



## COVID-19 RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY

### OBJECTIVE:

The aim of this policy is to ensure a safe working environment for all employees and to stop the spread of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 “COVID-19” virus. Section 8 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993 “OHSA” requires every employer to provide and maintain, as far as reasonably practicable, a working environment that is safe and without risks to the health of its employees. Similarly, the OHSA also imposes a duty on employees to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of their fellow employees.

Information pertaining to COVID-19 is being provided by various authorities on a regular basis and it is important to ensure that updates are obtained and disseminated through the organisation. Please refrain from forwarding information related to the virus without having checked it with credible sources such as the World Health Organisation “WHO” and the National Institute for Communicable Diseases “NICD”. Spreading unverified information may contribute to unnecessary panic, stigma and discrimination, all of which do not add value at this stage.

This policy is susceptible to changes with the introduction of additional governmental guidelines and accordingly will be updated if, and when, required.

### APPLICATION:

This policy includes measures being taken to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. You are kindly requested to follow all these requirements to sustain a healthy and safe workplace. It is important that we all respond responsibly and transparently to these health precautions.

### CONTENT:

How does COVID-19 spread?

COVID-19 is most likely to spread when there is close contact (1.5 metres or less) with an infected person. It is likely that the risk increases as the period of exposure to an infected person lengthens. Contaminated droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes are the main means of transmission. There are two main routes by which people can spread COVID-19:

1. Infection can be spread to people who are nearby as droplets are inhaled into the lungs.
2. It is also possible that someone may become infected by touching a surface, object or the hand of an infected person who has been contaminated and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes.

### PRIMARY SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

The following symptoms may develop up to 21 days after exposure to someone who has COVID-19:

- ⊗ Cough
- ⊗ Sore throat
- ⊗ Fever



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- ⊗ Shortness of breath/ difficulty in breathing
  - ⊗ Redness of eyes
  - ⊗ Body aches
  - ⊗ Loss of smell
  - ⊗ Loss of taste
  - ⊗ Nausea
  - ⊗ Vomiting
  - ⊗ Diarrhoea
  - ⊗ Fatigue
  - ⊗ Weakness

Infections can cause more severe symptoms in people who are over the age of 60 and those with compromised immune systems such as diabetes, cancer, and chronic lung disease.

#### SCHOOL PREREQUISITE

School Nurse or COVID-19 Compliance Officer to be provided with full PPE and to tend to employees and students in full PPE.

Establish an isolation room for all suspected cases to be dealt with on-site, this will be in the Sick Room.

Identify a discreet exit for any confirmed case / case where a person needs to self- quarantine to be escorted off-site.

The School Nurse or COVID-19 Compliance Officer will be responsible to communicate to the Head if there are any employee / student / students' parents when they are suspected to be infected, and to escort them to the Isolation room for further investigation.

The School Nurse or COVID-19 Compliance Officer will be responsible for managing the process in the isolation room, including asking pre-defined questions, and implementing the necessary protocols.

A list of key stakeholders and their contact numbers will be documented and provided to all staff.

A specific, trained cleaning team, with appropriate PPE will be responsible for the cleaning and decontamination of the isolation room.

#### PREDEFINED CASE DEFINITION QUESTIONS

The following questions have been provided by the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) and are applicable in all incidents as defined by this SOP.

1. Are you experiencing a sudden onset of at least one of the following symptoms: dry cough, sore throat, shortness of breath or fever [ $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$  (measured) or history of fever?
2. In the last 14 days:
  - i. Have you been in close contact with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 infection?
  - ii. Had a history of travel to areas with local transmission of COVID-19; (NB Affected countries will change with time, consult the NICD website for current updates);
  - iii. Worked in, or attended a health care facility where patients with COVID-19 infections were being treated; or
  - iv. Admitted with severe pneumonia of unknown origin?



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Should the person answer YES to question 1, they are exhibiting symptoms of COVID- 19 as per the definition.

Should the person answer YES to ANY of the questions listed under Question 2 (a, b, c or d), they have a risk of exposure to COVID-19.

Depending on the outcome of the questionnaire, the School Nurse or COVID-19 Compliance Officer must implement the relevant employee protocol as defined in this Policy.

#### DETAILED PROCEDURE FOR EMPLOYEE INCIDENTS:

##### 1. Local and International Travel

If any of the below scenarios occur, the following protocol must be implemented:

An employee returns from local or international travel for leisure purposes, or

An employee's close family returns from international travel.

- i. The School Nurse or COVID-19 Compliance Officer and the Head must be contacted upon return from all local and international travel.
- ii. In all instances of the above, the self-quarantine protocol must be implemented.
- iii. The only exception to the self-quarantine protocol with regard to working arrangements will be in the case of an employee returning from international leisure travel or close family returning from international travel. In this case, should an employee not be able to work from home, they will be required to take sick leave for the 14-day precautionary quarantine period. The employee can apply for sick leave for these 14 days. If the sick leave entitlement is exhausted, the employee can apply for annual leave.

