COVID Safe plan

Business name: Monash University

Site location: All campuses and Monash sites

Contact person: Peter Marshall COO, Dr Vicki Ashton CMO

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Monash COVID Safe Strategies

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Introduction

The health and safety of the Monash community is the highest priority. Monash is committed to protecting the Monash community from the transmission of COVID 19 and has developed a nine-pillar risk control strategy, in line with the government’s health directions and advice. Monash University understands its responsibilities and obligations under the Directions issued by the Chief Health Officer.

The nine strategies work together to protect the staff, students and visitors to the University and are applied to the diverse range of spaces and activities the University undertakes. The Monash COVID Safe Plan has been developed under the direction of the Monash Chief Medical Officer and in consultation with relevant staff from across the University to ensure it is fit for purpose. The plan is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect the changing stages of the pandemic and health directions.
Strategy 1. Come to campus well

Victorian Government guidance requirements relating to Monash:

- You must support workers to get tested and stay home even if they only have mild symptoms.
- You must follow DoH instructions regarding visiting exposure sites or returning from interstate or international travel zones.

Monash Actions

- Consistent with the Government’s health messaging Monash has communicated to all staff and students to only attend campus if they are well.
- Monash continues to reinforce this message by communicating to all staff and students. In order to protect the Monash community, it will be essential that all staff and students who are feeling unwell and showing even the mildest symptoms of COVID 19, do not come to campus and get tested for COVID 19. Faculties and divisions reinforce this message in all correspondence with staff and students.
- The University has changed the staff leave entitlements to incorporate COVID-19 leave provisions and will utilise alternative student learning methods and assessment activities so not to disadvantage students if they are unable to attend campus due to illness.
- Monash has provided COVID testing at its Clayton health service.
- Encourage staff and students to frequently check the latest list of potential exposure sites and interstate travel zones and then follow the government’s requirements about testing and isolating as appropriate.

Strategy 2. Physical distancing

Victorian Government guidance requirements relating to Monash:

- You should provide training to workers on physical distancing expectations while working and socialising.

Monash Actions:

- There are currently no mandated Government density quotient requirements, however keeping 1.5 metres distance where possible remains a recommended control measure.
- Where there is local (‘split systems’ or window, wall and ceiling mounted air conditioning systems) or no ventilation, Monash may reduce occupancy in these spaces.
- Floor markings have been installed in all areas where staff and students may congregate including queues for service desks, retail outlets, lifts and kitchens.
- Physical distancing is included in the University’s ‘How to Stay Safe’ posters and messaging.
- Monash staff and students have training resources available including a “return to campus OHS induction” and “Monash COVID Safe Practices” videos, which include instruction on the physical distancing requirements on campus.
- Physical distancing between workstations has been assessed and adjustments made to maintain 1.5 m ‘head to head’ distancing between people in staff work areas.
- Monash security, Monash COVID marshals and the safety network are used to monitor compliance with physical distancing requirements on campus.

Strategy 3. Face coverings

Victorian Government guidance requirements relating to Monash:

- All persons must carry a face covering at all times.
- A person must wear a face covering, unless they have a valid reason to not do so (eg medical condition):
  - while in indoor retail premises
  - while in indoor healthcare premises
  - while on public transport or in a commercial passenger vehicle or vehicle operated by a licensed tourism operator
  - while working at a food/drink premises
  - if they have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or are awaiting a test result.
- A mask is not required to be worn by a person while they are broadcasting, lecturing or teaching, nor while eating or drinking or completing strenuous exercise.
- You should provide training, instruction and guidance on how to correctly fit, use and dispose of PPE.

