

# FRRR COVID-19 Safe Plan

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19<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Plan completed by: Karen Fazzani, Corporate Services Manager

Date of Updates:

- 11 November 2020, Carolyn McMillan, Office Administrator
- 23 November 2020, Sarah Matthee, General Manager – Partnerships & Services
- 7 December 2020, Natalie Egleton, Chief Executive Officer
- 15 November 2021, Corporate Services Manager
- 17 November 2021, Carolyn McMillan, Office Administrator
- 18 November 2021, Sarah Matthee, General Manager – Partnerships & Services

## Introduction

On 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020, the World Health Organisation declared a pandemic as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. On 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020, in the interests of staff safety, FRRR requested all staff to work from home until such time that they were advised to return to the office. Throughout the pandemic, FRRR's response and advice to staff has been guided by Federal and State Government declarations, guidelines and recommendations. As restrictions and Government advice changes, FRRR will review and change its practices to ensure its workplace and premises remain COVID-19 safe as staff return to the office and the community is able to move about more freely.

FRRR has duties, including as prescribed by Safe Work Australia<sup>1</sup> and Work Safe Victoria<sup>2</sup>, to eliminate, or if that is not reasonably practicable, to minimise the risks of COVID-19 in the workplace so far as is reasonably practicable. FRRR also has a duty to consult workers and volunteers regarding COVID-19 risks and how these risks are to be managed. This includes the introduction of workplace policies relating to vaccination.

This COVID-19 Safe Plan provides a framework to mitigate risks at FRRR's premises and remote locations that FRRR staff work, in particular Victoria and New South Wales. As of November 2021, returning to the workplace will be staged in two phases:

- 1) Safe to Return but with some COVID-19 risks remaining; and
- 2) Return to COVID-19 safe operations (a "pre-COVID-19" normal).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://covid19.swa.gov.au/covid-19-information-workplaces/industry-information/general-industry-information/duties-under-whs>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-covid-19>

## Principles

In developing this Plan, the following principles (based upon the [National COVID-19 Safe Workplace Principles](#)) apply:

1. All workers, regardless of their occupation or how they are engaged, have the right to a healthy and safe working environment.
2. The COVID-19 pandemic requires a uniquely focused approach to work health and safety (WHS) as it applies to businesses, workers and others in the workplace.
3. To keep the workplace healthy and safe, we must, in consultation with staff, assess the way we work to identify, understand and quantify risks and to implement and review control measures to address those risks.
4. As COVID-19 restrictions are gradually relaxed we must work together to adapt and promote safe work practices, consistent with advice from health authorities, to ensure we are ready for the social distancing and exemplary hygiene measures that will be an important part of the transition.
5. We must actively control against the transmission of COVID-19 while at work, consistent with the latest advice from the <https://www.health.gov.au/committees-and-groups/australian-health-protection-principal-committee-ahppc> by considering the application of a hierarchy of appropriate controls where relevant.
6. We must prepare for the possibility that there will be cases of COVID-19 in the workplace and be ready to respond immediately, appropriately, effectively and efficiently, and in a manner that is consistent with advice from health authorities.

## Risk assessment

In response to these principles, a risk assessment has been undertaken and can be found in appendix 1.

The risk of COVID-19 being transmitted by staff and volunteers/visitors to staff and volunteers/visitors has been assessed as medium (unlikely likelihood with catastrophic consequences) based upon the controls in place prior to staff returning to the office to work.

An increase in staff in the office increases the likelihood of the risk and therefore the overall risk rating from medium to high. To mitigate these risks strategies have been put in place.

### Risk Mitigation approach

The risk mitigation strategies will be implemented to cover two phases and follow guidance by the State Government:

- Phase 1 – Safe to Return, but some COVID-19 risk remains
- Phase 2 – Return to COVID-19 Safe operations

Each phase addresses six risk mitigation strategies areas:

- Workforce COVID-19 health self-assessment
- Hygiene practices

- Physical distancing
- Food and beverage safety
- Travel and engagement
- COVID-19 Incident Management Plan

## **Phase 1**

Phase 1 will see the implementation of risk mitigation strategies for the return of up to a total of 10 staff present in the office per day, adhering to the limitation of a 1 person per 2 square metre recommendation.

Staff will be spread throughout the FRRR office to meet this requirement. To facilitate this distancing, staff will be assigned to desks that can be used.

### **1. Workforce COVID-19 health assessment**

The guidance to staff has been, and will continue to be, “If you are unwell, stay home.”

Please consider the following questions before departing for work:

- Are you feeling unwell or experiencing any cold or flu like symptoms?
- Do you have, or have you recently had a temperature?
- Have you been in contact with anyone who has been a confirmed case of COVID-19, in the last 14 days?
- Are you waiting on a COVID-19 test result?

If the answer to any of these questions is ‘yes’ please stay home, get a COVID-19 test (if advised by government assistance) and await the results. Discuss leave entitlements with your manager/Corporate Services Manager. If you are able to work from home, discuss this option with your manager/Corporate Services Manager.

It is a requirement that under the direction of the Chief Health Officer that all staff working from the office are double vaccinated against COVID-19 or have a valid medical exemption to COVID-19 issued by an authorised medical practitioner. Refer [Office workplaces guidance | Coronavirus Victoria](#)

### **2. Hygiene practices**

FRRR is committed to continuing to provide a safe workplace. A Work Environment Checklist based on recommended hygiene criteria has been developed. Each staff member will need to complete this Checklist before returning to work in the office. See attachment 1. The following additional hygiene measures are in place during the COVID-19 situation:

- Hand sanitiser is available throughout the office, focusing on communal areas including the following:
  - Kitchen
  - Photocopier area
  - Meeting rooms
  - Entrances
- Soap will be available at all sinks

- Hand hygiene protocol posters are present around the office
- Respiratory hygiene protocol posters are present around the office
- Signage has been placed at doors to advise staff/visitors not to enter if they are unwell
- Contracted cleaners have been briefed on sanitizing high touch areas in the weekly Monday cleaning schedule
- Desk sharing is discouraged during Phase 1
- Cleaning products (wipes and sanitiser) have been made available for cleaning by staff of frequently touched surfaces (i.e. cleaning of shared desks or equipment by staff after use, copier panels, counter tops, sinks, keyboards, meeting room tables, kitchen table, kitchen tap, hot water services tap, kettle handle, fridge door, bin, entry door handles and security keypad).
  - Where sharing desks is unavoidable, staff are responsible for cleaning the work station and shared equipment (phones, keyboard etc.) at both start and end of day.
  - Meeting rooms – the staff member that hosts the meeting is responsible for cleaning the room at the end of the meeting. This is a simple wipe down of desks, chair handles and spraying with sanitiser.
  - Cleaning equipment will be placed around the office, with spares available in the supply closet. Staff need to inform the Office Manager when products are running low to allow for appropriate time for re-ordering.
- Everyone is responsible for cleaning down counter tops, sinks, kitchen table, kitchen tap, hot water service tap, fridge door, bin and door handles washing your own dishes. Staff can bring their own cutlery etc and keep at their desk or use communal cutlery and ensure that it is washed prior and post use.
- Cloth tea towels have been removed from the kitchen and hand towels from bathroom facilities. Paper towels are to be used instead and disposed of after use.
- Airconditioning has been serviced and filters replaced.
- A COVID-19 Safe Work Environment Checklist <https://frrrbendigo.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/Ea8E8kMaX3VBgKWj2ed7utUB3pCRUajzNwJeiQ3-iiCt2w?e=RTwuj> has been developed based on the above.

### **3. Physical distancing practices**

The Work Environment Checklist also includes physical distancing practices based on government direction. See attachment 2. The following physical distancing measures have been put in place to support a COVID-19 Safe Workplace.

- Staff are encouraged to eliminate physical contact with others, such as handshakes or embracing.
- Staff are advised to avoid touching surfaces touched by others, as much as possible.
- Events/meetings with external people must be conducted in accordance with government advice.

- Group lunches/catering or other in-office group events must be conducted in accordance with government advice.
- Staff to have workspaces 2 square metres and maintain a distance of 1.5m from other people (until restrictions are lifted). Masks are to be worn indoors (until restrictions are lifted). Masks may need to be worn in areas where the 1.5m distance cannot be maintained.
- Managers may consider the following strategies to achieve this goal:
  - Rearrange or decommission work stations to achieve 2m<sup>2</sup>, with the consent of impacted parties.
  - Split teams into different cohorts and schedule different days for them to come into the office.
  - Utilise small meeting room and board room as required to achieve physical distancing.
  - Stagger start/finish times for staff.
  - Consider room capacity for the kitchen when planning meal breaks.
  - Staff will be encouraged to go outside to get fresh air every two hours at least.
  - Making sure that windows and air conditioning are set for optimum air flow at the start of each workday
  - Use of video or phone calls to replace in-person meetings.
  - Directing staff to continue working from home.
- Display signage about social distancing and hand hygiene where staff tend to congregate to perform tasks (photocopier areas, kitchen area)
- The use of Teams or Zoom for meetings is encouraged
- If physical distancing is impacting your wellbeing, staff are encouraged to access the Employee Assistance Program
- Staff should refer to the Return to Office and Working from Home Principles.

