



NURTURE + STRENGTHEN + CONNECT OUR COMMUNITY

## COVID RESPONSE POLICY

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## 1. Introduction.

As an organisation and a community of people, we are committed to ensuring that LIVEfree PROJECT is, in every respect, a safe place for those who join with us. We take the wellbeing of our staff and volunteers seriously.

This policy represents our approach to dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. However, this policy is in all respects subject to any overriding Government directive or law. For example, if the Government mandates that you must remain at home, or that our workplace must close, then such directive overrides this policy.

This policy will help ensure that LIVEfree PROJECT provides practices that are safe, respectful and demonstrate care, hope and love. It will assist in the prevention of unhealthy practices and the consequences associated.

This policy will be available to all persons involved in paid or voluntary roles within the expression of LIVEfree PROJECT and be accessible on the LIVEfree PROJECT website. The Director and Board will review this policy every three years.

## 2. Defining COVID – 19

**Definition:** 'CO' stands for corona, 'VI' for virus, and 'D' for disease. Formerly, this disease was referred to as '2019 novel coronavirus' or '2019-nCoV.' The COVID-19 virus is a new virus linked to the same family of viruses as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and some types of common cold.

**What are the symptoms?** The virus can cause a range of symptoms, ranging from mild illness to pneumonia. Symptoms of the disease are fever, cough, sore throat and headaches. In severe cases difficulty in breathing and deaths can occur.

**Who can COVID -19 effect?** People of all ages can be infected by the new coronavirus (2019-nCoV). LIVEfree PROJECT advises people of all ages to take steps to protect themselves from the virus, for example by following good hand hygiene and good respiratory hygiene.

**Who is more vulnerable?** Older people, and people with pre-existing medical conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease) appear to be more vulnerable to becoming severely ill with the virus.

**Where COVID - 19 exists?** Since first being recorded late last year in China, the Covid-19 coronavirus has spread around the world and been declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization. Our duty of care in regarding this pandemic that has swept the world is one that encompasses our moral and legal responsibility that we have, as individuals and corporately, towards all those we encounter in the various programs and operations of our organisation. It involves care to act in a manner that will protect these people from infection or distress through our actions or negligence.

### 3. Government Health Outline

#### 3.1 Responsibilities and compliance

Workers / volunteers within the organisation are entrusted with the authority to influence other people. Workers/ volunteers need to be aware that this brings great power, even while they may be dealing with those who are their peers in terms of age, maturity, profession etc.

Every person under our care and service is entitled to be safe and feel safe at all times. Workers / volunteers paid or voluntary should therefore make every reasonable effort to avoid acting, or failing to act, in a way that is likely to cause harm to another person, or compromise another's sense of physical, emotional or spiritual safety and well-being especially when it comes to COVID -19 as the measures of control come down to individual adoption of safe practises.

All workers/ volunteers will adhere to the boundaries and guidelines set out in the '*LIVEfree PROJECT Code of Conduct Policy*' and related policies. This will help ensure the safety of the people who place themselves into the organisations care and protect the integrity and personal well-being of leaders / workers.

People of high profile have and need to be aware this comes with a degree of influence, both positive and negative. There should be consideration for what they say in public sector in order to avoid the potential for undue pressure or demand, or any other form of manipulation. In addition, special care must be taken to never reference any person without expressed approval of the individual concerned.

#### 3.2 Accountability and training

LIVEfree PROJECT understands that workers or volunteers are a crucial resource to the effectivity of care, and we are committed to empowering our leaders /workers with knowledge, skills and awareness.

All leaders / workers or volunteers will be screened according to the '*LIVEfree PROJECT Covid -19 Response Policy*' and include the provision of training, material to read, ways to stay informed and PPE when working or volunteering for LIVEfree PROJECT. Workers and volunteers will be provided with an induction which clearly states who they are accountable to and supported by – most cases a staff member on duty and director.

