



# **COVID Safe Plan—10th Assembly**

- Reducing exposure risks
- Managing health and safety
- Transition and resumption

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## Version information

OLARIS	20-016083
Version / Approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• V1.0 endorsed 19 June 2020—Speaker, BCIMT, Administration and Procedure, Health and Safety Committee (HSC)</li> <li>• V1.1 Review and updated by Office’s BCIMT/EMC—14 August 2020</li> <li>• V1.2 revised for 10th Assembly—8 December 2020</li> <li>• V1.3 revised to address vaccination rollout (30 March 2021) considered by APC on 7 April 2021. V1.4 revised to address Delta variant (increased transmissibility, changes to vaccination programs)</li> <li>• v.1.5 revised to reflect 2021 lockdown (from 12 August), revised likelihood based on community transmission in the ACT (new ACTIA risk matrix)</li> <li>• v1.6 revised to reflect additional transition support measures, updated risk assessments and treatments, whole-of-government advisories and guidance—December 2021</li> <li>• v1.7 Including amendments addressing Omicron outbreak [Considered by WHS Committee on 8 March 2022]</li> </ul>

## Authority and commitment

Following consideration by the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure and the Assembly’s Health and Safety Committee, this plan has been endorsed by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly on behalf of the Legislative Assembly and the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly on behalf of the Office of the Legislative Assembly.

Additional revisions will continue to be made throughout 2022 based on the prevailing public health conditions and assessments of risk.

Joy Burch MLA  
Speaker

Tom Duncan  
Clerk

December 2021

December 2021

# 1. Executive summary

## Background

- 1.1. Since the start of the global COVID-19 pandemic, which began to emerge in early 2020 (in the Ninth Assembly), two overarching risks have confronted the Assembly:
1. **Risk of exposure/transmission of COVID** to occupants of the precincts (MLAs, staff/contractors, visitors, and others) and the associated downstream health and safety impacts of the pandemic more generally.
  2. **Risk of disruption to the work of the Assembly**—i.e. sub-optimal performance of functions performed by the Assembly/committees/MLAs due to the wider social, economic, epidemiological, and legal effects associated with the pandemic.
- 1.2. From March 2020 onwards, a range of planning work was undertaken and considered by the Speaker, the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure, the Assembly's Health and Safety Committee (HSC), and the Office of the Legislative Assembly (the Office or OLA) to address these risks.
- 1.3. This plan recognises the importance of continuing to develop and implement suitable risk management strategies throughout the Tenth Assembly based on the best available public health advice.<sup>1</sup>
- 1.4. **It proceeds on the basis that all MLAs and the Clerk are 'persons conducting a business or undertaking' (PCBUs) under the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#) (WHS Act) and have a primary duty to ensure a safe and healthy workplace.** Those in the Assembly with management responsibilities (such as supervisors in both OLA and in members' offices) also have duties to effectively manage WHS risks. A useful summary of the relevant duties is available on the [Safe Work Australia website](#).
- 1.5. The plan has been guided by and draws from:
- relevant provisions of the WHS Act;
  - principles of effective risk management;
  - feedback provided by the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure and the Assembly's HSC;
  - feedback from staff involved in the performance of particular tasks and functions about relevant risks and steps to manage them effectively;
  - elements of the Office's business continuity program;

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<sup>1</sup> It supersedes the Assembly's COVID-19 Response Plan (20/002080) and COVID-19 Business resumption/WHS action plan (20/003361).

- [National COVID-19 safe workplace principles](#) and other material produce by SafeWork Australia; and
- [comprehensive guidance documents](#) prepared for use across the ACT public sector; and
- [ACTPS WHS COVID-19 resource: workplace exposure risk assessment and response guidance \(See Appendix D\)](#).

## Overview

- 1.6. The plan has been cast in the broadest terms possible so as to be useful to:
- PCBUs (MLAs and the Clerk);
  - supervisors and managers within members' offices and within OLA (i.e. those individuals with workplace and people management responsibilities); and
  - workers, including staff and contractors of MLAs and OLA, and other staff who work in the precincts (e.g. directorate staff).
- 1.7. It is set out as follows.
- **Chapter 2—Useful contacts:** contact details for Assembly's HSC's committee members, Work Safe, Safe Work Australia etc.
  - **Chapter 3—Governance:** Sets out the overarching governance arrangements for considering and addressing WHS and business continuity measures to be adopted in the Assembly workplace during the pandemic.
  - **Chapter 4—Reducing likelihood of exposure:** Sets out the steps that are being taken across the Assembly precincts to reduce the likelihood of exposure to COVID in the workplace.
  - **Chapter 5—Supporting vulnerable people:** Provides information to assist in identifying and effectively managing risks for those staff who belong to a vulnerable group.
  - **Chapter 6—Supporting mental health:** Provides information on how we can support each other's mental and psychosocial health.
  - **Chapter 7—Transition arrangements:** Provides information and guidance about how the Speaker will determine when to open or close the precincts and how various activities and functions will operate depending on the broader public health risk environment.

- **Appendix A—Risk register:** The risk register assesses a range of situational and general risks associated with health and safety within the precincts in connection with the pandemic. It records the measures/internal controls that are being implemented to effectively manage those risks. Internal controls will be adapted and recalibrated to respond to the changing risk environment based on public health advice.
- **Appendix B—Risk assessment template**—can be used by MLAs/managers and staff to assess particular WHS risks that may require particular attention in their immediate workplace.
- **Appendix C—Risk matrix**—the whole-of-government consequence and likelihood tables to be used to assist in assessing risks.
- **Appendix D—Workplace exposure risk assessment tool**—sets out risk management framework for assessing and treating workplace exposure events.

## 2. Useful contacts and links

- [ACT Public Sector intranet site for COVID-related work health and safety](#)
- **WHS advice and support for non-executive MLAs, their staff, and OLA staff** (HR and Entitlements section within OLA)
  - Phone: x 50150
  - Email: [olahrandentitlements@parliament.act.gov.au](mailto:olahrandentitlements@parliament.act.gov.au)
- **WHS advice and support for ministers and their staff** (CMTEDD Executive Support)
  - Phone: x 70582
  - Email: [executivesupport@act.gov.au](mailto:executivesupport@act.gov.au)
- **Assembly's Health and Safety Committee members**
  - OLA management representative (chair), Rachel Turner: x 50181
  - ACT Greens management representative, Carol Bunt: x 58500
  - ALP management representative, Faheem Khan: x 71201
  - Canberra Liberals management representative, Lisa Scott: x 51529
  - ALP non-executive HSR, Melinda Gonczarek: x 50519
  - Canberra Liberals HSR, Felicity De Fombelle: x 50071
  - ACT Greens HSR, Maverick Douglas: x 50131
  - OLA HSRs, Janice Rafferty (x 50126) and Val Szychowska (x 50557)
  - CPSU representative, Annemieke Jongsma: x 51253
  - CMTEDD Executive Support, Tracey Henry: x 70372
  - OLA secretariat, Emma Rogers: x 50150
- **Work Safe**—The ACT work safety regulator responsible for a range of WHS functions, including monitoring and enforcing compliance under the WHS Act and promoting education and training on WHS matters.
  - Website: [www.worksafe.act.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.act.gov.au)
  - Phone: x75111
  - Email: [worksafe@worksafe.act.gov.au](mailto:worksafe@worksafe.act.gov.au)
- **Safe Work Australia**—National statutory body responsible for a range of WHS functions, including the development and maintenance of an evidence base to inform WHS and policy and practice. The Safe Work Australia website has a wealth of information on effectively managing WHS risks, including those that are posed by COVID-19.
  - Website: [www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au](http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au)



## 3. Governance

### The Speaker and the Clerk

- 3.1. The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly has particular powers under the *Legislative Assembly Precincts Act 2001* (Precincts Act). Importantly, the Speaker is responsible for the control and management of the Assembly precincts and may take any action the Speaker considers necessary for those purposes.
- 3.2. The Clerk of the Legislative Assembly has a range of functions pursuant to the *Legislative Assembly (Office of the Legislative Assembly) 2012* (OLA Act), including a function to manage staff of the Office. The Office has the function of maintaining the Assembly precincts.
- 3.3. Both the Speaker and the Clerk are PCBUs and have a duty to take all reasonable steps to eliminate risks to health and safety, so far as is reasonably practicable; and where it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate those risks, to minimise them so far as is reasonably practicable.
- 3.4. The Speaker and the Clerk, advised by the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure and the Assembly's HSC will:
  - monitor implementation of actions and risk treatments under the plan/risk register;
  - manage ongoing communications with staff and members of the public associated with the Assembly's management of COVID-19 risks;
  - monitor any escalated public health alerts and developing appropriate strategies and actions to manage associated risks;
  - liaise with public health and government representatives (e.g. ACT Health, WorkSafe ACT, Safe Work Australia, CMTEDD) regarding general public sector developments and responses;
  - coordinate implementation of various strategies and actions required under the plan;
  - periodically review the plan to ensure that it is updated and relevant to the prevailing circumstances; and
  - make decisions about restricting or cancelling any (non-parliamentary) services or programs assessed as presenting unacceptably high risks to health and safety.
- 3.5. Led by the Clerk, the Office's Business Continuity and Incident Management Team are responsible for advising the Speaker on the particular business continuity management issues that arise (for instance, where there is a lockdown or other event that will potentially disrupt the business of the Assembly or the Office).

## Members of the Legislative Assembly and their senior staff

- 3.6. Under the WHS Act, MLAs who employ staff are PCBUs in their own right and have the same duties as the Speaker and the Clerk to take all reasonable steps to eliminate risks to health and safety, so far as is reasonably practicable; and where it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate those risks, to minimise them so far as is reasonably practicable.
- 3.7. Members and their staff with workplace management responsibilities (e.g. chiefs of staff, senior advisors) need to be sure that they are actively identifying, assessing and treating<sup>2</sup> the WHS risks, including those that arise in connection with COVID-19.
- 3.8. While whole-of-government requirements issued across the ACT public sector to deal with COVID WHS risks may not have strict application to MLAs and their staff, there is nonetheless a [wealth of general guidance information and resources available](#), which may be of practical use in helping MLAs and their senior staff to fulfill their duties under the WHS Act.

## Health and Safety Committee

- 3.9. The Assembly's Health and Safety Committee is established pursuant to the WHS Act. It is comprised of management representatives and staff health and safety representatives from:
- Executive ALP;
  - Non-executive ALP;
  - Canberra Liberals;
  - ACT Greens (Executive and non-Executive);
  - Office of the Legislative Assembly; and
  - the union.
- 3.10. Under the Act, the functions of the committee are:
- to facilitate cooperation between the person conducting a business or undertaking and workers in instigating, developing and carrying out measures designed to ensure the workers' health and safety at work; and
  - to assist in developing standards, rules and procedures relating to health and safety that are to be followed or complied with at the workplace; and
  - any other functions prescribed by regulation or agreed between the person conducting the business or undertaking and the committee.

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<sup>2</sup> Treating a risk simply means putting in place appropriate measures to reduce the likelihood and/or the impact of a risk.