Monash Actions:

- The requirement to wear a face mask on Monash campuses and buildings, in accordance with the Victorian Government requirements, has been communicated and implemented in all areas of the University.
- A face mask must be worn indoors in specific circumstances, as noted above, unless they have a lawful exemption such as a medical reason.
- Staff and students are expected to bring their own appropriate face mask to campus, which must cover the nose and mouth.
- The requirement to wear a face mask when travelling on University transport (inter-campus buses, shared Monash vehicles) has been communicated.
- ‘How to Stay Safe’ posters and online OHS inductions have been used to encourage the wearing of a mask when in Monash buildings and outside.
Strategy 4. Practice good personal hygiene

Victorian Government guidance requirements relating to Monash:

- You should make soap and hand sanitiser available for all workers and customers throughout the worksite and encourage regular handwashing.

Monash Actions:

- Monash University has deployed hand sanitiser stations across all its campuses and buildings to ensure all staff and students have multiple opportunities to hand sanitise when entering a building or workspace and during their activities on campus. This includes stations at the entry to buildings, entry and exits of lifts, main stair landings and in office, laboratory and teaching spaces.
- Good hygiene posters and online OHS inductions have been used to reinforce the key health messages to help slow the spread of COVID-19.
- The University cleaning team is ensuring adequate soap is available in all bathrooms.
- Posters have been displayed in bathrooms, lunch areas and above hand sanitiser stations showing the correct method of washing or sanitising hands.

Strategy 5. Increased Cleaning

Victorian Government guidance requirements relating to Monash:

- You must frequently and regularly clean and disinfect shared spaces, including high-touch communal items such as doorknobs and telephones.

Monash Actions:

- Monash has developed a new campus cleaning regime increasing the cleaning on all campuses and sites to incorporate the DoH cleaning guidelines. This includes:
  - Modifying the normal routine (early morning) cleaning to incorporate the wipe down of high touch surfaces in all areas - faculty/division and common areas.
  - Engaging an extra team of daytime cleaners to continue regular cleaning of the high touch surfaces in common areas. The extra daytime cleaning includes wiping down of light switches, doors handles, lift buttons, stair balustrades, flat table surfaces in the retail and public spaces.
  - Toilet facilities receive additional cleaning during the day with the doors, sinks and hand dryer buttons cleaned.
- The ‘high touch’ cleaning team is outfitted in pink high-visibility vests.
- In addition, all areas have been provided additional cleaning materials to allow staff and students to wipe down their furniture and equipment before and after work/study or exercise.
- Monash has secured sufficient supply of all cleaning products and has increased the products held on site to manage peak demands.
- The new cleaning regime is provided on the University’s internet for staff and students to understand the new cleaning standards and frequencies.
- Inspections are undertaken to ensure the quality of the cleaning is maintained.

Strategy 6. Well ventilated spaces

Victorian Government guidance requirements relating to Monash:

- Optimise fresh air flow in air conditioning systems.
- Enhance airflow by opening windows and doors.
- Move activities outside if possible, including meetings, tea and lunch breaks.

Monash Actions:

- The University has undertaken a comprehensive assessment of all of its buildings to ensure the ventilation systems are effectively providing sufficient outside air and do not represent an increased COVID transmission risk. Monash is ensuring the ventilation systems are meeting or exceeding Australian Standard 1668.2 and regular monitoring and maintenance of the systems is in place.
- Additional COVID safe measures are being applied to buildings or spaces with no ventilation systems or areas supported by local ‘split systems’ or window, wall and ceiling mounted air conditioning systems (that primarily recirculate the air in the room). This includes measures such as controlling room occupancy and opening windows and doors to provide outside air into the room. Activities involving large groups in small spaces with no or local ventilation systems are being scheduled to other well-ventilated spaces.
- Staff and students are encouraged to undertake activities outside if possible. Meetings, discussion groups etc which do not require technology are ideally undertaken outside if weather permits. The room scheduling system allows booking of outside spaces.
Strategy 7. Positive Case Management

Victorian Government guidance requirements relating to Monash:

- Workers and students who receive a positive COVID-19 result and have attended an indoor space on campus during their infectious period must notify Monash University.
- You must support workers to get tested and stay home even if they only have mild symptoms.
- You must develop a business contingency plan to manage any outbreaks.
- You must keep records of all people who enter the workplace for contact tracing.