#### **4. Food and beverage safety**

A COVID-19 Safe Food and Beverage Information Sheet was prepared for distribution to staff. See attachment 3. The following food and beverage measures are in place a COVID-19 Safe Workplace:

- Tea, coffee, milk and sugar will be supplied as they were before COVID-19.
- Staff are asked to wash/sanitise their hands prior to accessing tea, coffee, milk, sugar and utensils.
- No snacks will be provided in the workplace (including fruit, vegetables, nuts, biscuits, bread, pastries) unless individually packed.
- Utensils and dishes must be washed after use (no 'teaspoon soaking' mug to be used or utensils or dishes left in or near the sink).
- Soap and hand sanitiser will be available in the kitchen.

#### **5. Travel and engagement**

A COVID-19 Safe Travel and Engagement Information Sheet was prepared for distribution to staff. See attachment 4. Also refer FRRR Travel Policy: [Travel and Accommodation Policy](#)

The following travel measures are in place to support a COVID-19 Safe Workplace:

- People may travel in the same vehicle, with the consent of all parties and wearing face masks (until restrictions are lifted).

- At the end of the day sanitise the vehicle.
- Staff must maintain good hand and respiratory hygiene when travelling.
- Based on Government advice for each State, community outreach and engagement activities can recommence with CEO or CSM approval and COVID-19 Safe plans in place.
  - Any location engaged or visited by staff during work hours, or for any work activities must have COVID-19 Safe plans in place including QR codes, proof of vaccination, wearing face masks (until restrictions are lifted), social distancing and sanitiser. Other patrons should be double vaccinated and venues well ventilated.
  - Consideration should be given to structuring events to allow both face-to-face and virtual participation.
  - Staff should not attend events if unwell, showing any COVID-19 symptoms, is a close or casual contact of someone who is required to isolate or have visited a red zone or tier 1 site in the previous 14 days.

## 6. COVID-19 incident management

A COVID-19 incident management plan was developed for use by the Leadership Team. The Corporate Services Manager is the nominated staff member who is the control person if an outbreak occurs, and who ensures all safety standards are in place and being adhered to. This procedure will ensure:

- For all people entering the office, including staff and volunteers there is a QR code sign in with your mobile phone and a registration form for those that do not have a mobile phone.
- An isolation room is available where required – (small meeting room), an isolation area will be established in the event of an incident.
- Cleaning products are available to disinfect the workplace following an outbreak and options for hiring a cleaning company to do this work are available.
- Spare masks are available for use in accordance with State Government advice.
- A protocol is in place for reopening the office should an outbreak occur or quarantine period be imposed.
- Signs about the symptoms of COVID-19 are in place in the office.
- Staff should not come to work with any symptoms, or if at high risk (eg if have recently travelled overseas to high risk areas, visited code red site in NSW or Tier 1 site in Victoria or been in close contact with confirmed case of COVID-19 or display symptoms such as cough, fever etc. until had COVID test with negative COVID-19 test result)
- There is a practice of sending workers home if they are sick, and if they are displaying symptoms of COVID-19 asking them to get tested and stay home until receive a negative COVID-19 test result. Further information available at: [coronavirus.vic.gov.au/vaccine](https://coronavirus.vic.gov.au/vaccine)
- Staff are asked to immediately notify their employer if they are displaying symptoms of COVID-19, or have been in close contact with people who has COVID-19 or have been tested for COVID-19. Staff are not to enter the office under these conditions.

- Testing is free and financial support is available for workers who need to self-isolate or quarantine see <https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/support>
- Staff are reminded of their leave entitlements if they are sick or required to self-quarantine.

The triggers for an office closure include:

- if a confirmed case notifies FRRR or DHHS notifies FRRR, the office is shut immediately and all staff to return home until the premises have been appropriately cleaned and cleared by DHHS to reopen.
- If DHHS, or a staff member notifies FRRR that they are a confirmed close contact, FRRR will follow the advice of Government Departments, such as DHHS (phone 1800 675 398) and WorkSafe Victoria (phone 13 23 60) regarding continuing to remain open or needing to close the office.