- 3.11. In the context of the pandemic, the committee will:
- consider risks associated with the coronavirus pandemic as part of its responsibility in developing and maintaining the Assembly's WHS risk register;
  - consider risk treatments to be adopted to effectively manage these risks;
  - liaise with MLAs, their staff and OLA management and staff about issues or concerns that arise in connection with the pandemic and ensure that they have visibility over the work of the committee and the actions that arise from its consideration of WHS risks and implementation of measures taken to eliminate or reduce those risks; and
  - perform relevant statutory duties as outlined in the WHS Act and associated regulations.
- 3.12. The terms of reference for the committee are available on the [Assembly intranet](#).

### Consulting with staff

- 3.13. Staff perspectives have been critical in developing a comprehensive understanding of the WHS risks that arise in the Assembly precincts as a result of COVID and in developing appropriate strategies to manage those risks effectively.
- 3.14. It is essential that MLAs/managers speak with, and seek the input of, their staff in making decisions that potentially affect workplace health and safety. To do this effectively MLAs/managers must:
- share information;
  - give staff a reasonable opportunity to express their views and contribute to decision-making;
  - take those views into account before making decisions on health and safety matters; and
  - advise workers of the outcome of consultations.

### Making decisions about sittings of the Assembly

- 3.15. The sitting pattern of the Assembly may be altered by the Speaker on an application in writing from a majority of members. The Speaker will consult with the Chief Minister, the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the ACT Greens where there are circumstances which may warrant a change to the sitting pattern.
- 3.16. For instance, this may occur in the event of a large-scale COVID outbreak in the Territory that poses unacceptable risks to the health and safety of MLAs and staff and a majority of MLAs form the view that the business of the Assembly can be accommodated by limiting or postponing sittings.

## 4. Reducing likelihood of exposure to COVID in the workplace

### Introduction

- 4.1. While the ACT has had significant success in limiting transmission of COVID-19 within the community, there have been a number of outbreaks, or waves of transmission, around Australia between 2020 and 2022.
- 4.2. The likelihood of transmission among the population has fluctuated as these outbreaks have emerged and then been brought under some level of control or have stabilised. With the advent of Omicron from December 2021, it is 'likely' to 'almost certain' that the ACT will continue to experience a level of community transmission throughout 2022. [The spike in COVID numbers in the ACT and around Australia from June/July 2022 \(and the anticipated continuation of that trend\), means that the likelihood assessment of 'almost certain' remains.](#)
- 4.3. Accordingly, MLAs and staff will continue to have a role to play in developing and implementing strategies to reduce the risk of adverse health and safety risks associated with COVID-19 exposure and transmission in our shared workplace.

### Health impacts of COVID

- 4.4. There are a number of short- and long-term health impacts associated with COVID-19, including:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath</li><li>• Tiredness or fatigue</li><li>• Symptoms that get worse after physical or mental activities</li><li>• Difficulty thinking or concentrating (sometimes referred to as "brain fog")</li><li>• Cough</li><li>• Chest or stomach pain</li><li>• Headache</li><li>• Fast-beating or pounding heart (also known as heart palpitations)</li><li>• Joint or muscle pain</li><li>• Pins-and-needles feeling</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Diarrhea</li><li>• Sleep problems</li><li>• Fever</li><li>• Dizziness on standing (light headedness)</li><li>• Rash</li><li>• Mood changes</li><li>• Change in smell or taste</li><li>• Changes in period cycles</li><li>• Post-intensive care syndrome</li><li>• Multisystem inflammatory syndrome</li><li>• Post-traumatic stress disorder</li></ul>
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- 4.5. The economic, social and interpersonal stressors arising from changing work requirements, lockdowns, and isolation associated with the pandemic may also have a range of psychosocial / mental health impacts (see section 6 below).

## How the virus is spread

- 4.6. Similar to the traditional influenza virus, SARS-CoV-2 is highly contagious<sup>3</sup> and can be spread through:
- close contact with an infectious person (including in the 48 hours before they had symptoms—i.e. fever, flu-like symptoms, coughing, sore throat, difficulty breathing);
  - contact with droplets/aerosol from an infected person’s cough or sneeze; and
  - touching objects or surfaces (like doorknobs or tables) that have droplets/aerosol from an infected person, and then touching your mouth or face.<sup>4</sup>

## WHS controls to reduce exposure risks

- 4.7. The main controls<sup>5</sup> that are being implemented in the Assembly precincts to reduce the risk of exposure are:
- ensuring that people who are unwell or symptomatic are not present in the precincts;
  - dealing effectively with any exposure event;
  - physical distancing and room limits in line with prescribed health directions;
  - limiting large gatherings in line with prescribed health directions;
  - the promotion and adoption of good hygiene and cleaning practices;
  - ensuring adequate ventilation; and
  - mask wearing in accordance with any applicable public health direction ([Members and staff are also encouraged to wear masks in the Assembly chamber and when moving around the common areas of the precincts.](#))

<sup>3</sup> In Australia, the mortality rate of SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) is approximately 2.6 per cent (as at 4 August 2021) and its reproductive number (the number of people an infected person transmits the virus to in a previously healthy population), during the first wave of the pandemic in 2020, sat at between 1.4 and 2.5. The Delta Variant of the virus, which emerged in 2021, is estimated to have a reproductive number of between 5.5 and 6.5.<sup>3</sup> <https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/coronavirus-covid-19-case-numbers-and-statistics>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert/what-you-need-to-know-about-coronavirus-covid-19#:~:text=The%20virus%20can%20spread%20from,your%20mouth%20or%20face.>

<sup>5</sup> See Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) statement on recommendations for managing COVID-19 health risks. See <https://www.health.gov.au/news/australian-health-protection-principal-committee-ahppc-statement-on-recommendations-for-managing-covid-19-health-risks>

- 4.8. There are different degrees of virus exposure risk, depending on the activity, setting or event. Some types of activities, events and settings may increase the risk of contracting COVID-19. These include activities that:
- are in closed or indoor environments;
  - have large numbers of people in close contact over an extended period (for example, public transport at peak hour, sporting events, protests or other large gatherings);
  - require physical activity and close contact;
  - require vocalising in an indoor environment (close communication such as shouting in a noisy environment);
  - require sharing objects with others (for example, utensils at a catered event);
  - require sharing accommodation or amenities with other people (for example, hostels, university dormitories, boarding schools); and
  - take place over an extended period of time (the risk for exposure and transmission increases with time).<sup>6</sup>
- 4.9. A range of measures to address specific risks will continue to be implemented to manage exposure risks in the Assembly precincts. These measures will be reconsidered and adapted depending on levels of community transmission of the virus and vaccination rates (including the uptake of vaccination boosters). See Appendix A setting out the range of situational WHS risks confronting the Assembly, along with the internal controls directed towards eliminating or minimising those risks.

## Ensuring that people who are unwell or symptomatic do not enter the precincts

- 4.10. One of the most important tools that we have in fighting the virus is to isolate ourselves from contact with others if we are unwell. It is critical that people—including MLAs and staff—who have cold- or flu-like symptoms **do not come into the precincts under any circumstances.**
- 4.11. The presence of even one COVID positive person in the precincts presents considerable risks to the health and safety of everyone else and could render parts of the precincts, and the democratic functions they support, temporarily inoperable.

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<sup>6</sup> Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) statement on recommendations for managing COVID-19 health risks. See <https://www.health.gov.au/news/australian-health-protection-principal-committee-ahppc-statement-on-recommendations-for-managing-covid-19-health-risks>

- 4.12. MLAs/managers must remind workers of these requirements and direct anyone who is unwell or is displaying cold or flu-like symptoms to remove themselves from the precincts and to seek appropriate medical attention and testing in line with the applicable public health advice.
- 4.13. The Speaker and the Clerk have issued a number of whole-of-precincts emails stressing the importance of complying by these requirements. Periodic reminders will follow, and ongoing communication and advice will be provided in line with public health advice. Signage will also be posted at the members' and public entrances of the Assembly building (and the entry to the North Building precinct) advising of the requirements that apply at a given time.

### Exposure event—precincts are an exposure site

- 4.14. Anyone who is waiting for a COVID-19 test result must quarantine until they receive their test result. Accordingly, if a person tests positive for COVID-19, they will already be in quarantine at the time.
- 4.15. However, if a person has been in the precincts during their infectious period, the precincts (or part of the precincts) ~~may be an exposure site. will be identified as an exposure site by ACT Health.~~
- 4.16. **So that appropriate steps can be initiated, it is critical that the HR and Entitlements area of the Office ([olahrandentitlements@parliament.act.gov.au](mailto:olahrandentitlements@parliament.act.gov.au), tel: x50150) is notified where a person with a confirmed case of COVID has been present in the precincts.**
- ~~4.16. As necessary, immediate action will variously be taken by the Speaker, the Office and MLAs to reduce the risk of further transmission associated with the location under investigation as follows.~~
- 4.17. The Office will notify occupants of the precincts that an exposure event has occurred within the precincts at particular times/dates/location (e.g. Assembly Building, North Building), the level of risk associated with the exposure (in line with the [ACTPS COVID-19 workplace exposure risk assessment tool \(See Appendix D\)](#), and precautions that ought to be adopted by occupants.
- 4.18. Members/ supervisors will ensure that they and their staff comply with relevant public health requirements in relation to testing and quarantine.
- ~~• The Office will comply with any requests for information from ACT Health in relation to attendance at the workplace for contact tracing, such as visitor logs and sign-in sheets.~~
  - ~~• The Security and Building Services area of the Office will liaise with the~~

**Commented [A1]:** ACT Health would no longer designate the site as such.

**Commented [A2]:** ACT Health no longer seek this information. Subject to A&P, HSC feedback, closing precincts is no among the suite of controls to be adopted. The strategies are now more geared to ensure that those with COVID and those who are high risk contacts are not present in the workplace.

~~Assembly's cleaning providers to arrange appropriate cleaning in line with SafeWork Australia COVID-19 cleaning guidelines.~~

- ~~• The Speaker will consider whether the precincts (or part of the precincts) are to be closed<sup>7</sup> whilst the risk is assessed and the mitigative responses are being implemented.~~

4.19. Members and managers should also be guided by the following documents:

- [checklist for workers who are a contact of a case of COVID-19](#), outlining the steps workers should take if they are exposed to COVID-19; and
- [checklist for workers who test positive to COVID-19](#); and
- [Assessing a COVID-19 Exposure in the workplace](#).