Ongoing training and information opportunities for leaders are provided by organisations director. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Covid -19 safety plan available on website
- Up to date policy, procedure and updates and information available on website
- Safe practices for working with COVID -19 vulnerable people available on website
- Online presence through social media, webpage and emails containing updates and information on reminders of safe practices.
- clear guidance on physical distancing, hygiene, and other matters, including through use of signs and posters in the workplace

- control measures in place at the workplace to manage the risks of COVID-19, including any new ways of working
- any training that is necessary to address risks in the workplace, including on how to perform tasks differently or the use of PPE
- information on their workplace entitlements (such as access to paid leave) if they have COVID-19 symptoms or they are required to self-isolate
- clear expectations and procedures, in consultation with workers and their representatives, on what will happen if a worker contracts COVID-19, and
- advice on how to report concerns or safety incidents.

This will be communicated through formal and informal communication methods (e.g., email, signs, posters, verbal, etc)

### **3.3 Ongoing vigilance and updates**

LIVEfree PROJECT will stay informed and vigilant in the implementing of COVID – 19 safety updates from the World Health Organisation. We will release / inform our staff and volunteers of relevant updates that change our practises or services to ensure current methods for infection control are both up to date and relevant in its application to practises, services, programs and conduct. We will also communicate COVID - 19 safe practices on various platforms messages that will serve as a reminder and on-going awareness of the need to remain vigilant in these practises.

## **4. Safe practices in working with people and the risks associated with COVID – 19 and identifying vulnerable people**

LIVEfree PROJECT is strongly committed to compliance of the World Health Organisation standards and government guidelines within the operation of our organisation’s response to Covid – 19. We aim to always create an environment where people can confidently trust that we will adhere to World Health Organisation standards, recommendations and expectations to create a safer community.

Older people, and people with pre-existing medical conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease) appear to be more vulnerable to becoming severely ill with the virus.

Other known vulnerabilities are those people experiencing immune compromises due to health, disease, treatment of a known illness that compromises overall health such as cancer treatment, these people especially deserve our adherence to health practises so that we can serve our community, deliver programs and services with Covid -19 safety guidelines adhered to

#### ***4.1 Ensuring people with symptoms of COVID-19 do not come to work by:***

- providing education and training and utilising signage and infographic material to increase awareness of COVID19 symptoms and what a person should do if they have symptoms including:
- not coming to work or isolating or quarantining, where instructed by health officials
- the steps to follow if they develop symptoms at work
- when to seek medical advice and get tested
- supporting workers to access testing, stay home if they have symptoms and implementing remote working options for workers in isolation or quarantine, if possible, and workplace policies and procedures to manage cases or outbreaks of COVID-19 in the workplace.

#### ***4.2 Screening workers by:***

- reminding workers of the common symptoms of COVID-19 and that they should not be at work if they have or have had any of the common symptoms in the last 48 hours
- asking workers if they have recently travelled or been in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19, and
- conducting temperature checks in some circumstances with touch-free thermometers. Temperature checks can be used in combination with other measures, but they should not be solely relied on.

#### ***4.3 Maintaining physical distancing by:***

- Limiting the number of people in the workplace based on NSW Health directions in the state and to ensure each person can maintain a physical distance of 1.5 metres.
- Modifying workflows and processes so that work tasks are carried out in a way that minimises interactions between people. This includes reducing the time spent in proximity.

Where the interaction is unavoidable, the amount of time that workers are in close contact will be minimised, and if appropriate, workers will be provided with PPE.

However, it is inappropriate to initiate physical contact with people in the Covid safe environment (other than protecting a person from harm). We now need to engage other methods of affirmation and connection as these are still part of a person feeling a sense of belonging and connection with others in their community.

***Examples of appropriate COVID - 19 physical contact include:***

- Elbow taps and the nod provide ways of safely saying hello
- Air-hi fives are an appropriate alternative to our embrace of a side hug or shoulder tap for affirmation.

