



ICSP004 - COVID-19 Safety Officer Role Guidelines and Procedure

ISLAMIC COUNCIL OF VICTORIA

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Who is a COVID Safety Officer?

The role of a COVID-19 Safety Officer (C-19 Officer) is to monitor and implement the COVID safety program for the place of worship in order to promote and educate the community, and thereby maintain an environment that is safe for the congregation attending services at the Mosques.

The role of implementing the COVID safe plan will not only be the responsibility of the C-19 Officer but also the Mosque Management Committee and any other staff/volunteers appointed.

The person appointed will have to:

- Have received appropriate training in what the role will entail;
- Understand their duties and have the skills to implement them;
- Ensure they are up to date with all the regulations pertaining to COVID safety and the prevention of the spread of the disease where possible;
- That they do not put themselves at risk while carrying out their duties;
- Be able to discharge their duties and be responsible for the day to day management of the safety plan

The plan must be regularly audited and managed to ensure it works and protects persons in their place of work/worship.

Failure to take it seriously could result in an outbreak of COVID-19.

Enforceable Government directions during COVID-19

In line with expert health advice about what the community must do to prevent the spread of COVID-19, the Australian government the State Government and DHHS in Victoria have issued enforceable directions which set out requirements and restrictions for places of worships in Victoria. These public health directions may include:

- Limits on public gatherings;
- Physical distancing and density requirements (1 per 2 squares metre if electronic system is applied, otherwise 1 per 4 squares metre);
- Hygiene, cleaning and signage requirements;

- Risk management requirements such as COVID Safe plans (or similar);
- Keeping records of contact details for contact tracing preferably using an electronic system.

C- 19 Officer must review the directions which apply to your area. Remember, even if these public health directions do not apply to the Mosque, you must still do all that you reasonably can to meet your work health and safety duties and limit the spread of COVID-19.

Policy and Procedure

C-19 Officer must ensure that the Mosque has processes and procedures in place to manage issues arising from COVID-19. You also need to ensure those processes and procedures are followed.

Relevant processes and procedures include:

- Risk assessment templates for *hazards* arising from COVID-19. Where there are risk assessments in place, they should be reviewed regularly and documented for external audits by the ICV COVID Safety Advisory Team;
- Having procedures for consulting with volunteers regularly;
- A process for how the Mosque will respond if there is a positive COVID-19 cases within the congregation.

Action Required as C-19 Officer

The C-19 Officer need to exercise ‘due diligence’ to ensure that everyone complies with the requirements outlined in the COVID-19 Safety Plan.

In relation to COVID-19, due diligence means you must:

- Acquire and keep knowledge of the COVID-19 situation up-to-date;
- Follow the advice from authoritative sources such as the DHHS and check daily, for any updates to safety advice. If the direction is relevant in the area, take steps to help the Mosque implement it as soon as possible;
- Make sure your Mosque is adequately resourced to manage congregations during the COVID-19 outbreak and check that the resources are being used;

- Review the COVID-19 safety procedures and reporting processes to ensure they address the *risks* of COVID-19. Update these materials if necessary;
- Ensure that new safety procedures about COVID-19 are communicated clearly to the congregation and community;
- With the help of the Mosque Management committee identify volunteers who would be assisting in the process;
- Provide instruction and training to volunteers on things they need to do to help manage the risk of COVID-19 spreading; and
- Ensure policies and procedures are in place and being followed.

Guidelines Depending on Indoor or Outdoor Prayer Service

INDOOR

Ensure the Mosque is adequately resourced to manage the risk of COVID-19. Relevant resourcing considerations include:

- Whether the Mosque facilities are adequately resourced to keep the congregation safe;
- People are informed of basic hygiene requirements such as wearing socks and bringing their own prayer mats (have an alternate arrangement if people fail to comply with this).
- Ensuring that the area for prayer is marked and easy to identify. Draw a floor map and share it with the congregation to assist with moving around in the area;
- Restrooms and common areas are kept clean, and there are ample hand sanitizers in the common area as well as the entrance;
- Monitoring proper disinfection and cleaning procedures are in place and are being followed (refer to [DHHS guidelines](#));
- Approaches to cleaning throughout the day, e.g. providing training and cleaning products to cleaners to clean throughout the day or increasing the cleaning requirements at the end of the day. For safety keep records of external staff (cleaners, contractors, etc.) coming to the Mosque and ensure that all the required checks are done as well;
- Keeping a record on how you will ensure the Mosque operates effectively while also maintaining physical distancing, e.g. staggering prayer start times and limiting the number of people attending at a given time (this must be compliant with the limited

number of people attending the Mosque based on the guidelines given by the Victorian Government);

- Restructuring the area or equipment to maintain safety, e.g. removing furniture to provide more space, putting up barriers between staff and people;
- Identifying separate entry and exit points;
- Minimizing contact point of surfaces by congregants attending prayer services.

OUTDOOR

For an outdoor prayer congregation, it is essential to provide a different plan of action; some aspects to take in considerations are:

- In the outdoor areas, make sure the entry/exit point are identified;
- People are informed of basic hygiene requirements such as wearing socks and bringing their own prayer mats.
- Area for prayer is marked and easy to individuate. Draw a floor map and share it with the congregation to assist with moving around in the open area;
- Records are kept on how ensure the Mosque operates effectively while also maintaining physical distancing requirements, e.g. staggering prayer start times and limiting the number of people attending at a given time;
- Outdoor area is in a defined space, safely protected from possible other risks.

Confidentiality Clause

All Covid Safety Officers must maintain confidentiality of all personal and private information, and without obtaining the written consent of the other Party, shall not disclose any relevant confidential information to any third parties, except for the information that: (a) is or will be in the public domain; (b) is under the obligation to be disclosed pursuant to the applicable laws, regulations, or orders from Government Health Authorities (DHHS).