### Exposure event in the chamber during a sitting period

4.20. While there are a range of risk management controls in place within the chamber and during sittings, ~~potential business continuity risks arise if~~ were a COVID-positive MLA or OLA staff member ~~was~~ to be present for an extended period during a sitting significant WHS ~~and business continuity challenges arise.~~

~~4.21. The same risk assessment, notification and isolation arrangements as provided for above (paragraph 4.17) apply.~~

~~4.22. The Speaker has encouraged MLAs to wear masks while in the chamber, although there is no requirement to do so. The wearing of masks in the chamber and in the common areas of the precincts is encouraged. The Speaker, consulting with the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure, may vary these requirements depending on the prevailing risk at any given time.~~

~~4.20. —~~

~~4.21. — With the advent of the Omicron outbreak in the last part of 2021, the likelihood of such an exposure event has increased significantly.~~

~~4.22. — At its meeting of 7 February 2022, the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure agreed to limit the number of MLAs in the chamber at any one time to 13 and to put in place appropriate pairing arrangements. The committee also agreed to adopt special procedures for question time.~~

**Commented [A3]:** These arrangements have been superseded.

### Room limits and physical distancing

4.23. All persons who are present in the precincts must observe the applicable physical distancing requirements and room limits in line with public health directions and

<sup>7</sup>The Chief Minister will consider whether parts of the Executive area, pursuant to s 8 of the *Legislative Assembly Precincts Act 2001*, will need to be closed in consultation with the Speaker.



advice. As at November 2021, there is a requirement to maintain a distance of 1.5m apart from others and for there to be no more than one person per 2m2 in a room together (these arrangements are subject to change). Where appropriate physical distancing cannot be maintained, a mask must be worn in the precincts.

- 4.24. Signage indicating applicable room limits are posted throughout the building and must be observed at all times. Periodic emails will be issued by the Speaker and the Clerk reminding members and staff to observe the prevailing requirements. Where there are changes, new signage will be installed.

### Chamber

- 4.25. A range of measures addressing physical distancing requirements in the chamber were adopted on 19 March 2020 by the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure, including the installation of additional furniture. In 2021, Perspex barriers were installed in the chamber to reduce the free movement of aerosols and particulate between MLAs and chamber staff.

- 4.26. Sittings will be held with appropriate physical distancing, mask wearing (where the Speaker and ~~administration and procedure committee~~ the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure consider that there is a heightened risk of transmission within the chamber), cleaning and personal hygiene facilities in place and in line with the prevailing public health advice.

- 4.26.4.27. Additional internal controls for managing WHS risks associated with Assembly sittings is listed in the risk register at Appendix A.

### Committees

- 4.27.4.28. Within the standing orders how, when and where an Assembly committee meets or conducts public hearing is a matter for each committee. Throughout both the 2020 and 2021 lock-downs extensive use was made of remote committee hearings that were conducted digitally via various digital meeting platforms.

- 4.29. Where a committee elects to conduct an in-person meeting or hearing, physical distancing, ~~mask wearing~~, cleaning and personal hygiene facilities will be applied in line with the prevailing public health advice. There may be occasions where the Speaker and the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure ~~administration and procedure committee~~ consider that wearing masks is a necessary measure in the face of higher transmission risks).

- 4.28.4.30. Additional internal controls for managing WHS risks associated with committee hearings is listed in the risk register at Appendix A.

## Limiting large gatherings

4.29.4.31. To date, under applicable health directions, the normal operations of the Legislative Assembly have not been considered ‘gatherings’ to which limitations have applied.<sup>8</sup>

4.30.4.32. **However, whether or not non-essential functions or events (e.g. external room hire, opening of the public galleries etc) will be permitted in the precincts at a given point in time will be determined by the Speaker based on the prevailing risk (particularly in light of community transmission levels). Additional risk management treatments may be necessary to reduce exposure risks during particular activities or events (see Appendix A). As at July 2022, public galleries are open but large group visits from school or community groups and room hire by external groups is not permitted.**

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4.31.4.33. The Speaker will consult with the Clerk and the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure on these matters and relevant advice provided to occupants of the precincts as necessary.

## Good hygiene

4.32.4.34. All those in the precincts are strongly encouraged to observe appropriate personal hygiene. In general, this means regularly washing hands with soap and warm water and to avoid touching their face.

4.33.4.35. The use of hand sanitiser can also be a useful way of reducing viral loads that might be present on a person’s hands. Hand sanitiser stations are located at both the members’ and public entrances and adjacent to the large meeting room in the North Building precinct. Members and staff can top up their bottles of sanitiser using the refill station at the public entrance. To avoid dermatitis or skin irritation, members and staff are encouraged to moisturise their hands periodically.

4.34.4.36. Good respiratory hygiene (covering the mouth with the elbow when coughing, throwing used tissues in the bin immediately after use) is essential to assist in preventing the spread of disease (noting once again, that any person with a cough, sore throat or runny nose must not be in the precincts).

4.35.4.37. Enhanced cleaning arrangements across the precincts ensure that commonly used areas, equipment and touch points are cleaned continuously throughout each day. Meeting rooms are also cleaned following the conclusion of meetings (Members and staff should call the Assembly’s attendants so that cleaners can be notified to commence the cleaning procedures).

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<sup>8</sup> See, for instance, s 28(k) of Public Health (Restricted Activities) Emergency Direction 2021 (No 5).

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## Ventilation

**4.36.4.38.** Evidence is starting to emerge that increased airflow and ventilation play an important role in reducing the risk of COVID transmission within buildings. A [whole of government advisory](#) on workplace ventilation notes that 'Indoor workplaces and enclosed spaces present a risk of transmission of COVID-19, where virus particles are more likely to concentrate. The risk is further increased where indoor, enclosed spaces are crowded and people are talking, singing or shouting'.

**4.37.4.39.** Accordingly, doors to the Assembly chamber, committee rooms and other Assembly facilities will be opened whenever possible.

**4.38.**—The Office has increased fresh air intake into the building through the HVAC system from 30% to 50%. In addition, the Office commissioned -expert environmental advice on- air flows and ventilation throughout the Assembly building and has implemented recommendations arising from that review. The Office will continue to consider these issues in line with the whole of government advice issued on the subject.

**4.40.**

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## Masks

**4.39.4.41.** All those in the precincts are required to abide by applicable public health directions concerning the wearing of masks.

**4.40.4.42.** These arrangements may change based on public health advice and any changes to mask wearing requirements will be advised based on the latest health directions. Even where there is not a mask mandate in place, MLAs and staff should feel comfortable wearing a mask.<sup>9</sup>

## Vaccinations and boosters

**4.41.4.43.** Neither the Assembly, nor the Office have instituted any requirement for MLAs and staff to be vaccinated. However, vaccination and booster shots are strongly encouraged.

**4.42.4.44.** MLAs/managers may approve COVID-19 leave for to attend an appointment to be vaccinated or to receive a booster shot. For more information see [ACTPS Staff Entitlements for COVID-19 Vaccinations](#).

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<sup>9</sup> Disposable masks are available from both the members' and public entrances of the Assembly building, and the entry to the North Building precinct. Where mask wearing requirements are in place, it is important to wear face masks properly and remove them carefully to ensure that they protect everyone as effectively as possible. The ACT Government's [COVID-19](#) website has information about the proper use of face masks.

4.43.4.45. All MLAs and staff are entitled to receive free flu vaccinations through the annual vaccination clinic organised by OLA.

## 5. Supporting vulnerable people

- 5.1. The following groups of people are more likely to be at higher risk of serious illness if they get the virus (vulnerable persons):
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people 50 years and older with one or more chronic medical conditions;
  - people 65 years and older with [chronic medical conditions](#) (conditions included in the definition of chronic medical conditions that increase the risk of serious illness from COVID-19 will be refined as more evidence emerges);
  - people 70 years and older; and
  - people with [compromised immune systems](#).
- 5.2. **MLAs and the Clerk, supported by managers, have a duty of care to ensure that there are appropriate arrangements in place to eliminate or minimise risks to staff members who belong to a vulnerable group.**

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### OLA requirements

- 5.3. As a matter of policy, OLA supervisors are required to ascertain whether anyone in their work group identifies as belonging to a vulnerable group so that additional measures for eliminating or minimising WHS risks can be considered and implemented.
- 5.4. If a staff member of OLA identifies as belonging to a vulnerable group and has not advised their supervisor, they should take the time to complete a [PDF Vulnerable worker checklist](#) and submit it to their supervisor as soon as possible.
- 5.5. OLA supervisors must assess and consider what additional measures might be required in order to provide the greatest level of protection to staff who belong to a vulnerable group using a [Word checklist developed for use across the ACT public sector](#).
- 5.6. If an OLA staff member identifies as a vulnerable worker, or HR and Entitlements advises that someone is a vulnerable worker, the OLA supervisor needs to work with HR And Entitlements to assess and manage the work health and safety risks for that employee, specifically:
- first consider approaches to remove the employee from the risk through a change in their workplace, such as working from home;
  - if the employee's current work is not suitable for a working from home arrangement, consider options for allocating alternative duties and/or redeployment that can be done in a working from home arrangement;

- if the employee’s situation does not enable a working from home arrangement, you must consider options for risk management for their existing role or allocation of alternative duties and/or redeployment in the workplace, that removes the employee from customer-facing contact;
  - if none of the above are possible, the employee must be placed on leave ‘where leave cannot be granted under any other provision’ (COVID-19 Leave’).<sup>10</sup>
- 5.7. Provision of PPE and administrative controls, such as rostering changes, are not considered appropriate controls on their own to manage the risks arising from customer contact or other high-risk work for vulnerable workers. Additional measures must be considered to remove the employee to a non-public facing role. If an employee is able to work from home, the supervisor will work with them to ensure they can do this safely.
- 5.8. The HR and Entitlements area of the Office will review and document strategies that are being adopted to protect OLA staff who belong to a vulnerable group.

## Members and their staff

- 5.9. It is important that MLAs and their senior staff (i.e. those with management responsibilities) take steps to:
- identify any of their staff who belong to a vulnerable group; and
  - put in place arrangements that eliminate or minimise risk exposure for those staff to the greatest extent possible.
- 5.10. The above approach, utilised across the ACT public sector, may offer a useful guide for MLAs and their senior staff in considering how best to manage these issues.
- 5.11. The HR and Entitlements area of the Office is able to advise non-executive MLAs and their staff on suitable approaches. Ministers and their staff should contact the Executive Support area within CMTEDD to receive advice.

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<sup>10</sup> The Office has adopted ACTPS requirements in relation to vulnerable workers.

## 6. Supporting mental health

- 6.1. There is recognition that the pandemic has presented additional challenges beyond the prospect of being exposed to, or contracting, COVID-19. With established routines and working environments changing and our direct social connections to family, friends and colleagues being constantly disrupted, there can be significant impacts on our mental health.
- 6.2. Some staff may find these changes particularly challenging, and MLAs/supervisors have a responsibility to identify staff who need additional support. Warning signs that a staff member may be feeling stressed, worried or anxious include:
- increased agitation or tenseness;
  - difficulty concentrating or settling down to work;
  - changes in behaviour or communication style;
  - appearing quiet, distant or disinterested;
  - not taking breaks or taking longer breaks than normal; and
  - increased unplanned absences or unexplained lateness.
- 6.3. If a staff member appears so stressed, worried or concerned that they believe the staff member is not well enough to be at work, the MLA/supervisors should encourage the staff member to take personal leave and to see their GP, a healthcare professional or to arrange an EAP appointment.

### Leave

- 6.4. If a staff member is feeling overwhelmed and needs a break from the workplace, MLAs/supervisors should discuss taking a period of leave.
- 6.5. Non-executive members, their staff and OLA staff can seek further advice about leave entitlements from OLA's HR and Entitlements (x50150). Ministers and their staff are able to contact the Executive Support area within CMTEDD (x70372).