### **Non-compliance**

- If staff do not comply with any directives related to COVID-19, this should be raised immediately, and an explanation sought. If non-compliance continues usual complaints and disciplinary procedures may apply. Please direct any concerns to the Corporate Services Manager.
- If an external visitor does not comply with any COVID-19 directives they should be respectfully requested to leave the office and, if necessary, police assistance should be requested by calling the Victoria Police Assistance line 131 444.

### **Phase 2**

As the Victorian State Government phases in return to onsite work for workers who have been working from home, FRRR will continue to implement mitigations strategies to reduce risks to staff for whom the Bendigo office is their primary place of work. FRRR will make clear changes to return to work circumstances and arrangements that are in place and mitigation strategies that need to be observed. All staff and volunteers returning to the FRRR office will need to be double vaccinated. Refer [COVID Vaccination Policy](#)

All staff regardless of which state they live and work in will need to comply with their state's respective pandemic laws.

### **Communication and engagement**

- This Plan will be emailed to staff and available on Sharepoint [COVID Safe Plan 2021](#)
- If they need support, staff are encouraged to access the Employment Assistance Program (EAP).
- It will be a requirement that all staff working from the office to have completed online compliance course related to COVID-19.
- Under the Chief Health Officer's Direction's, it is requirement that all staff working from the office are double vaccinated against COVID-19 or have a valid medical exemption to COVID-19 issued by an authorised medical practitioner. All employees will be asked their vaccination status and that information will be kept confidential in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988 and Victorian (Privacy and Data Protection Act 2011, Health Records Act 2001) legislation.

**For the latest information on restrictions in Victoria, visit <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/victorian-public-coronavirus-disease-covid-19> and New South Wales visit <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/covid-19>**

## Attachment 1: Work environment checklist

### COVID-19 Safe work environment checklist

All staff should conduct the COVID-19 Safe work environment checklist and speak to their manager/Corporate Services Manager if any work environment issues need to be addressed. Work environment issues include:

#### General

- I am aware of the availability of the Employee Assistance Program if I need additional support.
- I am aware that the COVID-19 Safe Workplace Plan is available on Sharepoint [COVID Safe Plan 2021](#)
- I have completed the online course on how to be safe during COVID-19.
- I agree to stay home if sick, or if I have symptoms of COVID-19.
- I am fully vaccinated.

#### Hygiene

- I have been provided with or have access to hand sanitiser during work hours.
- There is hand sanitiser in the kitchen, meeting rooms and entrances for use during work hours.
- There is soap is available at the sink/s for use during work hours.
- There is appropriate signage displayed throughout the office.
- There is a 'stay home if unwell' poster near my work area.
- I have discussed any other hygiene concerns with my manager/ Corporate Services Manager.
- When using shared equipment (work stations, copiers, counter tops, sinks, keyboards, meeting room tables, kitchen tables, kitchen taps, hot water service tap, fridge door, bin, entry door handles, security keyboard) I have easy access to, and agree to use disinfectant wipes or spray to sanitise after use.

#### Physical distancing

- I will not handshake and embraces with others.
- I will avoid touching surfaces touched by others, as much as possible.
- I conduct/participate in events with external people and/or large gatherings in accordance with government advice.
- I conduct/participate in group lunches/catering/happy hours or other in-office group events in accordance with government advice.
- If I arrange deliveries, I will utilise non-contact deliveries where possible.
- I know I can use Teams or Zoom for meetings instead of face to face meetings.



Action plan to address gaps

Gap identified	Action to address gap	Who will take this action?	By when?
1. e.g. Don't have 4m2	Arrange for space in meeting room	Manager/ Corporate Services Manager	Today
2.			
3.			

Print name: .....

Signature: .....

Date: .....

Copy to staff

Copy to Corporate Services Manager

## Attachment 2: COVID-19 Safe food and beverage information sheet

### COVID-19 Safe food and beverage information sheet

- Tea, coffee, milk and sugar will be supplied as they were before COVID-19.
- Hands to be washed/sanitised prior to accessing tea, coffee, milk, sugar and utensils.
- No snacks will be provided by the workplace (including fruit, vegetables, nuts, biscuits, bread, pastries) unless individually packed.
- Utensils and dishes to be washed after use (no 'teaspoons soaking' mug to be used or utensils or dishes left in or near the sink).
- Soap and hand sanitiser will be available in the kitchen.