***Examples of inappropriate physical contact include:***

- Shaking Hands
- Hugs
- Shoulder tapping or touching
- Kissing – even on the side of the cheek or air kisses inside the 1.5m distancing allowance

***4.4 Practicing good personal hygiene (including handwashing) by:***

- Ensuring there are adequate and accessible facilities to achieve good hygiene
- Facilities are in good working order, are clean and are otherwise safe, and
- Facilities are properly stocked and have adequate supplies of toilet paper, soap, water, and drying facilities.
- Provide alcohol-based hand sanitiser (with at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol as the active ingredient) in appropriate locations, such as entry and exits.
- Allowing time to wash hands and providing sanitizer

***4.4a Toileting of children***

LIVEfree PROEJCT agrees that the best practice for toileting of small children or children who need assistance is to call the parent/guardian.

Refer to our code of conduct policy in regarding these vulnerabilities.

- However, the introduction of Covid -19 safety standards requires us to maintain good handwashing and sanitising around these areas.
- LIVEfree Project will incorporate these safety measures to continue including the use of soap, sanitiser, bacterial wipes in all dealings with children and vulnerable people around this issue.

***4.5 Engaging in routine cleaning and disinfection of surfaces by:***

- Cleaning workspace areas daily using a 2-in-1 clean and disinfection by using a combined detergent and disinfectant
- Frequent cleaning of equipment that is shared between workers
- Cleaning and disinfection will be undertaken after a person with a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 has recently been at the workplace.

***4.6 Providing personal protective equipment (PPE) where appropriate, such as:***

- Gloves
- Apron
- Surgical mask fluid-resistant; P2/N95

#### **4.7 Contact tracing by:**

- Encouraging workers to utilise the COVIDSafe App and QR codes provide within the workplace and in community
- In addition to these precautions, LIVEfree PROJECT also offers staff working from home arrangements where possible and adheres to all NSW Health guidelines and restrictions.

#### **4.8 Managing inappropriate behaviour in people in a Covid -19 compliant environment**

LIVEfree PROJECT will endeavour to prevent the occurrence of difficult behaviour through careful program planning, positive reinforcement, and by clearly communicating acceptable and unacceptable behaviour to people participating in programs.

However, despite best efforts, should behaviour arise that requires correction the following guidelines may be noted:

- Observe the Covid -19 safe engagement of a person – this means no physical contact.
- If a person was a danger to themselves or others and need for restraint arose, this would need to be actioned only as a last resort and all measures to protect the person as best as possible keeping the Covid -19 safety guides in mind.
- It is never acceptable to sneeze, cough or spit with intent to infect as a way of responding to another person – this will result with total withdrawal from programs and services. Withdrawing the person from programs and services is our safe precaution measure if others are being impacted by the behaviour or there is risk to others and a police report made.
- Use verbal correction, with a respectful and calm tone and manner.
- Make it clear to the person what behaviour is inappropriate.
- If the behaviour continues engage higher authority
- Shouting, physical punishment or the threat of physical punishment is **NEVER** acceptable.

#### **4.9 Driving and Transport**

LIVEfree PROJECT will create a COVID – 19 safe environments when transporting people in cars, avoiding unnecessary contact and minimising contact where possible with people in our programs and transportation of clients and or other workers or volunteers. In these circumstances the following guidelines should be considered:

- Car cleaned frequently.
- Social distancing still observed as best as possible.
- Fresh air flow to be provided through the car whilst people are travelling as passenger in the vehicle.

- Hand sanitizers and hand hygiene wipes available for clients and workers / volunteers to have in cars – people taking own responsibility to replenish these when necessary.
- Masks worn with passengers

## 5. Privacy and Confidentiality

LIVEfree PROJECT recognises that the names, phone numbers and addresses that people give in the process of making safe places for operation of LIVEfree programs and services, will be respected with the highest degree of privacy and confidentiality.

All records of information about any person that are required by Australian Health Organisation in the management of the COVID – 19 responses, will adhere to the '*LIVEfree PROJECT Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*' and are required to be stored or disposed of in a secure manner that ensures confidentiality and respect.

### 5.1 Registration and indemnity forms, signing in and out

Attendance documentation is required for persons entering, working, volunteering and attending programs and meetings including name, phone number and or email address. These will be stored in compliance with our Privacy and Confidentiality Policy.