##### 2. Suspected case on-site or off-site

- i. If any of the below scenarios occur, the following protocol must be implemented:
- ii. An employee suspects they may have symptoms or have been exposed to COVID-19 and present themselves for assistance, or
- iii. An employee suspects they may have symptoms or have been exposed to COVID-19 and are not on-site, or
- iv. An employee presents with a temperature of  $\geq 38^{\circ}$  on the temperature scanning device.
  - a. If the employee is on-site, they must report to the isolation room immediately.
  - b. The employee must be reassured by the School Nurse or COVID-19
- v. *Compliance Officer as follows: "Name, we are going to assist you to establish if there is any risk of you being exposed to the Coronavirus, and for your own safety, we suggest that you do not contact anyone until we have established the risk exposure."*
- vi. If the employee is off-site, they must contact their Head, School Nurse or COVID-19 Compliance Officer.
- vii. Once in the isolation room, the School Nurse or COVID-19 Compliance Officer must proceed to ask the employee the Predefined Case Definition Questions.
- viii. If the employee is off-site, the Head, School Nurse or COVID-19 Compliance Officer will ask the questions telephonically.

##### 3. Case Definition Protocol

- i. If they are displaying symptoms, and have a confirmed risk of exposure as per the predefined questions asked, the employee meets the case definition of a probable case and must be sent for testing:
- ii. If the employee is on-site:
  - a. Inform the employee that they have possibly been exposed to COVID-19 as they meet the case definition, as defined by the NICD.



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- b. Inform them that you will be contacting your local healthcare or emergency service provider (if applicable) as per your local communicable diseases protocol, and the NICD, and inform them of the results from your questionnaire.
  - c. Contact your local healthcare or emergency service provider (if applicable) as per your local communicable diseases protocol, and the NICD, and inform them of the results from your questionnaire.
  - d. Follow all protocols provided by the healthcare professional and the NICD. Should their protocol differ from what is documented in this SOP, their requirements will take precedence and must be followed.
  - e. Inform the employee of the necessary steps that must be followed as per the guidance provided by the relevant health authorities.
  - f. The employee must be informed to maintain open lines of communication in this regard with the Head of School.
  - g. Follow the On-Site Case Management, Decontamination, Contaminated Laundry and Waste Management Protocol's documented in this SOP.
- iii. If the employee is off-site:
    - a. Inform the employee that they have possibly been exposed to COVID-19 as they meet the case definition, as defined by the NICD, and must immediately contact their Doctor to arrange for testing.

#### 4. Self-Quarantine Protocol

If an employee has been in close contact with an individual who has since been diagnosed with COVID-19, the employee must immediately inform their employer and contact the COVID-19 Hotline. Close contact means that the employee was in face-to-face contact (i.e. within 1.5 metres) or in a closed space for more than 15 minutes with a person with COVID-19.

Hotline for the COVID-19 as per the Department of Health website:

The employee must be requested to self-quarantine themselves at home for 14 days. The following working arrangements will apply:

Where it is possible for an employee to work remotely, this will not be any form of leave because the employee will be required to continue to perform her/ his functions from home and will therefore be entitled to her/ his normal salary and benefits until such time that the self-quarantine period has lapsed.

Where it is NOT possible for an employee to work remotely, the company will continue to pay the employee her/his normal salary and benefits. The company will offer outstanding sick leave and then annual leave.

During the 14-day quarantine period, employees will be required to monitor themselves for symptoms, and to monitor their temperature twice a day.

Should symptoms present, the employee must contact their Doctor for assistance to get tested and proceed to self-isolate.

The employee is required to maintain open lines of communication in this regard with the Head of School.

#### 5. Sick Employee Protocol

- i. If an employee is displaying symptoms, but do not have a confirmed risk of exposure, it is likely the employee only has regular flu:
- ii. The employee must be requested to go home and consult with their Doctor.
- iii. The company's sick leave policy will apply, and a sick note must be provided after 2 days of being booked off ill at home.



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iv. The employee may return to work once the Doctor has confirmed that the employee is no longer sick.

6. Employee with Underlying health issues or comorbidities Protocol

Section 5 (5) (d) and 5 (5) (e) of the Disaster Management Act Regulations requires employers to adopt measures to promote physical distancing of employees, including:

- Special measures for employees with known or disclosed health issues or comorbidities, which place such employees at a higher risk if infected.
- If an employee has disclosed health issues or comorbidities, which places such employees at a higher risk if infected are required to provide a Doctor's note to confirm whether the employee is required to work from home or if the employee can return to work to resume duties.
- If the Doctor authorises that the employee can resume their duties at the workplace, the School will adopt precautionary measures to safeguard and minimise the risk for these employees.
- If the employee can fulfil the duties of their job at home, such an employee will continue to be remunerated as per the terms and conditions of their contract of employment.
- If an employee is unable to fulfil their duties of their job at home, such an employee will continue to remain at home. Sick Leave and Annual leave entitlement will be utilised until exhausted. Unpaid leave will then kick in as the employee is unable to tender services.

