



## **COVID-19 and Emergency Disaster Management Policy**

### **1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to protect all people in the care of Lift Up Voices and to ensure that risks associated with COVID-19 and other disasters are managed to protect people who work for, attend sessions and workshops, consultations, and meetings with Lift Up Voices staff members.

The inevitable arrival of COVID-19 into the South Australian community has presented challenges with regards to continuity of service delivery, risk management and ensuring the health and wellbeing of staff and participants.

This policy supports Lift Up Voices to apply the National Standards for Disability Services, in particular Standard 1: Rights. This policy also supports the NDIS Practice Standards Core Module 2, *Provider Governance and Operational Management*, in relation to *Risk Management*, *Human Resource Management* and *Emergency Disaster Management* (2021).

### **2. SCOPE**

This policy applies to the management, employees, contracted staff and volunteers of Lift Up Voices. A copy of this policy will be provided to all staff upon their appointment and is also available on the Lift Up Voices website. An easy-read version will be available to all concerned upon request.

### **3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The Covid-19 pandemic first began in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. It has since spread throughout the world, with evolving variants being discovered on an ongoing basis. A coronavirus is a type of virus that effects the respiratory system of an infected person, with symptoms including coughing, sore throat, runny nose and fatigue. The virus is spread through close contact and the inhalation of airborne particles that contain the virus during a carrier's infectious period.

Since the start of the pandemic South Australia has been subject to numerous government-enforced control measures, such as lockdown periods, mandated vaccination and compulsory wearing of masks.

### **4. ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT**

Lift Up Voices provides music workshops and individual sessions to people with disability in the greater Adelaide metropolitan region. This includes people who have conditions that impact their physical or cognitive functioning and who will likely require additional support to abide by COVID-19 precautionary measures.

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COVID-19 presents numerous organisational risks to Lift Up Voices, including:

- Disrupted service delivery due to quarantine of participants
- Staffing shortages due to mandated isolation
- Financial challenges associated with cancelled or postponed service delivery and additional costs incurred to maintain infection control measures

It can reasonably be assumed that COVID-19 will continue to spread throughout the South Australian community and will impact Lift Up Voices as outlined above.

## **5. PROCEDURE**

### **5.1 Preventative Measures**

Lift Up Voices will engage in ongoing discussion with participants and their families regarding appropriate precautions to prevent COVID-19 being transmitted at the Lift Up Voices premises, including, but not limited to:

- Abiding by government-enforced close contact measures, mandated vaccination policies and mandated mask-wearing
- Ensuring all staff, contractors and volunteers and trained in emergency procedures during their initial orientation and notified of any changes or updates as they occur
- Providing staff with KN-95 masks and patrons with disposable surgical masks
- Carefully monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19 that may indicate an undiagnosed infection
- Managing numbers of participants to ensure that social distancing can be maintain, including redirecting patrons to an additional waiting area if required
- Cleaning of workspaces between each appointment and abiding by principals outlined in NDIS Infectious Control Training.
- Distribution of South Australian COVID-Safe Plan

### **5.2 Disruption due to staff or participant testing positive to COVID-19**

In the event a staff member or participant tests positive to COVID-19, services will be delivered online via Zoom wherever possible. If either party is unwell to the extent this is not practical, or the nature of a participant’s disability is such that Zoom is not an effective medium for service delivery, appointments will be postponed and rescheduled to the next school holiday break following liaison between concerned parties.

### **5.3 Action following a person infectious to COVID-19 visiting Lift Up Voices**

A person who has tested positive to COVID-19 will likely have been unaware that they were infectious in days prior, including when they may have visited the Lift Up Voices premises. In the event this occurs, the following action will take place:

- Lift Up Voices will immediately contact participants and other parties that may have had contact with a positive case in the four calendar days prior to them receiving a positive test, regardless of

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whether the concerned individual meets the definition of close contact as outlined by the SA Government

- If a staff member has had contact with a potentially infectious individuals but does not meet the definition of a close contact, Rapid Antigen Tests will be provided prior to their commencement of work in subsequent days
- Procedure outlined in 5.2 shall be followed in the event either party is required to isolate whilst awaiting the outcome of a PCR test

## 6. RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of all staff members to ensure that they comply with all elements of this policy.

## 7. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Lift Up Voices staff members are encouraged to provide feedback on this policy and procedure to the Director/s, to ensure that it remains relevant and reflects an appropriate response to the COVID-19 pandemic as it continues to evolve.

## 8. RELEVANT COVID-19 RESOURCES

- SA Health COVID-19 Information Line (8AM-8PM, 7 days per week) 1800 253 787
- South Australia COVID-19 Mental Health Support Line - 1800 632 753
- National Coronavirus Helpline (24 hours, 7 days per week) 1800 020 080
- Emergency Services in the event of immediate threat to safety - 000

## 9. REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure any legislative, policy or funding requirements alterations that result in the policy no longer being appropriate in its current form will be addressed by the immediate review and amendment of the policy.

## RELATED POLICIES

Risk Management Policy

## SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Lift Up Voices NDIS Service Agreement

## RELEVANT LEGISLATION OR STANDARDS

National Standards for Disability Services, Standard 1: Rights

NDIS Practice Standards Core Module 2, *Provider Governance and Operational Management*, in relation to *Risk Management, Human Resource Management and Emergency Disaster Management* (2021)

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