Signing in with the NSW QR Code on entry to building or program

If a person is attending a program, the information required will also include emergency contact numbers, and arrangement details for the collection of unwell people if necessary. Please refer to the LIVEfree PROJECT registration forms that will be used in these instances.

## 6. Building/Environment Safety and WHS practices

LIVEfree PROJECT values the safety of all persons who enter the spaces and buildings owned / rented and operated by LIVEfree PROJECT. As part of our efforts in keeping all staff, volunteers and participants safe we recognise and adhere to the principal WHS law in NSW consisting of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*, supported by the *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011*.

LIVEfree PROJECT is guided by their '*Work, Health and Safety Policy*' which offers detailed requirements and considerations. Please access this policy on the LIVEfree PROJECT website for further information regarding WHS practises.

### 6.1 Cleaning and building hygiene

- Wear gloves when cleaning and dispose after use
- Thoroughly clean surfaces using detergent and water
- Use disinfectant – leave on for 10 minutes to be effective
- Use sanitizer spray on surfaces and use paper towel or disposable cloths and then let air dry
- Cleaning should be done pre-programs/ meetings
- Cleaning should be done as needed whilst program/ meetings are in operation
- Cleaning should be done after programs / meetings

## **6.2 Appropriate ratios for areas**

Ratios for defined spaces has been outlined by the Australian Government and these guidelines are to be adhered to by all LIVEfree PROJECT workers and volunteers to the best of our ability for the 4 people to 1metre rule – if we go to 4 in 2metre rule these numbers can double.

- Front Courtyard: Capacity is 12
- Entry Foyer: Capacity is 3 people
- LIVEfree Project House Office Spaces: Capacity 12 people
- Auditorium: Capacity 54 people
- Middle Auditorium: Capacity 22 people
- Creche Area: Capacity 5
- Kitchen Area: Capacity 4
- Backyard Area: Capacity 44

## **6.3 Communication COVID -19 messages on a digital platform**

LIVEfree PROJECT recognises our responsibility to continue to communicate and educate our staff, volunteers and client in safe methods of conduct in regard to COVID – 19 and stopping the spread.

At LIVEfree PROJECT, the following guidelines are to be considered:

- Posting on Social Media regularly to encourage responsible interaction with one another.
- COVID - 19 updates available on our website regularly or as needed
- COVID - 19 Policy and procedure available on our website for both staff and volunteers.

## **6.4 Reporting and responding to cases of COVID -19**

Staff and volunteers have been briefed on symptoms of COVID-19 and have been told to stay home if they aren't feeling well.

- If a staff or volunteer member becomes unwell at work, a process is in place to isolate them and arrange for them to be sent home to receive medical attention.
- Report COVID safe officer
- Secure the site as outlined by Safe Work Australia and NSW Health guidelines (Isolate person quickly)
- Use the register for employment / programs to gather information on who else has been in contact with the person.
- Complete incident report.
- If the person tests positive to the virus contact will need to be made with others who have been in contact with the person involved, using client and staff /

volunteer records call these people to arrange for them to be tested, closure of some programs or areas of business may need to be closed for deep cleaning and self-isolation of people while waiting for testing results.

- Suitable work that can be done contactless away from clients or workplace and carried out in the home can be still carried out whilst the person / persons remain in isolation for designated time period as outlined by Australian Government.

## 7 First Aid

First aid kits, together with kits for offsite use, are located at several signed locations throughout the organisation's premises. These kits are to be used by trained first aiders who have completed relevant training.

All First aid kits will be regularly checked and updated in accordance with SafeWork Australia guidelines<sup>i</sup> and the SafeWork NSW '*First aid in the workplace code of practice 2015*'.<sup>ii</sup>In addition to all safety practises involved in treating a person needing first aid we will also include the following measures to help stop the infection of COVID - 19.

### **7.1 When an accident or emergency occurs:**

- Hand sanitiser used
- Disposable gloves to be worn when attending anyone
- First aid should be given by appropriately trained persons;
- Medical advice should be sought regardless of the apparent degree of the injury;
- Relevant family members are to be notified;
- An incident form is to be completed by organisations leaders or appropriate volunteers involved in the incident.

## 8 Food Safety

LIVEfree PROJECT values offering hospitality in ways that are consistent with Australian food safety standards and safe practices. LIVEfree PROJECT are guided by the '*LIVEfree PROJECT Food Preparation and Hygiene Policy*', which offers detailed requirements and considerations that need to be made when handling and serving food and beverages. Please access this policy on the LIVEfree PROJECT website for further information regarding food safety. In addition to all safety practises involved in food preparation and service we will also include the following measures to help stop the infection of COVID – 19

### **8.1 Communication of COVID -19 safe practises:**

All workers/ volunteers will be briefed and trained on what the areas of compliance are through instruction, signage, emails and our online platforms with social media and website.

### **8.2 Hand Sanitiser:**

All workers/ volunteer will use hand sanitiser regularly throughout food preparation and service of food as you transfer jobs in the food prep process with people connection

### **8.3 Disposable gloves:**

All workers/ volunteer will use disposable gloves throughout food preparation and service of food as you transfer jobs in the food prep process with people connection.

## **9 Client Management**

- COVID-19 screening to occur within Home Visit Safety Checklist during initial appointment intake.
- Written reminder to clients to notify LIVEfree PROJECT if experiencing signs or symptoms, contact tracing, etc. in all appointment confirmations and reminders so appointments can be rescheduled
- During lockdown periods we will ensure a contactless delivery services of all essential goods and all "RUOK Check In" visits will be socially distanced 1.5m away from the other person, wearing masks and taking place on the front doorstep of the home – during these periods of time there is to be not entry into the client's home.
- If appointment is urgent, attendance should be contingent upon risk assessment and compliance with PPE usage, hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette. It may also be possible to schedule a telehealth outpatient appointment.
- Notify Director of LIVEFree PROJECT for reportable incident

## **10 Home Visits**

- When conducting a home visit staff must utilise the appropriate PPE as outlined by NSW Health.
- All equipment used by clients must be cleaned and disinfected before re-use with any other client after removal from the room.
- During COVID19 pandemic restrictions, non-essential visitors are encouraged to not be present for the home visit; preferable client and 1 carer only

## **11 Covid-19 Vaccinations and the Workplace**

### **11.1 Staff Management**

LIVEfree PROJECT implements the guidelines and health advice of NSW Health about how to reduce the risk of contact and droplet spread from a person, directly or indirectly, and from contaminated surfaces. We will continue to communicate these directives through emails, signage, and promotion in work procedures.

## **11.2 Sudden Lockdowns**

In the event of a regional, city or state lockdown, LIVEfree PROJECT will follow the instructions, guidelines and restrictions advised by NSW Health and the NSW Government.

## **11.3 Pay, Leave and Stand Downs**

In the case of sudden workplace closure that is outside LIVEfree PROJECT control, every effort will be taken to maintain current staffing and to offer working from home options, however, employees may be stood down without pay. In these circumstances the Director would first discuss and communicate with employees about a stand down. These circumstances would include:

- LIVEfree PROJECT has closed because of an enforceable government direction (which means the employee can't be usefully employed, even from another location)
- There's a stoppage of work due to lack of supply for which the LIVEfree PROJECT can't be held responsible.

During a pandemic such as Coronavirus, employees can still access their existing pay and leave entitlements (such as Annual Leave, Sick and Carer's Leave, Unpaid Leave and Other Paid Leave) and conditions under the National Employment Standards (NES), applicable award, enterprise agreement, contract, or workplace policy.

Employees who cannot go to work because of COVID-19 due to a need to quarantine or self-isolate must contact the director of LIVEfree PROJECT and discuss leave and flexible working options. This would affect individuals who:

- have been diagnosed with coronavirus
- have been in close contact with someone who has been diagnosed with coronavirus
- need to get tested or are waiting for a coronavirus test result
- are prohibited from leaving their home because of an enforceable government direction, or
- have arrived from overseas or interstate and need to self-isolate because of an enforceable government direction.