7. Employee 60 and Over Protocol

Section 5 (5) (d) and 5 (5) (e) of the Disaster Management Act Regulations requires employers to adopt measures to promote physical distancing of employees, including:

- Special measures for employees above the age of 60 who are at higher risk.
- Employees over the age of 60 are encouraged to work from home, clauses 6 will apply.
- If an employee chooses to return to the workplace to resume their duties, the employee is required to sign an Attestation letter and return to the Head of School.

MEETINGS:

- Consider whether a face-to-face meeting or event is needed - could it be replaced by a teleconference or any other electronic platform.
- Could the meeting be scaled down so that fewer people attend?
- Ensure that all participants in the meeting have washed their hands for 20 seconds or utilised a hand sanitiser prior to the meeting commencing.
- Ensure that all delegates are seated at least one and a half metre apart.
- The names and contact details of all participants in the meeting should be retained for at least one month. This may be done through the completion of a register and will assist healthcare authorities in tracing those who have been exposed to COVID-19 if a participant does become ill with the virus shortly after the meeting.
- If a participant should contract the virus shortly after the meeting, the company must inform all participants.

HYGIENE IN THE WORKPLACE

- All students, parents, employees, external vendors and or visitors entering the schools must be requested by the receptionist to wash their hands or utilise a hand sanitiser on entering the premises.
- Coughs and sneezes must be covered with a tissue; the tissue must be disposed of in the relevant waste bin.
- Frequently touched objects, including workstations and surfaces, must be cleaned and disinfected using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.



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- If soap and water are not readily available, an alcohol-based hand sanitiser with at least 70% alcohol must be used.
  - Handshakes with any staff, students, parents, external vendors and or visitors must be AVOIDED; one's face should not be touched either.

### WEARING FACE MASKS

The use of face masks covering the mouth and nose is compulsory, when in public, entering any of the school buildings and when utilising public transport. Persons without a face mask will not be permitted to enter the school building, as required by Chapter 5(1) and 5(2) of the Risk Adjustment Strategy Regulations (29 April 2020).

### SEMINARS, TRAINING AND CONFERENCES

No employee may attend external seminars, training, or conferences, unless approved by the Head of School. The presentation of seminars, meetings and training to clients and parents will be converted to online/blended facilitation.

### COVID-19 COMPLIANCE OFFICER

A COVID-19 Compliance Officer will be appointed at each school to ensure the implementation of and adherence to Standard Operating Procedures for the risk mitigation of COVID-19 in the workplace, as required by Government Notice NO. 479 29 APRIL 2020 - 479 Disaster Management Act (57/2002): Covid-19 Occupational Health and Safety Measures in Workplaces Covid-19 (C19 OHS), 2020 and the Risk Adjustment Strategy Regulations of 29 April 2020.

It is recommended that a COVID-19 Response Team is also appointed to assist, where necessary, with the implementation of and adherence to Standard Operating Procedures for the risk mitigation of COVID-19 in the workplace; which may be the same appointee as the COVID-19 Manager.

The Compliance Officer is required to work in collaboration with the Head of School,

Managing Director, Facilities Manager and HR Director to develop a plan for the phased in return of employees to the school, prior to reopening the school. The plan must include the following:

- Which employees are permitted to work
- What the plans for the phased-in return of their employees to school are
- What health protocols are in place to protect employees from COVID-19; and
- The details of the COVID-19 Compliance Officer

### HOSPITALS IDENTIFIED AS CENTRES OF ISOLATION & TREATMENT

The following hospitals have been identified as centres of isolation and treatment of people infected with coronavirus. Please continue to monitor available Government:

- ✓ Limpopo: Polokwane Hospital
- ✓ Mpumalanga: Rob Ferreira Hospital
- ✓ Gauteng: Charlotte Maxeke Hospital, Steve Biko Hospital, Tembisa Hospital
- ✓ KwaZulu Natal: Grace Hospital
- ✓ North West: Klerksdorp Hospital
- ✓ Northern Cape: Kimberley Hospital
- ✓ Free State: Pelonomi Hospital



- ✓ Eastern Cape: Livingstone Hospital
- ✓ Western Cape: Tygerberg Hospital

Visit the National COVID-19 websites as this list may change.

COVID-19 Emergency Contact Numbers:

- COVID-19 National Crisis Helpline: 0861 322 322
- WhatsApp Support: 0600123456

### CONSEQUENCE OF BREACH

1. If an employee breaches this policy the necessary disciplinary action will be taken.
2. It is important to note that the company's sick leave policy will not be adjusted or become flexible during the outbreak of COVID-19.
3. It is important to note that the company's sick leave policy will not be adjusted or become flexible during the outbreak of COVID-19.
4. The normal sick leave policy which is in line with Labour Law will still apply.
5. It is the employee's responsibility to contact management should he/she have any queries related to this Policy.