

Australian Society of Ophthalmologists Recommended Coronavirus Workplace Policy

Introduction

The Australian Society of Ophthalmologists is committed to ensuring the health and safety of all those in the workplace. This policy sets out steps that the Australian Society of Ophthalmologists recommends in order to manage the coronavirus outbreak, alongside expectations that should be placed upon the team members.

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.

Standard Precautions comprise the following measures:

- Hand Hygiene – Follow 5 moments of hygiene and WHO handwashing and hand rub guidelines
- Respiratory hygiene (cough etiquette). Refer to poster. When coughing and sneezing, covering your mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue, throwing this tissue away immediately and washing your hands
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Aseptic technique
- Cleaning and disinfection
- Waste disposal

Extra Precautions in addition to above:

- End of every day –
 - Don gloves, eye protection and mask –
 - Wipe down all surfaces, handrails, door handles with Isowipe or V-Wipe disposable wipes.
 - All fabric chairs Glen-20 and end of week fabric chairs will be No-Vac foam
- Avoiding close contact with anyone who has fever and cough

- If you feel unwell with cold, cough and fever please notify your Practice Manager at first instance via call and avoid attending work
- Ensure access to “Patient Sanitising Station” for all patients and encourage good hand hygiene
- Patients should be encouraged to cancel or defer where possible if unwell
- Any coughing means you must wear a mask
- Anyone travelled from overseas must not attend for at least 14 days prior attending appointment
- Any TEAM members that travel overseas must self-isolate for 14 days

Coronavirus Diagnoses 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.

These extra precautions represent the minimum infection prevention measures that apply to all patient care, regardless of suspected or confirmed infection status of the patient, in any setting where healthcare is delivered. These evidence-based practices are designed to both protect and prevent spread of infection among patients and healthcare personnel.

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.

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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.

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We will not be directing employees to **CANCEL OR CEASE** undertaking private travel however, should an employee still choose to knowingly travel to a country that is listed in the government do not travel list, they will need to self-isolate for a further 2 weeks which may fall under and considered unpaid leave. If during self-isolation you get sick then this will fall under "sick leave".

<https://www.smartraveller.gov.au/crisis/covid-19-and-travel>

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-resources-for-health-professionals-including-aged-care-providers-pathology-providers-and-healthcare-managers>

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.

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

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.