Monash Actions:

- The University’s business continuity plan is frequently revised and is actively being used to guide the University’s COVID-19 response and the campus reactivation strategy.
- Processes have been developed for a positive or suspected case of COVID-19, which include:
  - Reporting procedures for staff and students
  - Establishment of a case management team
  - Care of the affected staff member or student
  - Engagement with the Department of Health
  - Management of internal communications, cleaning and building access
- Reporting and monitoring: Recording attendance - scanning the Service Victoria QR code is required every time on entering a building. Monash has developed a range of strategies to record the attendance of staff, students, contractors and other visitors to our campuses and sites. This includes door swipe access recording, wifi data mapping, visitor logs and online contractor sign in/out systems. This information will be utilised to assist DoH to identify close contacts and Monash to identify exposed persons.
- Identification of exposed persons – persons identified as having been potentially exposed to a person who is positive to COVID-19 in their infectious period are provided with written communication regarding the requirements to get tested and provide Monash the test result. Monash collects, records and stores a list of persons who have been notified that they have been exposed and the result of their PCR testing.
- Workplace OHS reporting - The University will utilise its online OHS hazard and incident reporting system (SARAH) to record and respond to COVID related OHS issues and actions. All staff and students have access to the online OHS reporting system. The management plan for confirmed COVID-19 cases includes the notification of the HSW Manager. The HSW Manager will ensure WorkSafe is notified as per the mandatory reporting requirements to the Department of Health and the reporting requirements under the Occupational Health and Safety (COVID-19 Incident Notification) Regulations 2021 and Department of Health reporting requirements.
- Communication: The management plan for a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 outlines the communication responsibilities which will be managed by the University Marketing, Admissions and Communications team (UMAC). UMAC will use existing communication channels to ensure staff, students, Health and Safety Representatives and visitors are informed of a positive COVID-19 case in their area and provide them with instructions on actions to take where applicable. This includes written communication to exposed persons who are not workers.
- Cleaning - Monash has engaged two specialised cleaning companies to undertake cleaning in response to a result of a positive COVID case. The two companies have trained personnel and have site inspected the key areas of the University to understand the size and complexity of some of our buildings/spaces in preparation for deep cleaning should it be required.
- Reopening - The University’s Crisis Management Team, in conjunction with the University’s Chief Medical Officer and DoH, will determine when the relevant workplace is safe to reopen.

Strategy 8. Work Arrangements

Victorian Government guidance requirements relating to Monash:

- Activities permitted at our workplaces during restrictions will be in accordance with the Chief Health Officer Directions.

Monash Actions:

- Monash has implemented a “hybrid” work strategy and has established a range of HR procedures and resources to support staff working from home.
- Where applicable, work schedules for critical work functions have been developed and implemented to reduce the interaction of staff between shifts and/or teams to reduce the spread of COVID-19.
- Online formats are utilised for team communication, where appropriate.
- Events are undertaken in accordance with the Government requirements for check in and vaccination requirements and the use of COVID Check-in Marshals.
Strategy 9. Vaccinations

Victorian Government guidance requirements relating to Monash:

- Mandatory vaccination requirements are set out in several government directions which apply to Monash.
- These include requirements applying to adult education or higher education premises under the Open Premises Directions.

Monash Actions:

- Monash has implemented leave provisions to provide time for staff to get vaccinated during work hours.
- The University Health Services are providing COVID 19 vaccinations to eligible groups.
- The University is assisting Monash Health to provide pop up vaccination clinics.
- The University is collecting vaccination information from staff and students in order to comply with vaccination requirements.
- The University is permitting people to access campus if they meet the vaccination requirements. Persons who are not fully vaccinated or hold an approved exemption are being supported to work from home, where possible.
- The University is completing both random and formal compliance checks of people on site to ensure they are meeting the vaccination requirements.

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