

POLICY – EPIDEMIC/PANDEMIC POLICY & PROCEDURE

(Version 6)

Policy Title:	Epidemic/Pandemic
Policy Type:	Policy
Date:	18/01/2021 (1) 21/12/2021 (2) 24/03/2023 (3) 08/04/2024 (4) 09/04/2025(5) 08/04/2026 (6)

INTRODUCTION

From time-to-time infectious diseases develop into epidemics or pandemics, and create increased risks for the community. These occasions require specific policies targeted at the particular disease in question and general efforts at preparedness.

1. Bribie Island Community Arts Society wishes as far as possible to protect its visitors, its clients, its staff, its volunteers, and the general public from infection or contagion by epidemics and/or pandemics.
2. Bribie Island Community Arts Society will facilitate, through its policies and procedures, strategies designed to reduce risks to its visitors, its clients, its staff, its volunteers, and the general public.
3. Bribie Island Community Arts Society will comply with all directions from authorised public health officers and recognised medical authorities in relation to the epidemic or pandemic.

GOAL

The purpose of this policy is to outline the strategies and actions that:

1. Bribie Island Community Arts Society intends to take measures to prevent the transmission of infectious diseases that are epidemics or pandemics, and control the transmission of infectious diseases when a case/s is identified.

For the purpose of this policy, infectious diseases mean diseases caused by pathogenic microorganisms, such as bacteria, viruses, parasites or fungi; the diseases can be spread, directly or indirectly, from one person to another. This policy is focused on infectious diseases that are declared to be an epidemic or pandemic.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

Employees	Board Members	Members	Contractors (including employees of contractors) & Suppliers	Volunteers	Tutors & Facilitators	Visitors
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

POLICY

1. Bribie Island Community Arts Society will as far as possible plan for and make advance preparations for the possibility that its operations will be affected by an epidemic or pandemic.
2. In the event of an epidemic or pandemic, Bribie Island Community Arts Society will, as far as possible:

Assist its clients, staff, volunteers and others, as relevant, to minimise their exposure to the illness concerned.

 - Encourage and assist those who have reason to believe that they are at risk of contracting the epidemic or pandemic to obtain a diagnosis.
 - Support employees, volunteers, contractors and clients to take reasonable precautions to prevent infection or contagion.
 - Provide standard precautions such as personal protective equipment (e.g., masks, soap, and gloves).
 - Maintain its services and operations throughout the period of concern.
 - Encourage all employees, (including volunteers), members, contractors and suppliers to avail themselves of Covid 19 vaccinations or other vaccinations/treatments relevant to the existing pandemic.
3. In the event of an infectious disease being declared an epidemic or pandemic, Bribie Island Community Arts Society requires people covered by this Policy to take the following precautions:
 - Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitiser or wash them with soap and water.
 - Maintain at least 1.5 metres distance between yourself and anyone, especially anyone who is coughing or sneezing.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, or shaking hands with others.
 - Make sure you follow good hygiene, and encourage others to do the same. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze, and disposing of used tissues immediately.
 - Stay at home if you feel unwell. If you are well enough to work but would like to minimise the risk of infecting others, ask your manager or supervisor whether you can temporarily work from home.
 - Keep up to date on the latest hotspots (cities or local areas where the pandemic or epidemic is spreading widely). If possible, avoid traveling to places - especially if you are more at risk.

- If you are or are likely to be contagious, notify the Venue Manager or your co-ordinator as soon as possible. It may be necessary for you to self-isolate by staying at home until you recover.
- Seek medical advice promptly and follow the directions of your local health authority.

Note: Evidence of a recognised medical contraindication means a **COVID-19 vaccination** medical exemption recorded by an **eligible health professional** on the Australian Immunisation Register for the person. A person who provides evidence of a **medical contraindication** is treated as if they are fully vaccinated.

LEAVE AND FLEXIBILITY

1. Bribie Island Community Arts Society recognises that staff may request or require paid and unpaid leave when they are unwell, at risk of or vulnerable to infection, and at risk of infecting others.
2. Workers may make use of leave consistent with relevant industrial instruments and the National Employment Standards (including access to unpaid leave).
3. Bribie Island Community Arts Society may, at its discretion, direct those affected or reasonably at risk of being affected by the pandemic or epidemic, to remain away from the workplace or work remotely.

NOTES

In carrying out the procedures listed below, Bribie Island Community Arts Society will be guided by the information and directions provided by local health authorities and the World Health Organisation, and its occupational health and safety obligations.

ABOVE AND BEYOND PROVISIONS

Where possible during an epidemic or pandemic, Bribie Island Community Arts Society will aim to provide workers with flexibility to work remotely and to attend medical appointments, or to perform alternative duties.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

1. <https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/02/australian-health-sector-emergency-response-plan-for-novel-coronavirus-covid-19.pdf>
2. BICAS Work Health and Safety Plan for COVID-19 (Website link).

LEGISLATION AND INDUSTRIAL INSTRUMENTS

This policy and procedure is not intended to override any industrial instrument, contract, award or legislation.

- Biosecurity Act 2015 (Commonwealth)
- Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)
- Fair Work Regulations 2009 (Cth)
- Qld Health COVID Regulations

PROCEDURE – EPIDEMIC/PANDEMIC

1. The **Venue Manager** is responsible for:

- Nominating the Pandemic Officer.
- Ensuring that the organisation's Workplace Health and Safety policies are consistent with the intention of the Epidemic/Pandemic Policy.
- Assessing the organisation's vulnerabilities, in the light of the epidemic or pandemic, to:
 - Bribie Island Community Arts Society's own human resources (See Policy 3.1).
 - Bribie Island Community Arts Society's suppliers of goods and services.