## **11.4 Situations where employees may get tested for COVID-19 can include when:**

- the employee has symptoms of COVID-19
- the employee must quarantine after returning to Australia from overseas
- the employee must self-isolate after being in contact with someone confirmed to have COVID-19
- where a workplace has introduced mandatory workplace testing

Employees who have COVID-19 must not attend the workplace. They are required to isolate and can't go to work until they are formally released by the local public health unit or their treating doctor.

Any sick employee should let their employer know about their situation as soon as possible.

Full-time and part-time employees can take paid sick leave if they can't work because they're sick with coronavirus. If they have no paid sick leave left, they should arrange with LIVEfree PROJECT to take some other type of paid or unpaid leave.

Employees working from home during self-isolation or quarantine must be paid for the work they're doing.

Full-time and part-time employees should also be paid their normal pay if:

- their employer directs them to stay home in line with advice, such as the Australian Government's health and quarantine advice
- they aren't sick with coronavirus
- they are ready, willing, and able to work.

Employees aren't entitled to be paid (unless they use paid leave entitlements) if they can't work because:

- an enforceable government direction requires them to self-quarantine,
- government-imposed travel restrictions are in place (for example, they're stuck overseas), or
- they're sick with coronavirus.

## ***12 Returning to Work and the Workplace/Work, Health and Safety***

### **12.1 Duty to workers**

LIVEfree PROJECT will always do what it can to ensure the health and safety of all employees.

LIVEfree PROJECT will endeavour to eliminate the risk of exposure to COVID-19 in all ways that are reasonably practicable. For example,

- considering working from home arrangements
- requiring workers to practice physical distancing
- requiring workers to practice good hygiene (e.g., through workplace policies and ensuring access to adequate and well stocked hygiene facilities)
- requiring workers to stay home when sick, and

- cleaning the workplace regularly and thoroughly

## **12.2 Duty to Other People in the Workplace**

LIVEfree PROJECT will endeavour to ensure that our work does not put the health and safety of other persons (such as clients and visitors) at risk of contracting COVID-19. For example,

- requiring them to practice physical distancing, including through contactless deliveries and payments
- requiring them to practice good hygiene, and
- requiring others to stay away from the workplace, unless essential

LIVEfree PROJECT will support employees by working together to find solutions in meeting their individual needs. This will be done through:

- Providing leave or paid time off for employees to get vaccinated
- Helping to ensure employees have access to reliable and up-to-date information about the effectiveness of vaccinations
- Where employees do not wish to be vaccinated, or don't yet have access to vaccinations, exploring other options including alternative work arrangements.

## **12.3 Duty to Consult**

LIVEfree PROJECT will consult with employees on health and safety matters relating to COVID-19 and provide opportunity to express their views and raise WHS concerns. LIVEfree PROJECT will take the views of employees into account and advise them on the outcome of consultation. Employees will be consulted when:

- conducting a risk assessment
- making decisions on control measures to use to manage the risk of exposure to COVID-19 (e.g., decisions on working from home arrangements, or restricting the workplace to allow for physical distancing)
- making decisions about the adequacy of the workplace facilities to allow for control measures such as physical distancing and hygiene
- when you propose other changes that may affect the health and safety of workers, and
- when you change any procedures that have an impact on the WHS of workers.

Consultation does not require consensus or agreement, but you must allow your workers to be part of the decision-making process.

## **12.4 Vulnerable Workers**

Some people are at greater risk of more serious illness with COVID-19. These people include:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people 50 years and older with one or more chronic medical conditions
- People 65 years and older with one or more chronic medical conditions
- People 70 years and older, and
- People with compromised immune systems

In the case that an employee is a vulnerable worker, a risk assessment must be undertaken for essential work. Risk needs will be assessed and mitigated with consideration of the characteristics of the employee, the workplace, and the work.

### **12.5 Risk Assessments**

The exposure of employees and/or clients to COVID-19 is a foreseeable risk that must be assessed and managed in the operation of LIVEfree PROJECT.

A risk assessment will assist to:

- identify which workers are at risk of exposure
- determine what sources and processes are causing the risk
- identify if and what kind of control measures should be implemented, and
- check the effectiveness of existing control measures.