### Supporting staff that are in quarantine, required to isolate, subject to a stay-at-home order, or working from home

- 6.6. Each staff member may react differently, particularly if they are used to attending the workplace every day and have an established work routine. It is useful for employing MLAs, their senior staff and OLA supervisors to think about how their staff usually work in the workplace and what supports might be needed to manage.
- 6.7. Different people will require different levels of contact and connection.



- 6.8. The following simple steps can be taken by MLAs/managers to ensure that their staff do not become professionally or interpersonally isolated and that appropriate health and safety matters are properly considered.
- Maintain regular phone or email contact with staff who are required to isolate, quarantine, stay at home, or who are working from home. Consider setting up a regular time each day that to check in by phone, email or other technology.
  - Consider any technology or processes that can be put in place so that employees who are working from home or not experiencing symptoms to continue to engage with their work team (e.g. MS Teams, WebEx).
  - Regularly ask how employees are managing their work from home arrangements.
  - Ensure that staff have appropriate furniture and equipment to allow them to work without undue risk of injury.
  - Talk to staff about good health and safety measures at home, including regularly changing their posture, being alert to any hazards, keeping the environment clean, and washing hands thoroughly.
  - Make sure staff know the best ways to contact MLAs/senior members' staff/OLA supervisors to provide updates on their circumstances, including any changes to caring or parenting responsibilities, their physical health, or changes to agreed working hours. If a staff member has changes that materially affect their working from home arrangements, it is important to consider the WHS implications and any steps that need taken to reduce risks (OLA staff members are required to complete/update [working from home agreements](#)).
  - Emphasise the importance of staff managing their wellbeing whilst they are working from home (or required to stay home), including taking lunch breaks, eating a balanced diet and keeping well hydrated, participating in physical activity, maintaining contact with friends and family, and getting enough sleep.
  - Remind staff about EAP phone services that are available.
  - Keep up to date with any further developments on quarantine, isolation or stay at home requirements and COVID-19 physical distancing requirements by accessing the [ACT Health website](#).
  - Clarify requirements for staff returning to work, including any need for official clearance or release by ACT Health (where relevant).
  - Direct staff to resources for [looking after mental wellbeing](#) during quarantine, looking after mental wellbeing during isolation, and during a stay-at-home order (see also below).

## Taking care and seeking help

- 6.9. Members or staff who are feeling fatigued by the pandemic, may wish to try new some the following activities:
- taking regular breaks at work, whether working from home or in the precincts/the community;
  - looking after your physical health by undertaking regular physical activity, getting outdoors, eating well, and getting enough sleep;
  - keeping good boundaries between work and personal life by not working excessive hours, taking lunch breaks, and putting work items away after finishing for the day if working from home;
  - taking time to see or speak with family, friends, or other loved ones;
  - accessing reputable sources of information and taking a break from constant media updates;
  - using annual or flex leave to take time away from work;
  - making time to do something enjoyable;
  - taking personal leave if unwell;
  - speaking with someone—a trusted colleague or manager, a friend, GP etc.
- 6.10. The Territory's [employee assistance program](#) [EAP] is an excellent source of confidential counselling and support and may be accessed by members, staff and their immediate families.

## Urgent assistance

- [Mental Health Crisis Assessment and Treatment Team—1800 629 354](#) (ACT residents)
- [NSW Mental Health Line—1800 011 511](#) (NSW residents)
- [Suicide Callback Service—1300 659 467](#) (the same counsellor will call you back 6 times; call, video chat, or online chat service)
- [Lifeline—13 11 14](#) (call or chat online)
- [Lifeline](#)—text 0477 13 11 14 (SMS trial service)
- [Alcohol and Drug Services](#) (Canberra Health Services)—[5124 9977](#)
- [Mensline—1300 78 99 78](#) (phone and online chat)
- [Domestic Violence Crisis Service—\(02\) 6280 0900](#)
- [Kids Helpline—1800 551 800](#) (young people up to 25 years)
- [Stand By Support After Suicide—0421 725 180](#)
- [Canberra Rape Crisis Centre—\(02\) 6247 2525](#)
- [Open Arms—1800 011 046](#) (free counselling for Veterans and their families)

## Speaking to someone in-person

### Your GP

- 6.11. If you are concerned that you may be experiencing mental ill health, your General Practitioner can provide advice and, if necessary, develop a mental health care plan for you.

### Employee Assistance Program

- 6.12. EAP services are provided by Converge International, and all services are staffed by qualified practitioners.
- 6.13. Employee Assistance offers short term, solution focussed counselling and wellbeing support for MLAs, their staff and staff of the Office and their immediate families who are coping with challenges in their personal and or work lives.
- 6.14. MLAs and staff are encouraged to access the Employee Assistance Program as early as possible. Counselling can be delivered via telephone, audio visual conferencing, or face-to-face including Skype/ Zoom, Online, Video Counselling.
- 6.15. Please refer to the [EAP page](#) for further information.

### Next Step

- 6.16. [Next Step](#) is a free and confidential support service to help people tackle day to day pressures. The service is delivered by the Capital Health Network and provides a range of evidence-based services to people over 18 years of age who reside, work, or study in the ACT and are not accessing other mental health services
- 6.17. The service can be used as an alternative to EAP for those people looking for something different or who have used up their EAP sessions, and can also be recommended to friends and others in the ACT community who are not eligible to access EAP.
- 6.18. The service consists of low intensity interventions for people with mild to moderate concerns, and high intensity interventions for people with moderate to severe presentations.
- 6.19. The low intensity service is provided by mental health coaches (not psychologists) and a GP referral is not required. Its aim is to assist people who may not otherwise access services due to cost or other barriers. A GP referral is required to access the high intensity interventions.
- 6.20. To access Next Step phone: [\(02\) 6287 8066](tel:0262878066)

## Online resources

- [beyondblue](#)—beyondblue is a national, independent, not-for-profit organisation working to address issues associated with depression, anxiety and related substance misuse disorders in Australia. beyondblue provides information and support to help everyone in Australia achieve their best possible mental health, whatever their age and wherever they live.
- [moodgym](#)—moodgym is an online cognitive behaviour therapy program for depression and anxiety, developed by ANU. It is like an interactive self-help book which helps you to learn and practice skills which can help to prevent and manage symptoms of depression and anxiety.
- [myCompass](#)—a personalised self help program you can use on your computer, phone or tablet
- [E-couch](#)—E-couch provides information about emotional problems - what causes them, how to prevent them and how to treat them. It includes exercises to help you understand yourself and others better. Even better, it provides you with a set of strategies that might help you to improve your life.
- [SANE Australia](#)—SANE Australia is a national charity helping all Australians affected by mental illness to improve their lives and reduce the risk of suicide.
- [High Res](#)--High Res is a website developed by the Department of Veterans' Affairs designed to help you build resilience and manage stress. [The tools](#) provide a range of effective techniques that you can use to deal with stress and improve overall resilience.
- [Black Dog Institute](#)—Black Dog Institute is a research institute that aims to reduce the incidence of mental illness and the stigma around it, to actively reduce suicide rates and empower everyone to live the most mentally healthy lives possible. Programs include:
  - [Managing the workplace transition post-pandemic](#)
  - [Coping with anxiety about restrictions easing](#)
  - [Looking after your mental health when caring for others](#)
  - [The changing world of work and its impact on Australians' mental health](#)

## Member/manager support

- 6.21. Members and senior staff of members who are responsible for managing staff and OLA supervisors are able to access [Manager Support](#), a free, confidential coaching and wellbeing service specifically for people managers available through the [Territory's EAP](#).

## 7. Transition arrangements—resuming functions and activities

- 7.1. **In considering whether or not the precincts will remain open, the Speaker in consultation with the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure, will be guided at all times by the relevant public health directions and associated advice.**
- 7.2. As PCBU's under the WHS Act,<sup>11</sup> all MLAs and the Clerk commit managing any transition to and from work in the precincts in a way that maximises the operational capacity of the Assembly, its committees and its members, while ensuring that the health and safety risks that are posed by COVID-19 are prioritised.
- 7.3. The risk register at Appendix A of this plan outlines the range of specific controls and risk treatments that have been, or will be, adopted to effectively manage WHS and business continuity risks, associated with the closure or reopening of the precincts.

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### Overarching approach

- 7.4. Under the planned approach, the Assembly has three different levels of operational activity depending on the level of community transmission of the virus, prevailing public health advice about acceptable arrangements for returning to the workplace and managing relevant risks as follows:
- Stage **Red—Cessation of non-essential activities**
  - Stage **Orange—Resumption of most activities**
  - Stage **Green—Business as usual**
- 7.5. The table on the following page outlines in greater detail how the three stages are intended to operate.
- 7.6. **These arrangements are subject to change based on advice from public health authorities and are not intended to set out an inflexible roadmap.**<sup>12</sup> The Speaker

<sup>11</sup> Person conducting businesses or undertakings involving management or control of workplaces, pursuant to Division 2.3 of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*.

<sup>12</sup> The Speaker has signalled, in an email message to all members and staff in early October 2021, an intention to review the operation of these three stages with the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure in light of what appears to be a broader shift away from a policy of 'COVID elimination' as vaccination rates begin to reach critical thresholds for herd immunity. The three stages are intended to simplify a much broader continuum of operational and external risk factors that exist, and the needs of the Assembly and the health and safety of staff will be considered according to the prevailing context.

and the Office will be monitoring public health advice and the ACT's ['Pathway Forward' \(and any later interactions\)](#) to inform decisions about transiting back to work and a return, at some point, to business as usual.

## Assembly sittings

- 7.7. Under the resolution setting the sitting pattern for each year, a scheduled sitting may only be postponed or cancelled where a majority of members write to the Speaker requesting such an action.

## Committee hearings and meetings

- 7.8. While committees are responsible for determining whether or not to conduct a private meeting or public hearing, the Speaker, in consultation with the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure, has sought to adopt a consistent and consensus-based approach that balances the Assembly's duty of care (to members, staff, witnesses and visitors) with the need to ensure that committee proceedings function effectively.
- 7.9. Alternative arrangements for meetings and hearings are available (see risk register below) in line with physical distancing objectives (e.g. use of teleconferencing, procedural changes to permit electronic signatures). These arrangements were endorsed by the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure on 19 March 2020 and remain available to committees throughout the 10<sup>th</sup> Assembly.
- 7.10. The Speaker and the Clerk will ensure that, through the Deputy Clerk and Senior Director, Committee Support, committee chairs and secretaries have sufficient advice and guidance in order to make informed decisions about committee activities in the Tenth Assembly.

