emergencies. ECS will provide IT equipment and may assist with internet costs. Staff will be able to access ECS shared documents [s: drive etc] remotely. The ECS Manager and Coordinators will oversee organisational plans, as necessary. Volunteers will not be expected to work, and paid staff will assist

COVID MANAGEMENT PLAN

clients who have no other supports with emergency grocery or medication deliveries only. If possible, the phone redirects to the ECS Manager's mobile.

During periods of **High Risk or Medium Risk**, or if permitted to continue as 'essential workers' under a Health Order [ie. Area-wide 'Lockdown'], the ECS office will remain open, but the centre will be classified as 'closed' and the front door locked. Volunteers may be asked to work in the office or providing individual client supports according to the risk analysis above. The following safety rules apply:

5.1 Workforce Continuity

- no more than three staff together in the office to prevent total workforce contagion
- no one comes to work when they have tested positive, are a close contact or living with a COVID-positive person [see also 4.]
- all face-to-face services and meetings are cancelled
- PA Officer to make phone calls from home to clients and volunteers with scripts provided by the ECS Manager containing specific questions about COVID, reduced ECS operations and individual needs re groceries, medication and social isolation
- the office is closed on Fridays and phone redirects to the ECS Manager's mobile

5.2 At the ECS Community Centre

- No one to enter ECS premises without a mask or exemption letter. Every person must be registered on QR Code or similar.
- Only ECS staff and volunteers who are rostered to work are permitted in the office, as well as cleaners and other essential maintenance workers (ie. no clients or management committee members).
- Deliveries and any business not requiring conversations may occur at the door without proof of vaccination/exemption, and without entering, but ECS workers wear masks and practice social distancing. This includes quick questions, volunteers collecting or delivering timesheets and Toy Library exchanges.
- Only those who have proof of vaccination/exemption will be served for photocopying business or information enquiries requiring conversation. This will be conducted in the foyer area, with social distancing and exchanges kept under 20 minutes in duration.
- Confidential conversations with individuals who have been vaccinated will be conducted in the meeting room. This includes clients, management committee members and volunteers, as well as any other ECS business partners. Exchanges should be kept under 40 minutes in duration.
- If the person is distressed or confidential conversation is necessary with individuals who have not been vaccinated, these will be conducted in the courtyard. Exchanges should be kept under 30 minutes in duration.
- Only those with proof of vaccination/exemption will be permitted to use the syringe disposal service, as this requires they enter the office. Exchanges should be kept moving and under 10 minutes in duration.

5.3 Face Masks

Single-use and reusable cloth masks both help to prevent the spread of COVID-19, if used correctly [see definition, above]. When required by a NSW Health Order, ECS requires face masks in all public areas and when staff and volunteers are together in the office and cannot socially distance. In the absence of specific funding for face masks and other Personal Protective Equipment, ECS will purchase a small supply for use in service delivery when individuals can't afford their own.

ECS permits a person to remove their face mask in situations of practicality and safety, when allowed by a NSW Health Order:

- when eating or drinking
- when communicating with another person who is deaf or hard of hearing
- when the wearing of a fitted face covering a risk to the person's, or another persons' health and safety
- where clear enunciation or visibility of a person's mouth is essential
- where the work is in an indoor area and no other person is in the area
- when asked to remove their mask for identity purposes
- in an emergency situation
- when the person needs to remove their mask to provide services properly
- when clients and instructors are doing exercise classes
- in a vehicle alone or with another person from their household

The face mask must be worn again as soon as the reason for taking it off has ended.

5.4 Check-in & Contact Tracing

ECS will utilise the NSW Government COVID Safe Check-In system [QR Code] or similar to collect contact tracing details for all those attending the centre; individuals either scan the QR Code into their smart phone or their own QR Card into the ECS tablet at the sign-in desk. This includes staff, volunteers, contractors, clients and other visitors. Our existing sign-in system provides contact tracing back-up if contact tracing system cannot be used (eg. if visitors do not have smart phones or QR Cards). ECS stores the associated data for at least four weeks and can supply it to NSW Health, if requested.

Contact tracing requirements are communicated to all those attending ECS. If someone does not wish to comply with disclosure of information, access to the centre will be politely denied. Alternatively, conversations can be provided outside, on the phone or via email.

ECS workers will observe and monitor the health and wellbeing of people at the centre order to reduce the risk that COVID-19 poses to the community. The following is reflected in poster signage and other external communications, including Facebook, ECS website, newsletters and direct letters/emails/calls to ECS workers and clients:

- ECS provides current information about COVID-19 symptoms, precautions and restrictions sourced from health experts and government
- ECS communicates to attendees their health and wellbeing responsibilities prior to being allowed to enter ECS
- every person attending ECS must declare they are free of COVID symptoms and are not supposed to be in isolation, according to public health orders and this *COVID Management Plan*
- those with COVID-19 symptoms are identified, and asked to leave ECS, get tested and self-isolate

5.5 Hygiene & Cleaning

Appropriate hygiene and cleaning practices at the ECS community centre are important measures to have in place to reduce the likelihood of virus transmission and the risk COVID-19 poses to the community. This includes:

- All toilets are cleaned twice per week by a commercial cleaner; centre coordinators monitor for emergency cleans and ensure bathrooms are well stocked with hand soap and paper towels
- Hand sanitiser is provided outside of each toilet, at the sign-in, reception and other high touch/interactive points
- Hand sanitiser is provided at sign-in/entry and in meeting room so that all visitors, including group participants, clean their hands before sign-in
- ECS activities are non-contact as much as practical, including contactless payment options
- All high touch surfaces are cleaned before and after client use
- Disinfectant solutions are maintained at an appropriate strength and used in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions and ECS workers wear gloves when cleaning and wash hands thoroughly before and after with soap and water
- ECS provides gloves and wipes etc
- In the office, ECS workers ensure clean cutlery and tableware in the dishwasher, reduce sharing of equipment where practical and ensure these are cleaned with detergent and disinfectant between uses
- Clients are encouraged to bring their own refreshments

ECS actively promotes the basics of good hygiene practice in signage and various communications [see 4] and encourages everyone to:

- Wash their hands often with soap and running water for at least 20 seconds and dry with paper towel or hand dryer
- Try not to touch their eyes, nose or mouth
- Cover their nose and mouth with a tissue when they cough or sneeze or if not, cough into their elbow crook
- Avoid close contact with anyone showing symptoms of a cold
- Stay home if they feel sick

5.6 Density & Distancing

Distancing and density management are important measures to have in place to reduce the risk COVID-19 poses to the community. In particular, effective seating is an important measure to have in place to promote physical distancing and reduce COVID-19 risks to the community. ECS workstations are already set in place for a minimum distance of 1.5 metres and workers who face each other at their desks are separated by a partition.

When required by public health order or internal risk analysis, ECS designs operations and activities to ensure that:

- There are sufficient measures in place such that all people keep the required distance from each other (or other social groups), including in outdoor areas and separate rooms
- Seating is arranged so that distancing and density principles can be effectively implemented per the current requirements

COVID MANAGEMENT PLAN

- There are sufficient measures in place such to ensure the current density requirement is not exceeded

Organisational and monitoring measures that ECS will have in place to proactively ensure that capacity numbers and distancing in each venue area is complied with include:

- Floorplans for furniture setups for different activities
- Rosters to control office numbers [see also 3.1]
- Registration system for exercise classes at the start off each month to meet capacity limits
- Front door locked to control foyer traffic [see 3.]
- Access allowed by expected group attendees only [see also 2.4] and individuals by appointment
- Signage on front door and in centre
- Verbal reminders to assembled groups
- Notices in client letters, newsletters and social media, as well as explanations
- Constant counting

ECS plans for capacity limits at any given time as part of risk assessments [section 3., above]. For instance, the meeting room can hold 11 people at 1.5 metre distancing, but during Medium Risk periods, the limit for exercise classes is 7.

6. RESPONDING TO POSITIVE CASES OF COVID

ECS follows all public health orders and expert advice to minimise the spread of COVID-19 and protect the health and wellbeing of vulnerable community members, including timely and appropriate responses to suspected and actual outbreaks within the controllable parameters of ECS operations. It assumes everyone follows ECS instructions communicated in newsletters etc and the continued operation of NSW Health systems and availability of external Health administered (PCR) test and in-home Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) supplies in the community. The ECS leadership team is contactable after hours and on public holidays in order to implement the following processes if active ECS workers or clients are infected by COVID-19. The *ECS Data Base* contains key facts and dates of COVID status, which is added as it occurs.

6.1 Close Contacts

If an ECS worker is a close contact of a family member with COVID, they are not to attend work and must:

1. notify the ECS Manager, who will discuss leave options and ensure the worker has an income support
2. start a diary; wear a mask at all times, and stay away from work at ECS for at least 7 days
3. undertake a RAT every day; if positive, stay away from ECS and undertake a PCR test [see 4.2]
4. do not attend work or activities with Aged Services clients until the 8th day after the last person in your household has tested negative after having COVID

6.2 ECS Team members with COVID-19

ECS workers who have tested positive for COVID-19 are not to attend work, and must:

1. notify ECS Manager, who will discuss care and leave options to ensure the worker has health and income supports
2. start a diary; isolate for 7 days, and stay away from work at ECS for 7 days
4. take a PCR test on day 6 [email photo to ECS Manager]
5. if negative, return on day 8, only after a further negative result taken on day 5 [email photo to ECS Manager]

6.3 ECS clients with COVID-19

ECS clients who have tested positive for COVID-19 are not to attend ECS or accept services from ECS, and must:

1. notify ECS Manager, who will discuss care options to ensure the client has health supports in place [ECS may provide information, phone support and contactless grocery deliveries only]
2. start a diary; isolate for 7 days, and stay away from work at ECS for 7 days
4. take a PCR test on day 6 [email photo to ECS Manager]
5. if negative, return on day 8, only after a further negative result taken on day 5 [email photo to ECS Manager]

6.4 Workplace Action

If ECS is notified of a positive COVID case involving someone who has had contact with ECS workers or clients:

1. ECS Manager and Coordinators collect details of the trace [ie. when and who] and identify which ECS workers and activities may be affected, which clients attended [see also 3.4]
2. notify ECS management committee via text
3. report details to the NSW Department of Health and follow their instructions
4. ECS Manager and staff on duty to meet to draft response [see also 1.2] and delegate actions
5. notify those present during the contact period by phone immediately, with an explanation of the current NSW COVID rules and symptoms to look out for, when to isolate and get tested per NSW Department of Health instructions
6. notify workers and contractors by email of any actions