## **13. Mental Health**

For many people, the COVID-19 pandemic has introduced and increased a range of psychosocial hazards in the workplace, at a time when a range of other non-work-related psychosocial risks are also occurring (uncertainty about future employment, social isolation etc.). Psychosocial hazards arising from COVID-19 include:

### **13.1 Exposure to physical hazards and poor environmental conditions**

- concern about exposure to COVID-19 at work
- poor management of WHS risks, lack of equipment and resources, such as insufficient appropriate PPE

### **13.2 Exposure to violence, aggression, traumatic events, and discrimination**

- increased work-related violence, aggression and incivility from patients, customers, and members of the public
- serious illness or death of colleagues or clients due to COVID-19

### **13.3 Increased work demand**

- increased workloads
- increased time at work e.g., additional shifts as production moves 24/7 to meet increased demands
- increased workload e.g., because of increased cleaning requirements or reduction of workers in workplace due to physical distancing requirements

#### **13.4 Low support and isolated work**

- Working from home or isolation from others due to physical distancing or isolation requirements results in feelings of not being supported
- reduction in number of workers at workplace completing physical tasks to maintain physical distancing requirements
- failure (perceived or real) of employers not implementing new policies and procedure to address new working arrangements

#### **13.4 Poor workplace relationships**

- increased risk of workplace bullying, aggression and harassment as pandemic continues
- deterioration of workplace relationships as competing demands lead to less regular and effective two-way communication

#### **13.5 Poor organisational change management**

- lack of planning because of the pace of the pandemic
- continual restructures to address the effects of COVID-19 and a corresponding failure to provide information and training, consult and communicate with or support workers (e.g., manufacturing companies making different products or redeploying staff to meet changes in demand)

#### **13.6 Increased emotional distress**

- limitations on workers offering the same assistance to colleagues or clients they normally would or witnessing others' distress in situations where they can't access their normal services or support

Psychosocial risks will be managed through risks assessments, the same as physical risks.

LIVEfree PROJECT will engage the following tips for managing stress during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Regularly **ask employees** how they are going and if anything is stressing them
- Where employees are distressed about the challenging conditions caused by the pandemic, **acknowledge their feelings** about the situation and **reassure employees** they are doing what they can in the circumstances
- **Stay informed** with information from official sources and regularly communicate or share this information with workers
- **Consult employees** and representatives on any risks to their psychological health and physical health and safety
- **Support** innovations to address the psychosocial risks where reasonable
- Provide employees with a **point of contact** to discuss their concerns
- Make **workplace information** available in a central place

## **14 Inform employees about their entitlements if they become unfit for work or have caring responsibilities**

- Inform employees about their **rights** under WHS laws, including the right to stop work in certain circumstances and the right not to be discriminated against or disadvantaged for raising work health and safety concerns in the workplace
- Proactively **support employees** who you identify to be more at risk of workplace psychological injury (e.g., frontline workers or those working from home), and
- **Refer** employees to appropriate work-related mental health and wellbeing support services, such as employee assistance programs or the Coronavirus Mental Wellbeing Support Service.

## 16. NDIS Specific

As a NDIS provider LIVEfree PROJECT will implement control measures to minimise the spread of COVID-19 and ensure the health and safety of employees and participants. LIVEfree PROJECT will utilise the Outbreak Management, Infection Control and PPE Usage guidelines provided by NDIS Commission (<https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/resources/coronavirus-covid-19-information>).

LIVEfree PROJECT will adhere to the NSW Health guidelines.

### References

Safe Work Australia

NSW Government

NSW Health

Fair Work Australia

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Safe Work Australia. (2020) *World Health Organisation (2020) Safe Work Australia (2017) First aid*. [online] Available at: <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/firstaid> [Accessed 6 May 2017]. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Australia License First aid in the workplace code of practice. (2014). 1<sup>st</sup> ed. [ebook] Gosford NSW: Workcover Publications. Available at: [https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0015/52152/first-aid-in-the-workplace-code-of-practice-july-2015-3834.pdf](https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0015/52152/first-aid-in-the-workplace-code-of-practice-july-2015-3834.pdf) [Accessed 6 May 2017]. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Australia License.