**Table 1: Staged resumption / reopening**

Business activity level	Overview	Criteria for moving to stage	Activities permitted in the precincts
<b>Red</b> <i>Cessation of non-essential activities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limiting activities in the precincts to only those that are necessary to fulfill core democratic functions (legislative, representative, scrutiny).</li> <li>Non-essential staff encouraged to work from home.</li> <li>Closure of the public galleries, cessation of education program and public visitation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public health authorities determine that isolation or lockdown arrangements are to be implemented across the community, including workplaces.</li> <li>Consideration of any particular public health advice / ACT public sector advice relating to isolation, distancing, home based work etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sittings of the Assembly.</li> <li>Private meetings and public hearings of committees.</li> <li>Core business functions that are required to be performed by MLAs and the staff of the Office.</li> </ul>
<b>Orange</b> <i>Resumption of most activities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Return of staff to the precincts but with flexible working arrangements/ home based work to continue to operate based on operational requirements subject to community transmission levels and broader public health risks.</li> <li>Resumption of public visitation following assessment of risks subject to community transmission levels and broader public health risks.</li> <li>Resumption of education functions, use of rooms by external groups (with room limits remaining in place) subject to community transmission levels and broader public health risks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public health advice is that, in general, workplaces may continue to operate with certain health and safety controls in place.</li> <li>Consideration of any particular public health advice / ACT public sector advice relating to isolation, distancing, home based work etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Return of staff to the precincts with particular consideration given to the particular needs of staff belonging to a vulnerable group.</li> <li>Subject to community transmission levels and broader public health risks, consideration given to resumption / opening of:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>public galleries for chamber and committees (within room limits—to be reconsidered in light of changed ACT Health advice).</li> <li>School and community groups (within room limits). Public tours <del>(maximum of 5 persons)</del>.</li> <li>Use of reception, exhibition, Bluebell / Gang gang rooms for external groups within room limits. Inclusion of room hire conditions relating to organisers observing Assembly’s COVID-19 policies.</li> <li>Work experience/interns (inclusion of provisions in agreements requiring compliance with Assembly’s COVID-19 policies/public health directions).</li> </ul> </li> <li>Consideration of revised/additional controls arising from prevailing public health advice/assessed risk.</li> </ul>
<b>Green</b> <i>Business as usual</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resumption of all activities to pre-disruption levels.</li> <li>Normal arrangements for managing health and safety risks apply.</li> <li>Physical distancing requirements reviewed in light of public health advice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public health advice is that workplace health and safety risks are such that normal business activities can be resumed with the adoption of minimal additional internal controls as recommended by health authorities and public sector advice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subject to community transmission levels and broader public health risks, Consideration given to resumption of:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Constitutional convention.</li> <li>Speaker’s citizenship evenings.</li> <li>International parliamentary delegations.</li> <li>Adoption of revised/relaxed controls arising from latest public health advice/assessed risk.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Mental, psychological and emotional health

- 7.12. As noted above, it is important that MLAs and OLA supervisors are aware of the disruptive effects that changing to and from home-based work can have on affected staff and to ensure that there appropriate supports in place for staff facing particular challenges.
- 7.13. During periods of high disruption and change, it is not uncommon for staff to experience a degree of anxiety and greater exposure to psychological and social risks (such as social isolation).
- 7.14. All members, staff and their families are entitled to access the Territory's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) (see the [Assembly intranet](#) for details). The EAP offers free, professional and confidential services to assist in working through both personal and work-related issues, including those that may have arisen due to the pandemic and the associated disruption that it has produced.
- 7.15. Members and staff are encouraged to contact an EAP provider where they might be experiencing:
- workload or work pressures, including career concerns;
  - emotional stress, anxiety, conflict, tension or depression;
  - personal or professional relationship issues, including dealing with separation or divorce;
  - health and lifestyle issues (including addiction, alcohol and other drug issues);
  - grief and loss;
  - interpersonal conflict, bullying and harassment, management issues or change in the workplace;
  - child and family issues;
  - general health and medical issues; or
  - financial and legal strain.
- 7.16. Throughout the 2021 lockdown, the Office ensured that staff had access to a general suite of tools to support their mental health and wellbeing (such as Lifeline training, 'check in and chill' and mindfulness sessions).
- 7.17. Additional training and support will continue to be provided through the pandemic (and beyond) to give staff a variety of different skills to effectively manage stress, isolation and anxiety. Staff also have access to the [monthly wellness webinar series](#) being provided by Converge International.
- 7.18. Staff with particular mental health concerns that need to be addressed should discuss with their employing MLA or supervisor in the first instance.



## Additional support

- 7.19. The Office's HR and Entitlements area can be contacted (non-executive members, their staff and OLA staff) to seek additional support and guidance (x50150).
- 7.20. Ministers and their staff are able to contact the Executive Support area within CMTEDD (x70372).

## Vulnerable/high-risk persons

- 7.21. As noted above, there are a range of groups who are at high risk of adverse health outcomes in the event that they were exposed to COVID-19.
- 7.22. In addition, there may be particular challenges for staff recovering from injury or illness, staff with caring responsibilities, staff with mental health issues, and staff who may be experiencing family violence.
- 7.23. Any staff member who considers that they require additional support to manage particular risks or issues confronting them should first discuss these issues with their immediate OLA supervisor, employing MLA or the relevant HR area (HR and Entitlements for non-executive members' staff and Office staff/Executive Support in CMTEDD for staff of ministers) in order that reasonable adjustments and alternative arrangements can be evaluated.

## Communication and consultation

- 7.24. The Speaker and the Clerk will continue to provide regular email updates to all occupants of the precincts, including staff, about:
  - the steps that are being taken to address various COVID-related risks;
  - any changes to operating procedures and policies;
  - the support and assistance arrangements that are available to support staff and to manage risks that individual staff may be confronting.
- 7.25. The Office operates an SMS messaging services through an external vendor to enable the provision of information to MLAs and staff (on an opt-in basis) after hours. Contact details are updated each sixth months.
- 7.26. While the Assembly's HSC will consider relevant changes and proposed strategies in the normal course of exercising its functions under the WHS Act, it is essential that MLAs/managers continuously consult with their staff about how they propose to manage the various business continuity, staff, WHS matters that arise throughout any transitions to and from the normal workplace (and through the pandemic more generally).

## Adoption of flexible working arrangements

- 7.27. The Assembly, its committees, its members and the Office were all able to function effectively even at the height of the pandemic through the introduction of flexible and home-based working arrangements.
- 7.28. Considering the operational requirements of the Assembly and the Office, the Office continues to offer flexible working arrangements, including home-based work. Staff should discuss any proposal for flexible or home-based work arrangements with their employing MLA or immediate supervisor in the first instance.
- 7.29. In undertaking home-based work, it is important that WHS risks are properly considered and treated and that there is an agreement in place between the staff member and their immediate supervisor.
- 7.30. The Office's agreement template and working from home checklist is available on the [Assembly intranet](#).
- 7.31. Staff are able to access relevant leave entitlements pursuant to the applicable enterprise agreement.

## Maintaining duty of care—easing of restrictions

- 7.32. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Office and the Assembly has implemented measures to ensure the safety of members, staff and visitors to the precincts.
- 7.33. A range of measures, including but not limited to, physical distancing, wearing masks and working from home (where possible) have been implemented to reduce the risks of exposure to or transmission of COVID-19 in the precincts.
- 7.34. At times, these measures have been required under the ACT public health directions, but additionally the measures have been adopted to ensure that the Speaker's, Clerk's and individual members' PCBU obligations under the WHS Act to provide a safe workplace have been met.
- 7.35. The Speaker, Clerk and members must continue to assess the particular WHS risks that arise in their individual workplaces and ensure that appropriate control measures are in place to effectively manage those risks. A range of public health responses may be imposed or reimposed by the ACT Chief Health Officer, and responses may vary or need to be varied accordingly.
- 7.36. Our WHS obligations to provide a safe workplace and reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 remain even when public health restrictions ease. Any change to our working arrangements must be informed by risk assessments and our workforce consulted on the proposed changes. As part of the risk assessment,

workplaces must be prepared to respond to COVID-19 outbreaks within the workplace or the broader Canberra community.

- 7.37. Any change in public health directions is an opportunity for workplaces to review the measures that are in place and consider if any changes are required. Any easing of public health directions should prompt consideration of a review of risks, consultation with the workforce, a planned change or staged implementation and continued monitoring of the effectiveness of measures in place.
- 7.38. The Speaker, Clerk and members should follow the following steps to manage changes to the control environment as public health restrictions are altered.
- **Identifying**—identify risks, current controls, and other impacts
  - **Consulting**—take steps to encourage feedback and opinions from workers on the proposed changes
  - **Staged implementation**—any changes, easing or removal of COVID-safe control measures should be introduced gradually
  - **Monitoring**—actively seek evidence for whether the change is working as intended, changes in risk, and unintended consequences.

## Additional concerns

- 7.39. Any staff who have particular concerns about any aspect of the transitional arrangements are encouraged to speak with their employing MLA, immediate supervisor, relevant HR area or staff health and safety representative.

## Appendix A: Risk register

- This risk register included in this section outlines the WHS hazards and business continuity risks associated with COVID-19 identified by the Office of the Legislative Assembly in consultation with the Speaker, the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure and the Assembly's HSC. Controls listed are established to manage the risk so far as is reasonably practicable as per s 19 of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*.
- COVID-19 pandemic is a public health emergency. All actions to support the health and safety of the occupants of the Assembly precincts are based on the expert health advice and the principles and guidance developed by Safe Work Australia (identified by the National Cabinet to lead the response for workplace management of COVID 19 response).
- Advisory documentation used for this risk assessment includes:
  - [ACT Health – Latest information about novel coronavirus \(COVID-19\) in the ACT](#)
  - Australian Capital Territory COVID-19 Pandemic Response Guidelines V.1, 2020
  - [Australian Health Protection Principal Committee \(AHPPC\)](#)
  - [COVID-19](#) (ACT Government)
  - [COVID-19 information for workplaces](#) (Safe Work Australia)
  - ISO31000:2018 Risk management – Principles and guidelines
  - ISO45001: 2018 Occupational health and safety management systems – Requirements with guidance for use
  - [Latest information about novel coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) (ACT Health)
  - [Public Health Act 1997](#) (and associated regulations)
  - [National Cabinet](#)
  - [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#)
  - Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011
  - World Health Organization (WHO) - [Getting your workplace ready for COVID-19](#)
- Responses and risk management approaches for any events will also be reviewed when there is a change in public health advice or guidance updates are issued. Risk ratings need to be considered at the business unit level and addressed accordingly. Risks ratings provided are indicative only and may change over time. In addition to those risks or hazards listed, the Assembly, its members and the Office must consider, as appropriate, any additional risks that need to be managed within the scope of control.
- **As at ~~July -November 2021~~, based on the high degree of community transmission and the emergence of additional strains of the virus, ~~high levels of vaccination and prevailing public health measures~~, the likelihood that some MLAs or staff members will contract COVID-19 and suffer ill-health, is rated as 'likely possible'.<sup>14</sup>**
- It is difficult to predict with precision the likelihood that a significant number of MLAs and/or staff become unavailable in the Assembly precincts due to:
  - exposure to COVID-19;
  - widespread isolation/lockdowns on the basis of public health advice / public health orders; or
  - unavailability due to public transport disruption or because caring responsibilities need to be attended where schools are closed.<sup>15</sup>
- Assessments of the impact of community transmission of the virus COVID-19 on members and staff and on the operations of the Assembly, its committees and the Office, can be similarly difficult to precisely determine. However, it is clear enough that a large-scale outbreak of the virus in the ACT community would potentially result in major impacts on the health and safety of members and staff and would have considerable consequences for the effective operation of the Assembly and its committees. Assessments of risk will change depending on the extent of community transmission, the effectiveness of public health policy responses (e.g. vaccination/booster rates, lockdowns, mask mandates etc), and the effectiveness of the Assembly's own localised responses.
- Where the likelihood and consequence of these risks change over time, the responses contemplated in the below risk register are able to be stepped up or down as necessary.

<sup>13</sup> 'Ill-health' could be simply being exposed to the virus and suffering from mild symptoms through to exposure that results in more serious effects such as breathing difficulties, long-covid etc.

<sup>14</sup> Under the revised ACTIA whole-of-government risk matrix (September 2021), 'possible' means that it occurs infrequently but that it would not be a surprise if it did occur.

<sup>15</sup> The assessment has been conducted using the whole-of-Territory risk matrix (September 2021) which is at Appendix B.

Risk / health or safety hazard	What is the harm that the risk/hazard could cause?	Likelihood of the harm	Impact of the harm in the form it is most likely to take	Risk rating	Internal controls—procedures, strategies and policies to manage risks Can be progressively added / adapted in light of prevailing health advice and risk environment	Treatment implementation
1. Exposure in members' offices/activities	MLAs, staff exposed to COVID-19 Illness	Possible <a href="#">Current ACT COVID-19 case numbers</a>	Moderate, although consequences will vary depending on a range of individual risk factors.	Medium	a. Direction to staff and exercise of leadership in relation to compliance with all precincts requirements issued by the Speaker and public health directions, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Room limits</li> <li>▪ Physical distancing</li> <li>▪ Mask wearing (when applicable, where physical distancing is not possible)</li> <li>▪ Not coming into the precincts if unwell</li> <li>▪ General hygiene practices</li> <li>▪ Ensuring that any events hosted by members comply with relevant safety protocols around cleaning, hygiene, room limits</li> </ul> b. Consideration of particular PPE requirements for public/community events in light of health advice	Members, senior staff of members
2. Risk of exposure in connection with performance of library functions	MLAs, staff exposed to COVID-19 Illness	Possible <a href="#">Current ACT COVID-19 case numbers</a>	Moderate, although consequences will vary depending on a range of individual risk factors.	Medium	b. Home based work (subject to public health advice and whole-of-public-sector policy settings) c. Monitor the number of in-person visits to the library and encourage clients to engage online. d. Mark out 1.5m from front counter with signage asking any clients to observe appropriate distancing measures.	Assembly Librarian
3. Exposure risks associated with Speaker's end of year drinks event	Illness, transmission of COVID-19 / virus infection Business continuity impacts	Possible <a href="#">Current ACT COVID-19 case numbers</a>	Moderate, although consequences will vary depending on a range of individual risk factors.	Medium	a. Event discontinued where public health advice indicate that this is required (e.g. Another lockdown and limitations on gatherings). b. Applicable health advice/social distancing requirements to be strictly observed. c. Communications prior to event advising invitees not to attend the event if unwell, experiencing symptoms, or meet other criteria for potential exposure (e.g. close contact, awaiting test result, been to an area identified as high risk of exposure). Any participants who attend the event that are showing symptoms of being unwell will be asked to leave. d. Hand hygiene items available at event. Alcohol based hand sanitiser and/or access to hand washing facilities with soap, is provided and maintained, at the event. e. Signage to promote hand hygiene. f. Organise food and drink items that are not on share platters or designed to be shared amongst a group. g. Cleaning and disinfecting regimes established and implemented. Where the event is being held at a venue, the organisers must liaise with the venue to confirm cleaning protocols. h. Event to be held with open windows/doors to increase airflow.	Clerk
4. Covid Safe Assembly sittings (transmission risks)	Illness, transmission of COVID-19 / virus infection Business continuity impacts	Possible <a href="#">Current ACT COVID-19 case numbers</a>	Moderate, although consequences will vary depending on a range of individual risk factors.	Medium	a. Development of revised seating arrangements to enable a social distancing meeting with all 25 MLAs present. Temporary furnishings have been designed and installed to facilitate physical distancing. b. Members, clerks responsible for their own water during sittings. c. Daily cleaning of chamber furniture and fittings during sitting periods. d. Opening doors to improve ventilation <a href="#">(where possible)</a> e. Ongoing consideration of when/if building/public gallery will be open to the public (particular consideration to hosting of external events) based on an assessment of risk, taking into account community transmission levels, vaccination rates etc. f. Installation of Perspex screens between members, clerks-at-the-table.	Clerk, Deputy Clerk
5. Risk of exposure in connection with ICT support services	Illness, transmission of COVID-19 / virus infection	Possible	Moderate, although consequences will vary depending on a range of	Medium	a. Introduce advice that members/staff should clean keyboards after they have been used by another person (e.g. shared keyboards, where ICT officer has had to make changes of a person's PC). b. Wherever possible, ICT Support Officer to address/make any necessary ICT changes remotely, rather than in person. c. Where an in-person visit is required, 1.5m to be observed by the MLA/staff member and the ICT Support Officer. d. ICT Support Officer required to carry face mask, to be used when social distancing is not possible.	Director, Information and Digital Services

Risk / health or safety hazard	What is the harm that the risk/hazard could cause?	Likelihood of the harm	Impact of the harm in the form it is most likely to take	Risk rating	Internal controls—procedures, strategies and policies to manage risks Can be progressively added / adapted in light of prevailing health advice and risk environment	Treatment implementation
	Business continuity impacts		individual risk factors.		e. ICT Support Officer required to use hand sanitiser and keyboards wipes, located throughout the Assembly precinct, for appropriate use when using other people’s keyboards as part of the ICT support function (standard operating procedure detailing requirements). f. Requirement to clean hands before and after using another person’s keyboard (including ICT Support Officer).	
6. Risk of exposure associated with the performance of the records management function	MLAs, staff exposed to COVID-19 Illness	<a href="#">Possible</a> <a href="#">Current ACT COVID-19 case numbers</a>	Moderate, although consequences will vary depending on a range of individual risk factors.	<b>Medium</b>	a. One staff member at a time in either the records compactus room or the archive project room to maintain the 1.5m distancing measures. a. Wash hands before and after leaving the rooms and have nitrile gloves available if needed. b. Clean keyboard, mouse, phone, compactus and trolley handles and desktop before and after use. c. Archive Officer to retain several materials at home so can continue to work if showing flu or cold symptoms. d. Staff to wash hands before/after handling physical files, especially if taking receipt of a file or passing one to another.	Director, Information and Digital Services
7. Covid-safe catering (exposure risks)	Illness, transmission of COVID-19 / virus infection	<a href="#">Possible</a> <a href="#">Current ACT COVID-19 case numbers</a>	Moderate, although consequences will vary depending on a range of individual risk factors.	<b>Medium</b>	a. Whether or not events may be catered will depend on the prevailing public health context, whether external room hire arrangements are permitted etc. b. Where catering is undertaken: ▪ Any crockery should have been washed in a dishwasher on the highest available setting and removed by a person wearing gloves. ▪ If a dishwasher is not available, they must be washed in warm soapy water, after hands have been thoroughly cleaned for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, and dried with clean paper towel. ▪ Disposable or single use crockery to be used where reasonably practicable. ▪ Events should consider implementing ways that crockery and other items will not be shared. ▪ Cleaning and disinfecting regimes established and implemented. Where the event is being held at an external venue, the organisers must liaise with the venue to confirm cleaning protocols. ▪ Physical distancing / observation of room limits. ▪ Hold events outdoors where practicable or open windows/doors to increase airflow. ▪ Alcohol based hand sanitiser and/or access to hand washing facilities with soap, is provided and maintained, at the event.	Event organisers
8. Exposure in connection with parliamentary education function (in-precinct / in-school)	Illness, transmission of COVID-19 / virus infection Business continuity impacts	<a href="#">Possible</a> <a href="#">Current ACT COVID-19 case numbers</a>	Moderate, although consequences will vary depending on a range of individual risk factors.	<b>Medium</b>	a. Suspension of education events in the precincts where public health advice / orders and Office risk assessment indicate unacceptable level of risk <a href="#">(ongoing consideration by OLA/Speaker)</a> . b. A dedicated risk assessment and Covid-19 (20/004002) plan has been developed to address risks associated with the resumption of education events. c. A dedicated risk assessment has been prepared in relation to ‘incursions’ that occur within the school environment. d. Limited catering to occur on resumption of the function (i.e. provision of water, individual fruit/juice portions). Catering decisions to be determined based on an assessment of transmission risks at any given time. e. Ongoing assessment on resumption of education events within the precincts. Implementation of relevant procedures that have been developed for resumption of education activities. f. Clear communication to the visit organiser (e.g. school or community group) to ensure compliance with COVID-19 health and safety requirements, including: • the visit will not proceed if Assembly education staff are sick/symptomatic; • the visit will not proceed if any students or teacher is sick/symptomatic, education staff will confirm this on day prior to the visit and also again upon arrival at the school; and • contact details will be exchanged between the school/education staff to allow for tracing in the event of a contact being identified after the program has been conducted. g. Education officers will enter the school, sign in and go straight to the classroom where the program is to be conducted, run the program and leave again immediately afterwards. Programs to be limited to 2 hours to match the	Manager, Education and Engagement

Risk / health or safety hazard	What is the harm that the risk/hazard could cause?	Likelihood of the harm	Impact of the harm in the form it is most likely to take	Risk rating	Internal controls—procedures, strategies and policies to manage risks Can be progressively added / adapted in light of prevailing health advice and risk environment	Treatment implementation
					<p>policy for in house programs, this will be reviewed in line with any easing of restrictions under the ACT Government COVID-19 recovery plan.</p> <p>h. Ensure any paperwork required by schools has been completed prior to the visit.</p> <p>i. Take single use resources (e.g. roleplay scripts), these will remain with the students and teacher at the conclusion of the visit.</p> <p>j. Mock mace, this will be cleaned prior to the visit, handled only by education staff and one student wearing disposable gloves during the roleplay (as sergeant-at-arms) and cleaned again at the conclusion of the visit.</p> <p>k. Education staff to maintain social distancing of at least 1.5m at all times, use sanitiser before, during and after the visit.</p> <p>l. More detailed procedures are available under <i>Venue and safety information for visiting groups</i> document (OLARIS 21/006937).</p>	
9. Poor / limited knowledge of appropriate public health advice, directions and hygiene practices in the precincts	<p>Persons enter the precincts who may be contagious.</p> <p>Occupants of the precincts do not take proper precautions to maintain proper personal hygiene</p>	Unlikely	Moderate, although consequences will vary depending on a range of individual risk factors.	Medium	<p>a. Installation of signage at entrances to the precincts advising that people who have respiratory or other symptoms (or who meet other exclusion criteria based on prevailing health advice) are not permitted to enter the precincts.</p> <p>b. Signage throughout the precincts advising of good hygiene practices and physical distancing. Hand washing instruction notice in all bathrooms.</p> <p>c. Information on these matters communicated periodically, including by Clerk / Speaker early in 10<sup>th</sup> Assembly.</p> <p>d. Periodic reminders/comms about hygiene, social distancing etc to guard against complacency.</p>	Manager, HR and Entitlements
10. Adverse effects associated with use of hand sanitiser	Dermatitis	Unlikely	Low Affected individuals may have a reaction	Low	<p>a. Workers are encouraged to wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 secs where possible as an alternative to hand sanitiser in non-medical situations.</p> <p>b. Occupants advised to moisturise hands frequently for skin health.</p>	Manager, HR and Entitlements
11. Inadequate support arrangements for <a href="#">vulnerable persons</a>	Exposure/infection of a vulnerable person to COVID-19 with exacerbated health impacts	Unlikely	High Vulnerable workers are at a greater risk of more serious illness with COVID-19.	Medium	<p>a. Managers, in consultation with HR and Entitlements, to ensure that there are appropriate measures in place (in line with the requirements set out in the whole of public sector checklist).</p> <p>b. Completion of self-identification forms and checklists by supervisors/managers/HR and implementation of appropriate strategies</p> <p>c. Manager, HR and Entitlements, wrote to managers (October 2021) with guidance on identifying and supporting people who belong to vulnerable groups (using forms developed by CMTEDD).</p> <p>d. Clerk wrote to all staff on 29 October 2021 reminding staff who belong to a vulnerable group, and who are not already identified as such, to complete relevant form.</p> <p>e. Implementation of ACTPS WHS guidance for vulnerable workers including working from home or redeployment</p> <p>f. Access to leave entitlements where unwell or if working arrangements cannot be accommodated due to undue risk to the worker's health and safety</p>	Manager, HR and Entitlements
12. Postural / ergonomic issues arising from home-based work	Overuse injuries, sprains, musculoskeletal problems.	Possible	Moderate	Medium	<p>a. Furniture, keyboards, monitors relocated to home offices as necessary Whole-of-government and OLA advisories about home-based work and ergonomics.</p> <p>a. Working from home agreements include the provision of information about the adequacy of the workspace in the home-based work environment.</p> <p>b. Individual ergonomic assessments available through HR and Entitlements.</p> <p>c. Advisories issued by HR and Entitlements at various points throughout the pandemic</p> <p>d. Apply <a href="#">WHS Guidance: Ergonomic Principles for Working from Home During Covid-19</a></p>	<p>Manager, HR and Entitlements (OLA and non-executive)</p> <p>Executive Support (ministers and their staff)</p>

Risk / health or safety hazard	What is the harm that the risk/hazard could cause?	Likelihood of the harm	Impact of the harm in the form it is most likely to take	Risk rating	Internal controls—procedures, strategies and policies to manage risks Can be progressively added / adapted in light of prevailing health advice and risk environment	Treatment implementation
13. Risk to mental and emotional health of staff in connection with social isolation and changing work requirements during the pandemic and the return to work.	Poor mental health outcomes for staff.	Unlikely	Moderate, although consequences will vary depending on a range of individual risk factors.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Ongoing awareness raising about strategies for effectively managing mental health and wellbeing and provision of contact details for EAP providers.</li> <li>b. Periodic reminders that all members and staff are able to access the Territory's EAP provider.</li> <li>c. Staff confronting particular difficulties in relation to emotional/mental health in connection with the pandemic and changing operating environment to contact their respective member, supervisor, HR area to <u>discuss any particular needs that they might have</u>. Make additional support services available as required. Communicate these arrangements to staff.</li> <li>d. Deliver training/seminar sessions on mental health/resilience/coping strategies</li> <li>e. Ensure frequent contact with staff / virtual team meetings, managers to 'check in' on vulnerable staff, specialist referrals.</li> </ul>	<p>Manager, HR and Entitlements (OLA and non-executive)</p> <p>Executive Support (ministers and their staff)</p>
14. Exposure via contact/touch points in the precincts	Illness, transmission of COVID-19 / virus infection Business continuity impacts	<u>Possible</u> <a href="#">Current ACT COVID-19 case numbers</a>	Moderate, although consequences will vary depending on a range of individual risk factors.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Deployment of hand sanitiser at entrances to the precincts (visitors and staff should use on entry to, and exit from, the precincts), in the chamber and committee rooms, members' and staff office areas, kitchen areas.</li> <li>b. Alcohol wipes made available at photocopiers/prints along with appropriate signage.</li> <li>c. Gloves to be worn during mail deliveries and cleaning of mail trollies prior to each use.</li> <li>d. PPE made available to attendants and first aid officers and guidance on circumstances in which it must be used/how to use the equipment.</li> <li>e. Additional, continuous and intensive cleaning measures have been adopted across the building. Cleaning of meeting rooms, committee rooms, chamber, function rooms following activity in those venues. Cleaners sanitise high traffic areas (including door handles, taps) each weekday (three times daily).</li> <li>f. Attendants wear gloves when circulating papers in the chamber and use hand sanitiser in between distributions.</li> <li>g. Where additional sanitiser is required, members/staff should contact the Manager, Security and Building Services.</li> <li>h. Discontinuation of cash handling.</li> </ul>	Manager, Security and Building Services
15. Exposure via particulate / aerosol expressed from person within the precincts	Illness, transmission of COVID-19 / virus infection Business continuity impacts	<u>Possible</u> <a href="#">Current ACT COVID-19 case numbers</a>	Moderate, although consequences will vary depending on a range of individual risk factors.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Advise occupants of the precincts that all public health directions concerning physical distancing must be observed by all visitors and occupants.</li> <li>b. Advise occupants of the precincts that person who has cold or flu-like symptoms or is feeling unwell is <u>not permitted in the precincts</u>.</li> <li>c. Installation of signage at members and public entrances about conditions of entry re physical distancing, symptoms/illness mask requirements, close contact requirements etc.</li> <li>d. Establishment of room limits—maximum number of people in committee rooms, reception and exhibition rooms, meeting rooms at any one time in line with applicable social distancing requirements. Requirements communicated to all building occupants, visitors (installation of signage at these rooms/venues).</li> <li>e. Continue to develop WHS-aware culture in the precincts—emphasis on shared obligations of MLAs, staff and visitors to abide by WHS measures (all MLAs, staff and contractors have statutory obligations in relation to the maintenance of a healthy and safe workplace).</li> <li>f. Condition of entry requirements posted at entrances.</li> <li>g. If workers are displaying any symptoms, they are directed to leave the precincts immediately. Provide advice / guidance to staff on</li> <li>h. Availability of surgical masks within the precincts for members, staff, visitors</li> <li>i. Where necessary, consideration of working from home/flexible arrangements in line with public health advice assessment of particular risks confronting the Assembly.</li> </ul>	Manager, Security and Building Services
16. Exposure risk—use of lifts	Illness, transmission of COVID-19 / virus infection	Unlikely <a href="#">Current ACT COVID-19</a>	Moderate, although consequences will vary depending on a range of	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. One person in lift only per trip (including signage to this effect)</li> <li>b. Masks to be worn if more (such as escorting a child)</li> <li>c. Social distancing adherence</li> <li>d. Lift maintenance for airflow</li> <li>e. Touch point cleaning</li> <li>f. COVID safe hygiene practices</li> </ul>	Manager, Security and Building Services



Risk / health or safety hazard	What is the harm that the risk/hazard could cause?	Likelihood of the harm	Impact of the harm in the form it is most likely to take	Risk rating	Internal controls—procedures, strategies and policies to manage risks Can be progressively added / adapted in light of prevailing health advice and risk environment	Treatment implementation
		<a href="#">case numbers</a>	individual risk factors.		g. People with flu like symptoms not allowed in precincts	
17. Poor arrangements for contact tracing	Occupants unknowingly exposed to COVID-19 illness  Occupants unknowingly expose others to virus  Downstream public health impacts	Unlikely	Moderate, although consequences will vary depending on a range of individual risk factors.	Medium	a. <del>All visitors to the Assembly are required to sign the visitors book and list contact details / use of CBR App to assist with contact tracing—New visitor management system coming online in the second part of 2022.</del> b. Members and staff contact details and attendance at the precincts are known through prox pass security system. c. Adoption of Safe Work Australia (SWA) protocol concerning arrangements for advising public health authorities where contact tracing is required. Advice provided Ensure occupants of precincts are aware of reporting process for suspected or known cases. If workers are displaying any symptoms, they are directed to leave the precincts immediately. Confirmed cases are managed by State/Territory health authorities. d. Confirmed cases are managed by State/Territory health authorities. e. Use of CBR App to assist with contact tracing to ensure that contact information, required under the relevant public health direction, are captured in relation to all visitors to the Assembly precincts. f. Email from Clerk / Speaker early in 10th Assembly about COVID-19 issues.	Manager, Security and Building Services
18. Exposure risks associated with building contractors	Illness, transmission of COVID-19 / virus infection	Possible <a href="#">Current ACT COVID-19 case numbers</a>	Moderate, although consequences will vary depending on a range of individual risk factors.	Medium	a. Updated contractor protocols to include WHS requirements associated with COVID-19 special measures (i.e. physical distancing, not to be present in precincts if sick/symptomatic, need to observe proper hygiene practices etc). b. Ensuring all contractors entering the building read, understand, and sign protocols agreements as per relevant policy requirement (appropriate maintenance of records of compliance).	Manager, Security and Building Services
19. Exposure risks associated with visitor processing function/task	Illness, transmission of COVID-19 / virus infection  Business continuity impacts	Possible <a href="#">Current ACT COVID-19 case numbers</a>	Moderate, although consequences will vary depending on a range of individual risk factors.	Medium	a. Adapted screening procedures so that 1.5m requirements can be observed. b. PPE available for attendants/first aid officers as a precautionary measure (i.e. to be used where attendants might be required to deal with a situation or event where elevated risk is present and additional protection is required). Where mask mandate in place, public facing staff to wear masks. c. Room limit applied in vestibule and foyer d. Once agreed, any new procedures, or adaptation of existing procedures, to be documented and communicated so that attendants, visitors, building occupants are all aware of their obligations. Use of CBR App. e. Advices about abiding by applicable public health orders posted at entrances.	Manager, Security and Building Services
20. Exposure risks associated with mail delivery	Illness, transmission of COVID-19 / virus infection  Business continuity impacts	Possible <a href="#">Current ACT COVID-19 case numbers</a>	Moderate, although consequences will vary depending on a range of individual risk factors.	Medium	<del>e-a.</del> Requirement that precincts occupants do not come into work if you are feeling unwell or have symptoms. <del>e-b.</del> Room limits and physical distancing. <del>e-c.</del> Increased airflow and ventilation in the building <del>f-d.</del> Attendants to wear face mask in delivering mail. <del>g-e.</del> Attendants to wear gloves in delivering mail. <del>h-f.</del> Attendants to maintain proper hygiene practices. <del>i-g.</del> Attendants to quickly drop mail at the office in-tray without stopping to talk with staff. <del>j-h.</del> Mail delivery to be completed during quieter times of day, such as before 0830 or after 1630 to minimise contact. <del>k-i.</del> Contracted DIMEO cleaner will sanitise all high contact areas, such as door handles, between 0900 and 1700. <del>l-j.</del> All staff identifying as vulnerable have taken steps to work from home.	Manager, Security and Building Services