In the event of an epidemic or pandemic

- Giving notice to staff, volunteers, clients, and any persons likely to be affected that epidemic or pandemic procedures are in effect.
- Bringing into operation the epidemic or pandemic management procedures specified below.
- Instituting any administrative measures necessary to reduce the impact of the vulnerabilities detailed above.

2. **Supervisors/managers** are responsible for:

- Ensuring that staff and volunteers are aware of the epidemic procedures in effect at any time.

3. **Employees/volunteers** are responsible for:

- Abiding by the epidemic procedures specified below, when informed by authorised staff that epidemic or pandemic procedures are in effect.

4. The Pandemic Officer is responsible for:

- Advising the Venue Manager on when epidemic procedures should be activated.
- Familiarising staff, volunteers, members and visitors with recommended procedures regarding epidemic avoidance (*see* Scope).

PROCEDURES

The following procedures apply in the event of the Venue Manager giving notice that epidemic or pandemic procedures are in effect.

Events

- The Venue Manager, with the advice of the Pandemic Officer, will consider on a continuing basis whether any events involving the attendance of staff or members of the public should be changed, rescheduled or cancelled to minimise the risk of infection.

Work Procedures

- The Venue Manager, with the advice of the Pandemic Officer, will consider on a continuing basis whether:
 - it is necessary or appropriate for nominated staff/volunteers to work from home.
 - staff/volunteer travel, (or other activities that may cause them to come into contact with other people in Australia or overseas) should be modified or terminated.
 - arrangements for staff/volunteers who work with clients or the public should be modified to minimise risks for all parties.
- The Venue Manager, with the advice of the Pandemic Officer, may require any member of staff to not attend the workplace, and/or to work from home, or, if this is not feasible or appropriate, to take on alternative duties.
- The Venue Manager, with the advice of the Pandemic Officer, may require any member of staff to provide satisfactory medical evidence that they are fit to return to work.
- *Appendix A Vaccinations – Procedures.*

Contractors and Suppliers

- The Venue Manager, with the advice of the Pandemic Officer, will consider on a continuing basis whether arrangements with existing contractors and suppliers need to be modified or supplemented to ensure uninterrupted service delivery.

HEALTH MESSAGING

- The Pandemic Officer shall familiarise staff/volunteers and others, as relevant, with recommended procedures on epidemic avoidance guidelines (e.g., handwashing, soap, sneezing policy) as appropriate.
- The Pandemic Officer shall display signage listing vaccination requirements for all people entering all BICAS spaces if appropriate or mandated.

APPENDIX A

Procedures relating to vaccinations

Situation: Working in an environment with vaccinated and unvaccinated staff

“Staff” refers to employees and volunteers.

- Identify staff’s vaccination status
- Identify staff’s willingness to work in a non-discriminatory environment
- Any staff unwilling to work alongside unvaccinated staff, BICAS to endeavour to make flexible arrangements, such as:
 - work from home
 - provide a separate work space
 - provide separate work spaces for vaccinated and unvaccinated staff

REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed annually during the BICAS Work Health and Safety Audit Program, through consultation with Board Members, employees and volunteers, or when legislative requirements change, or in the event of a serious breach of this Policy.

BICAS reserves the right to vary, replace or terminate this policy.

POLICY VERSION AND REVISION INFORMATION

Policy Authorised by: Title:	Carolyn Wheeler BICAS CHAIRPERSON	Version 1: Review Date:	18/01/2021 21/12/2021
Policy Authorised by: Title:	Carolyn Wheeler BICAS CHAIRPERSON	Version 2: Review Date:	21/12/2021 21/12/2022
Policy Authorised by: Title:	Carolyn Wheeler BICAS CHAIRPERSON	Version 3: Review Date:	24/03/2023 24/03/2024
Policy Authorised by: Title:	Carolyn Wheeler BICAS CHAIRPERSON	Version 4: Approved by Board: Review Date:	 08/04/2024 08/04/2025
Policy Maintained by: Title:	Julie Thomson VENUE MANAGER	Version 4:	08/04/2024
Policy Authorised by: Title:	Carolyn Wheeler BICAS CHAIRPERSON	Version 5: Approved by Board: Review Date:	 08/04/2025 09/04/2026
Policy Maintained by: Title:	Julie Thomson VENUE MANAGER	Version 5:	09/04/2025
Policy Authorised by: Title:	Carolyn Wheeler BICAS CHAIRPERSON	Version 6: Approved by Board: Review Date:	 08/04/2026 08/04/2027
Policy Maintained by: Title:	Julie Thomson VENUE MANAGER	Version 6:	08/04/2026

BICAS EPIDEMIC/PANDEMIC POLICY & PROCEDURE

I, (Employee, Volunteer, etc., – please print)

....., have read, understand and agree to abide by the Bribie Island Community Arts Society Inc.'s (BICAS) Epidemic/Pandemic Policy and Procedure and I understand that such adherence is a condition of my employment, volunteer work, contract work, and/or any other participation in BICAS/BICAC activities. I understand that a violation of the BICAS Epidemic/Pandemic Policy and Procedure may be grounds for termination from BICAS/BICAC participation; as a volunteer; or in the case of an employee, immediate dismissal for just cause without notice or pay in lieu of notice.

Signed this day of, 20.....

BICAS/BICAC PARTICIPANT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge:

- *that I have read a copy of the BICAS Epidemic/Pandemic Policy and Procedure;*
- *that I should comply with the Policy; and*
- *that there may be disciplinary consequences if I fail to comply*

Your Name:

_____ *Please Print*

Signed:

Date:
