

Procedure

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Infection Control Procedure

Summary

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Related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines, Standards, Frameworks	Work Health Safety and Injury Management Policy
Replaces	N/A
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Executive Director Responsible (Name/Position/Office)	Phil O'Loughlin, Executive Director Human Resources and Workforce Development
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REVISION RECORD

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1. TITLE

Infection Control Procedure

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to provide strategies for infection control and management of biological hazards to eliminate or minimise the level of risk to Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) workers, children, young people and other persons.

The objectives of this procedure are to ensure DECD, its officers and workers comply with all relevant legislation, Australian Standards, approved Codes of Practice and SA Health guidelines relating to infection control by ensuring:

- Officers and site managers effectively identify and manage the risks associated with infectious disease exposures in accordance with [DECD Risk Management Policy](#) and [Risk Management Framework](#) and appropriate SA Health infection control guidelines.
- Consultation occurs with DECD workers, other persons, health and safety representatives (HSRs) and health and safety committees (HSCs) where a risk of exposure to infectious diseases has been identified as part of the risk management process.
- Incident notifications occur in accordance with [Section 63 of the Public Health Act 2011](#), [Section 38 of the Work Health and Safety Act 2012](#) (WHS Act) and [Regulation 699 of the Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012](#) (WHS Regulations).
- Adequate information, instruction and training on standard precautions and the provision of personal protective equipment are provided to all DECD workers and other persons at risk of exposure to infectious diseases.

This procedure supports the [Work Health Safety and Injury Management Policy](#).

3. SCOPE

This procedure applies to all DECD activities.

4. PROCEDURE DETAIL

4.1 Prevention Strategies

- 4.1.1 DECD will collaborate and cooperate with [SA Health and the Communicable Disease Control Branch \(CDCB\)](#) to ensure that adequate infection prevention, control and containment measures are adopted, monitored and reviewed to eliminate or minimise the risk of infectious disease exposure to DECD workers, children, young people and other persons. The extent of communication to parents, carers and the community will be based on the assessed risks of each case.
- 4.1.2 A DECD funded vaccination program will be provided to DECD workers where a risk of infectious disease exposure has been identified through the risk assessment process.
- 4.1.3 Site managers may apply to the Director Health and Safety Services, level 3, 31 Flinders Street, Adelaide SA 5000, telephone 8226 7555, Fax 8226 1177, for the reimbursement of specific vaccination costs incurred by DECD workers whose activities expose them to a high risk of infection which has been identified through the risk assessment process. Refer to [Appendix 6 for transmission and vaccination information](#).

- (a) The Director Health and Safety Services may approve vaccinations for other DECD workers on the completion of a risk assessment by the site manager eg. Q Fever. Contact Health and Safety Services on 8226 7555 for further advice.
- (b) An influenza vaccination program is centrally funded and the delivery of vaccinations is managed by the site. [Vaccination Reimbursement Form](#) (refer to Appendix 8) is available for DECD workers who are unable to attend a site group vaccination session.

4.1.4 Site managers must ensure that DECD workplaces adopt standard precautions, which assumes that all body substances are potentially infectious, and that appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) is provided and used by DECD workers and other persons where required.

4.2 Use of Standard Precautions

4.2.1 To prevent or minimise the spread of infectious diseases, all body substances must be treated as potentially infectious. The techniques used in handling body substances are known as standard precautions. [Standard Precautions](#) (refer to Appendix 1) must be followed when handling:

- Blood, including dried blood.
- Body substances including saliva, urine and faeces (but excluding sweat), regardless of whether they contain visible blood.
- Broken skin (cuts and abrasions).
- Mucous membranes (lining of nose, mouth and genitals).

4.3 Post Exposure Response

[Post Exposure Response](#) (refer to Appendix 2) provides detailed information on the processes site managers must follow in the event a DECD worker is exposed to blood or a body substance.

4.4 Notifiable Conditions and Prescribed Serious Illnesses

4.4.1 Medical practitioners and pathology services who diagnose specific infectious diseases are required to notify the Chief Public Health Officer under [Section 64 of the Public Health Act 2011](#). The Chief Public Health Officer is accountable for public health and communicable disease issues and they or their delegate may contact a DECD workplace as part of their investigation and surveillance requirements to prevent the spread of a notifiable condition within the community. In such cases, site managers are required to consult, cooperate and coordinate with any directions or instructions that are issued by the Chief Public Health Officer. This may include instructions on when and how parents, carers and the school community are to be informed of a notifiable condition. Refer to the list of [diseases or medical conditions that are notifiable under the Public Health Act 2011](#) (refer to Appendix 3).

4.4.2 In accordance with [Section 38 of the WHS Act](#), DECD also has a duty to notify SafeWork SA of certain prescribed serious illnesses as soon as possible. Refer to Appendix 4 [Incident Notification to SafeWork SA for Prescribed Serious Illnesses](#) that are notifiable incidents under the WHS Act.

4.4.3 Site managers must report all notifiable conditions and prescribed serious illnesses (omitting the name of the infected person) on the Incident and Response Management System (IRMS) as well as notify the Director Health and Safety Services on 8226 7555 as a matter of priority.

4.4.4 The Minister for Education and Child Development, through the Office of the Chief Executive, will be advised of all notifiable conditions and prescribed serious illnesses notified by Chief Public Health Officer and where there is a public health risk to other members of the school community. The Office of the Chief Executive will consult with the Chief Public Health Officer prior to making this notification.

4.5 Confidentiality / Disclosure of Illness

4.5.1 While DECD workers are required to notify their site manager of their absence from work as a result of illness, they are not required to disclose information of their illness or disease. However, if a worker or other person discloses information of their illness or disease, the site manager must keep the disclosure

confidential unless maintaining confidentiality places the health and safety of other persons at risk. [S.99 \(2\) of the Public Health Act 2011](#) provides information on the circumstances when disclosure of information is required in the course of official duties.

- 4.5.2 Health and Safety Service can be contacted for advice about when it may be appropriate to maintain confidentiality, and when it may be reasonable and necessary to do otherwise in order to protect the health and safety of other persons.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 Hazard Identification

- (a) [How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks Code of Practice](#) provides detailed information of the identification of general workplace hazards, the risk assessment process and risk controls to be taken to eliminate or minimise workplace risks. SA Health's website - [You've Got What](#) also provides useful information on symptoms, treatment and prevention of infectious diseases.
- (b) Infectious diseases are illnesses caused by the spread of microorganisms (eg. bacteria, viruses, fungi, parasites or prions) to humans from other humans, animals or the environment such as food, soil and water. Examples include but are not limited to:

Transition Medium	Disease Examples
Airborne / Droplet	Common Cold, Influenza, Chickenpox, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Whooping Cough, Meningococcal Infection, Legionnaires' Disease, Tuberculosis
Oral	Gastroenteritis, Giardia, Hepatitis A, Rotavirus, Worms, Campylobacter
Body Substances	Hepatitis B and C, HIV, Cytomegalovirus
Soil	Tetanus, Giardia
Contaminated Food & Water	Campylobacter, Cryptosporidium, Salmonella, Giardia, Hepatitis A, Legionnaires' Disease
Skin Contact	Impetigo (School Sores), Herpes Simplex (Cold Sores), Head Lice
Animals or insects	Q Fever (cattle), Giardia, Ross River Virus (mosquito)

- (c) DECD workplaces are common sites for transmission of infectious diseases where DECD workers and other persons may be at risk of exposure through the following situations:
- Large numbers of people in close contact on a daily basis eg. classrooms, open plan multi storey buildings.
 - The culture of workers, children, young people and other persons attending a DECD workplace when unwell.
 - Possible contact with asymptomatic carriers eg. before symptoms are present.
 - Hygiene issues eg. poor cough & sneeze etiquette.
 - Poor maintenance of ventilation systems.
 - Enrolment practices with/without translation services.
 - Working in close physical contact with high risk groups presenting a risk of Hepatitis A, B or C transmission, eg. special needs, new arrival and Aboriginal children and young people.
 - High risk roles and / or behaviours eg. designated first aid provider, aquatic centres, contact sports, special education, transitional accommodation, cleaning & maintenance.
- (d) Site managers are to identify all potential sources of infectious disease exposure through operational and curriculum activities in consultation with DECD workers, the HSR and HSC.

4.6.2 Risk Assessment

- (a) Site managers are to assess the risk of infection, taking into consideration the likelihood of infection from a particular hazard and the consequences if the person is infected. Refer to [Infection Control Risk Assessment Tool](#) (Appendix 7).
- (b) Factors to consider include the frequency of exposure, levels of training and knowledge of DECD workers and other persons, the adequacy of existing controls that are currently in place and environmental factors.

4.6.3 Risk Control

- (a) Site managers are to develop and implement risk controls, to eliminate or minimise the risks of infectious disease exposure, transmission, control and containment. Examples of risk controls include, but are not limited to:
 - Promote a high standard of cleanliness and hand hygiene practices in the workplace by ensuring hand-washing facilities are available.
 - Promote and provide training in the use of standard precautions eg. hand washing, washing food and drinking vessels and the use of PPE.
 - Inform DECD workers of the risks of potential exposure to infectious diseases and promote the DECD vaccination program where appropriate.
 - Inclusion of infectious diseases information and the use of standard precautions in induction processes.
 - Develop safe work procedures for cleaning of surfaces and disposal of body substance spills to eliminate or minimise the risk of exposure to infectious diseases.
 - Ensure ventilation systems are checked and maintained in accordance with maintenance schedules.
 - Ensure DECD workers who have been exposed to a body substance through a needle stick or sharps injury, receive advice from a medical practitioner regarding appropriate treatment within 48 hours.
 - Supply, maintaining and using protective equipment to minimise the risk of infection eg. disposable gloves, goggles, masks, aprons etc.
 - Observe the recommended minimum exclusion period for infectious conditions (Refer to Appendix 5).

4.6.4 Monitoring and Review of Risk Controls

- (a) Site managers must ensure the effectiveness of risk controls that have been implemented in accordance with the hierarchy of risk control such as knowledge and awareness of workers, conformance to safe work practices, records management, impacts of new legislation, appropriate Australian Standards or SA Health and DECD specifications are regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure compliance with this procedure.
- (b) Site managers must also ensure that risk assessments and risk controls, including safe work practices, are reviewed within a five (5) year period in consultation with DECD workers, the HSR and HSCs where a risk of exposure to infectious diseases has been identified.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Work Health and Safety Duties

Refer to 4.1.1 of the [Work Health Safety and Injury Management Policy](#).

5.2 Responsibilities

Role	Authority/Responsibility for
Health and Safety Committee (HSC)	<p>In accordance with Section 77 of the WHS Act, the functions of a health and safety committee are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To facilitate co-operation between DECD and workers in instigating, developing and carrying out measures designed to ensure the workers' health and safety at work. To assist in developing standards, rules and procedures relating to health and safety that are to be followed or complied with at the workplace. Any other functions prescribed by the regulations or agreed between DECD and the committee.
Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs)	<p>In accordance with Section 68 of the WHS Act, HSRs have powers and functions. They are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represent the workers in the work group in matters relating to work health and safety. Monitor the measures taken by DECD in compliance with this Act in relation to workers in the work group. Investigate complaints from members of the work group relating to work health and safety. Inquire into anything that appears to be a risk to the health or safety of workers in the work group, arising from the conduct of DECD.
Officers	Must ensure reasonable steps are taken to comply with due diligence requirements in relation to infection control.
Site Manager	<p>Site managers must ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All risks of exposure to infectious diseases are identified and risk controls implemented to prevent the spread of infection in consultation with DECD workers, the HSR and HSC. DECD workers at risk of exposure are provided with information, instruction and training in standard precautions, hand hygiene and cough and sneeze etiquette. Promote the DECD vaccination program to DECD workers. Support workers by ensuring they receiving appropriate treatment and counselling when exposed to a body substance as a result of a needle stick or sharps injury. Maintain confidentiality of personal information where required. Provide appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) where required. Report all notifiable infectious diseases on Incident Response Management System (IRMS) and the Director Health and Safety Services on 8226 7555 as a matter of priority.
Workers	<p>Must ensure they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow standard precautions at all times when handling body substances. Report all needle stick and sharps injuries to the site manager and seek appropriate first aid / medical treatment as soon as possible.

6. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

- 6.1 This procedure will be subject to review every 3 years by Health and Safety Services, in consultation with the DECD Work Health and Safety Committee and State WHS Consultative Committee or earlier if there has been a change in any legislation, Australian Standards or DECD specifications.
- 6.2 Site managers must review and evaluate the effectiveness of their infection control processes every 12 months. This requirement will be monitored by Health and Safety Services through the WHS Business Manager System. Compliance outcomes will be reported to the DECD Work Health and Safety Committee and State WHS Consultative Committee as part of the WHS&IM Management Review process.
- 6.3 Site managers must ensure that workers and others are consulted and provided with any necessary information, instruction, training and supervision to ensure infection control is managed safely and the risk controls are effective.
- 6.4 The effectiveness of this procedure will be evaluated and reviewed through regular internal audit processes. Compliance outcomes will be reported to the DECD Work Health and Safety Committee and State WHS Consultative Committee as part of the WHS&IM Management Review process.

7. DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Term	Meaning
Controlled Notifiable Condition	A disease or medical condition that is a controlled notifiable condition, or taken to be a controlled notifiable condition, under Part 10 of the <i>Public Health Act 2011</i> .
DECD	The Department for Education and Child Development.
DECD specifications	Include guidelines, fact sheets, standards or any other guidance material developed and approved by DECD and available on the DECD website.
Disease	A pathological condition of a part, organ, or system of the body resulting from various causes, such as infection, genetic defect or environmental stress, and characterised by an identifiable group of signs or symptoms.
Exclusion Period	The time during which an infected person must be excluded from a school, pre-school or child care centre to prevent the spread of infectious diseases to other persons.
Health and Safety Committee (HSC)	Means an established committee for the purposes of facilitating consultation and cooperation between a PCBU and workers in accordance with Division 4 of the <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2012</i> .
Health and Safety Representative (HSR)	Means an elected Health and Safety Representative in accordance with Division 3 of the <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2012</i> .
Hierarchy of Risk Control	A formal process of applying risk controls to achieve the most effective control of risks. The controls within the hierarchy must be applied in order, and as far as is reasonably practicable at each level of the hierarchy. The classifications of controls within the hierarchy are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elimination • Substitution • Isolation • Engineering Controls • Administrative Controls • Personal Protective Equipment

Infectious Disease	A disease that due to a specific agent or organism can be transmitted from an organisms or inanimate source (eg. water, food, soil) to a susceptible host.
IRMS	Incident Response Management System
Medical Practitioner	A person registered under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law to practice in the medical profession (other than as a student).
Must	Indicates that a process is a legislative, Australian Standard, SA Health Instruction or DECD specification requirement.
Notifiable Condition	A disease or medical condition that is a notifiable condition under Part 9 of the <i>Public Health Act 2011</i>
Pathology Service	A service in which human tissue, human fluids or human body products are subjected to analysis for the purposes of the prevention, diagnosis or treatment of disease in human beings
PCBU	Person conducting a business or undertaking and is defined in Section 5 of the <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2012</i> .
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment.
Prescribed Serious Illness	A prescribed illness or disease that is a notifiable incident under Sections 35 and 36 of the <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2012</i> .
Safe systems of work	A safe system of work is an inclusive concept that covers all aspects of the organisation of work processes including planning, consultation, policies, procedures, risk controls, PPE, information, instruction and training.
SEG	Senior Executive Group.
Site manager	Any person who has the responsibility, management or control of a DECD workplace or work unit. This includes but is not limited to Executive Directors, Directors, Education Directors, Principals, Pre-school Directors, Out of School Hours Care Coordinators, Managers and Supervisors.
Standard Precautions	Is a basic level of infection control precautions eg. hand hygiene, use of appropriate PPE and waste disposal, which are used, as a minimum, to reduce the spread of pathogens and the transmission of infectious diseases.
WHS Act	<i>Work Health and Safety Act 2012</i>
WHS Regulations	Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012
Worker	Section 7 of the <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2012</i> states: A person is a worker if the person carries out work in any capacity for a person conducting a business or undertaking, including work as— (a) an employee; or (b) a contractor or subcontractor; or (c) an employee of a contractor or subcontractor; or (d) an employee of a labour hire company who has been assigned to work in the person's business or undertaking; or (e) an outworker; or (f) an apprentice or trainee; or (g) a student gaining work experience; or (h) a volunteer; or (i) a person of a prescribed class.

8. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

9. REFERENCES

[Work Health and Safety Act 2012](#)

[Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012](#)

[South Australian Public Health Act 2011](#)

[National Health and Medical Research Council's 'Staying Healthy in Child Care'](#)

[You've Got What – 4th Edition, 2009](#)

[Handling Blood and Other Body Substances – Standard Precautions - SA Health](#)

[Work Health Safety and Injury Management Policy](#)

[DECD Risk Management Policy](#)

[Risk Management Framework](#)

[Hazard Management Procedure](#)

[How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks Code of Practice](#)

10. APPENDICES

[Appendix 1 Standard Precautions](#)

[Appendix 2 Post Exposure Response](#)

[Appendix 3 Notifiable and Controlled Notifiable Conditions](#)

[Appendix 4 Incident Notification to SafeWork SA for Prescribed Serious Illnesses](#)

[Appendix 5 Recommended Minimum Exclusion Periods for Infectious Conditions](#)

[Appendix 6 Transmission and Vaccination Information](#)

[Appendix 7 Infection Control Risk Assessment Tool](#)

[Appendix 8 Flu Vaccination Reimbursement Form](#)