### Attachment 3: COVID-19 Safe travel and engagement information sheet

#### COVID-19 Safe travel information sheet

- All travel needs prior approval from CEO or CSM. A detailed travel plan and Travel Request [Form](#) needs to be provided with request including planned COVID-19 safety measures.
- Staff should monitor government websites for changes to restricted zones and any border crossing restrictions before travelling and monitor while travelling for any changes. If changes occur before travelling a risk assessment should be undertaken to determine if trip should continue. If changes occur while travelling staff need to notify the Corporate Services Manager and adhere to any quarantine requirements and obtain any necessary notices/permits before crossing state borders. Staff may travel in the same vehicle, with the consent of both parties and both wearing masks (while restrictions are in place), one person drive and the other sit in the back seat to increase the chance of achieving 1.5m distance.
- The vehicle should be sanitised before and after use.
- Any location engaged or visited by staff during work hours, or for any work activities must have COVID-19 Safe plans in place including QR codes, proof of vaccination, wearing face masks (until restrictions are lifted), social distancing and sanitiser. Other patrons should be double vaccinated and venues well ventilated.
- Consideration should be given to structuring events to allow both face-to-face and virtual participation.
- Staff should not attend events if unwell, showing any COVID-19 symptoms, is a close or casual contact of someone who is required to isolate or have visited a red zone or tier 1 site in the previous 14 days.
- To reduce risk printed resources should be emailed to participants prior to training with a request to bring own notepads and pens.
- Refreshments either BYO or follow COVID safe protocols.

## Appendix 1: Risk Assessment

Section 1 – Activity Description	
Date of Assessment:	
Description of Activity/Hazard Risk:	Returning to work from reduced COVID-19 restrictions
Office Location:	66 Garsed Street, Bendigo VIC 3550
Assessment Conducted by:	
BACKGROUND INFORMATION	
Reason for Assessment:	As the COVID-19 restrictions are reduced more staff will be returning to the FRRR office.

FRRR risk matrix	Likelihood				
	Almost certain (90% probability)	Likely (75% probability)	Moderate (50% probability)	Unlikely (25% probability)	Rare (10% probability)
Catastrophic					
Major					
Moderate					
Minor					
Low					

Ranking of risk

Color: red highest risk, blue lowest risk

What is/are the hazard/s?	What is the harm that the hazard could cause?	What are we already doing?	What is the likelihood that the harm would occur?	What is the level of risk?	What further controls are required?	Responsible Person
COVID-19 being transmitted by a staff member or volunteer	Staff member catching COVID-19 (could result in serious illness or	FRRR staff are all practising social distancing  Some staff are working from home and have been given	Moderate, it is there will be an increase in cases locally	Moderate while there are few/or no cases the consequences may be catastrophic.	Hygiene practices  Physical distancing  Travel and engagement	CEO/CSM  All staff and volunteers

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	<p>death)</p>	<p>resources to allow this. (Working from home risk assessment has been undertaken).</p> <p>FRRR staff have been briefed on COVID-19 regarding expectations when unwell and not coming to work.</p> <p>Staff members will be required to complete online learning modules regarding COVID-19 before returning to the office.</p> <p>FRRR staff have access to hand sanitiser.</p> <p>FRRR staff to minimise time spent in areas other than their own working area.</p> <p>Staff and volunteers have been double vaccinated.</p> <p>COVID-19 Travel and engagement procedures in place.</p>			<p>safety</p> <p>Incident management</p> <p>Communication and engagement (regular Zoom meetings with staff)</p> <p>Vaccination policy</p>	
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What is/are the hazard/s?	What is the harm that the hazard could cause?	What are we already doing?	What is the likelihood that the harm would occur?	What is the level of risk?	What further controls are required?	Responsible Person
<p>COVID-19 being transmitted by a member of the community.</p>	<p>Staff members or volunteers catching COVID-19</p>	<p>FRRR office has restricted number of employees.</p> <p>Signage placed about physical distancing around the office.</p> <p>Posters inside the premises explaining the social distancing and hand sanitising procedures when entering the office.</p> <p>Additionally, if they are unwell, have come into contact with someone with COVID-19 etc.</p> <p>Non-essential travel ceased. Includes: outreach, conferences, committee meetings.</p> <p>COVID-19 Travel and engagement procedures in place.</p> <p>Move workshops online and facilitate virtual meetings.</p>	<p>Likelihood – Rare, office is generally not open to the public.</p>	<p>Moderate while there are few/or no cases the consequences may be catastrophic.</p>	<p>Hygiene practices</p> <p>Physical distancing</p> <p>Travel and engagement safety</p> <p>Incident management</p> <p>Communication and engagement (regular Zoom meetings with staff)</p> <p>Use of technology instead of face-to-face contact</p> <p>Vaccination policy</p>	<p>CEO/CSM</p> <p>All staff and volunteers</p>