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Risk / health or safety hazard	What is the harm that the risk/hazard could cause?	Likelihood of the harm	Impact of the harm in the form it is most likely to take	Risk rating	Internal controls—procedures, strategies and policies to manage risks Can be progressively added / adapted in light of prevailing health advice and risk environment	Treatment implementation
21. Exposure risks—meeting rooms	MLAs, staff, visitors exposed to COVID-19 illness	Possible <a href="#">Current ACT COVID-19 case numbers</a>	Moderate, although consequences will vary depending on a range of individual risk factors.	Medium	a. Applicable room limits posted (based on prevailing health advice) b. Intensive post-meeting cleaning (signage advising number to call to initiate cleaning following a meeting) c. Spacing of furniture to facilitate physical distancing	Manager, Security and Building Services
22. General business continuity and health and safety risks associated with a return to work within the precincts	Exposure to illness (higher intensities of persons in the precincts)	Possible <a href="#">Current ACT COVID-19 case numbers</a>	moderate	Medium	a. Subject to the latest advice from the Territory's public health advisers, members and staff returned to the precincts based on a number of factors including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>prevailing work requirements and priorities;</li> <li>the health and safety arrangements within individual work areas; and</li> <li>the health and wellbeing circumstances of individual members and staff.</li> </ul> b. Considerations include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reducing public transport intensities during peak travel periods;</li> <li>flexibility to allow staff to work at home where they might be symptomatic but still remain fit to work;</li> <li>staggering attendance/HBW; and</li> <li>assess logistics where furniture/ equipment is needed at both a HBW environment and within the precincts to cater from partial HBW work.</li> </ul>	PCBUs
23. Risks associated with the rollout of the vaccine across Australia, including in relation to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General communication about the rollout of the vaccination program;</li> <li>whether MLAs/staff, due to their professional requirements, fall into a higher priority group and consideration of impacts on MLAs/staff who have face-to-face roles</li> <li>the psychosocial health and safety of workers, including 'vaccine hesitancy',</li> </ol>	Vulnerable workers do not receive vaccine in line with appropriate level of priority.	Unlikely	Moderate, although consequences will vary depending on a range of individual risk factors.	Medium	a. It is acknowledged that given their roles as elected representatives, MLAs may come in contact with a large number of people in the community and that this could increase the likelihood of exposure. <sup>16</sup> Similarly, the Assembly's attendants, committee secretaries and parliamentary education staff may have a slightly elevated risk of exposure to the general population. Notwithstanding this, the consequences of exposure are likely to remain the same as for the rest of the population and there is no obvious case that would reasonably see MLAs or staff having a higher priority for vaccination by virtue of their professional responsibilities in the context of the national prioritisation criteria. Particular controls have been adopted for each of these groups to minimise risk of exposure (e.g. particular physical distancing (including room limits) and cleaning arrangements at committee hearings; COVID plan for education visits including revised procedures; revised screening procedures, availability of PPE for attendants etc). b. Psychosocial risks may arise in connection with concerns/beliefs about vaccinations, concerns/beliefs about others not being vaccinated, concerns/beliefs about others being vaccinated—the Speaker and the Office would rely on relevant messaging from ACT Health and other public health authorities about the safety and efficacy of vaccines (and addressing the disinformation where necessary). Internal messaging may be developed on a needs basis (for instance, if there were particular issues identified by public health authorities as needing to be specifically addressed at the workplace level. The Speaker's and the Clerk's message to occupants of the precincts on 2/3/21 relayed 'trusted sources of information'. c. Presently, there is no requirement for MLAs/staff to be vaccinated. Nor will there be any requirement for those working in the precincts to declare whether or not they have been vaccinated. While there may be good public health and public policy rationales for such an approach in certain professional settings (e.g. aged care, primary health care etc), those rationales do not have obvious relevance to the Assembly precincts. d. Vulnerable staff have been identified and particular arrangements have been put in place to manage their health and wellbeing (e.g. older people, people with chronic illness or who are immunosuppressed).	PCBUs

<sup>16</sup> Preliminary assessment is that while there may be staff who fall within a priority group based on certain attributes such as age, chronic condition, disability, ATSI status etc, there is unlikely to be a strong case that persons working in the Assembly would be prioritised ahead of the 2b group, merely by virtue of their professional roles and functions.

Risk / health or safety hazard	What is the harm that the risk/hazard could cause?	Likelihood of the harm	Impact of the harm in the form it is most likely to take	Risk rating	Internal controls—procedures, strategies and policies to manage risks Can be progressively added / adapted in light of prevailing health advice and risk environment	Treatment implementation
<p>risks associated with misinformation about vaccine efficacy and safety;</p> <p>d. whether there is a need to request and document proof of vaccination as an additional control;</p> <p>e. the effective management of vulnerable workers;</p> <p>f. the movement of MLAs/staff between other workplaces;</p> <p>g. the risk of complacency in the implementation and maintenance of appropriate controls during and following the vaccination rollout;</p> <p>h. whether or not vaccinations are required in order to work in the Assembly precincts.</p>					<p>e. Movement of MLAs/staff in other workplaces. For the most part, the Assembly precincts remain the primary workplace for MLAs and staff. However, it is acknowledged that MLAs and their staff may attend meetings offsite and in the community. Similarly, OLA staff will occasionally meet with staff from other agencies.</p> <p>f. Risk of complacency—Periodic messaging about the importance of complying with revised procedures and Covid safe working arrangements.</p> <p>Communication about the vaccination—Whole of public sector advices from ACT Health to all staff across the public sector about the vaccine rollout. Note from the Speaker and the Clerk about the rollout on 2/3/21.</p> <p>From health.gov.au: Australia remains on track to begin rolling out the COVID-19 Vaccination Program from 22 February 2021.</p> <p>Initial doses of vaccines will go to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>aged care and disability care residents and workers</li> <li>frontline healthcare workers</li> <li>quarantine and border workers.</li> </ul> <p>Quarantine and frontline health care workers will need to provide proof of occupation to be vaccinated under phases 1a and 1b of the rollout. The <a href="https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines/getting-vaccinated-for-covid-19/when-will-i-get-a-covid-19-vaccine#COVID-19-vaccine-national-rollout-phases">Commonwealth Government's phasing</a> is set out as follows (see <a href="https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines/getting-vaccinated-for-covid-19/when-will-i-get-a-covid-19-vaccine#COVID-19-vaccine-national-rollout-phases">https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines/getting-vaccinated-for-covid-19/when-will-i-get-a-covid-19-vaccine#COVID-19-vaccine-national-rollout-phases</a>).</p> <p>Most members and staff are likely to fall into category '2b' (i.e. the balance of the Australian population). <a href="https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/stay-safe-and-healthy/vaccine">https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/stay-safe-and-healthy/vaccine</a></p> <p>The Office and the Speaker will act on relevant advices from ACT Health and the Commonwealth Department of Health and any related directions concerning COVID-19 vaccinations (See <a href="https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/stay-safe-and-healthy/vaccine">https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/stay-safe-and-healthy/vaccine</a> and <a href="https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines/getting-vaccinated-for-covid-19/why-should-i-get-vaccinated-for-covid-19">https://www.health.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/covid-19-vaccines/getting-vaccinated-for-covid-19/why-should-i-get-vaccinated-for-covid-19</a> )</p> <p>g. Latest information on the vaccination rollout is available at <a href="https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/stay-safe-and-healthy/vaccine">https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/stay-safe-and-healthy/vaccine</a></p>	
<p>24. Exposure risks—committee hearings / meetings</p>	<p>Illness, transmission of COVID-19 / virus infection</p> <p>Business continuity impacts</p>	<p><u>Possible</u></p> <p><u>Current ACT COVID-19 case numbers</u></p>	<p>Moderate, although consequences will vary depending on a range of individual risk factors.</p>	<p><b>Medium</b></p>	<p>a. The Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure has previously acknowledged that it is ultimately a matter for each committee of the Assembly to decide exactly how it wishes to conduct its proceedings (i.e. in person or remotely). The standing orders permit hearings to be conducted remotely and this has proved to be an effective way of ensuring that committee proceedings have been able to continue during lockdown.</p> <p>b. Where committees decide to conduct a public hearing in the Assembly with witnesses appearing in person, the following internal controls will apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>strict requirements around the 1.5m spacing of witnesses to be implemented (appropriate spacing of furniture in gallery and for members and witnesses);</li> <li>maximum number of people at the table at any one time (where a number of witnesses appearing at once, witnesses would sub in/off in order to ensure that the maximum allow number is not exceeded;</li> <li>where public galleries are to be used, 1.5m spacing of seating arrangements and limits on number of people permitted in at any one time;</li> <li>cleaning of committee rooms furniture, fittings following a hearing or meeting;</li> <li>removal of excess furniture to aid in compliance; and</li> <li>Chair/Secretary to enforce compliance.</li> </ul> <p>c. Where private meetings are in-person much the same arrangements as for public hearings apply (see above).</p>	<p>Senior Director, Committees</p>

Risk / health or safety hazard	What is the harm that the risk/hazard could cause?	Likelihood of the harm	Impact of the harm in the form it is most likely to take	Risk rating	Internal controls—procedures, strategies and policies to manage risks Can be progressively added / adapted in light of prevailing health advice and risk environment	Treatment implementation
25. Inadequate communications lead to suboptimal understanding of the Assembly's/Office's policies, procedures, arrangements around COVID-19	Poor compliance, poor WHS culture re COVID-19	Unlikely	Moderate, although consequences will vary depending on a range of individual risk factors.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>d. Periodic whole-of-precincts emails by the Speaker and Clerk.</li> <li>e. Newsletter articles, intranet updates</li> <li>f. Website, social media advices.</li> <li>g. Signage on restrictions, good hygiene practices, room limits etc throughout the precincts.</li> <li>h. Update MessageMedia SMS update system where appropriate</li> </ul>	Senior Director, Office of the Clerk
26. Risk of exposure in connection with the performance of the Hansard transcription function.	MLAs, staff exposed to COVID-19 Illness	Possible <a href="#">Current ACT COVID-19 case numbers</a>	Moderate, although consequences will vary depending on a range of individual risk factors.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Home based work may be adopted (subject to public health advice and whole-of-public-sector policy settings).</li> <li>b. New requirements implemented regarding the maximum number of persons in the Hansard booth at any one time.</li> <li>c. Regular cleaning of shared controls/panels/keyboards (particular between change of operators) in Hansard booth.</li> <li>d. Mask wearing in the Hansard booth.</li> </ul>	Senior Hansard Editor
27. Risk of exposure in connection with Office's social club activities	MLAs, staff, visitors exposed to COVID-19 Illness	Possible <a href="#">Current ACT COVID-19 case numbers</a>	Moderate, although consequences will vary depending on a range of individual risk factors.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Events/activities are to be discontinued where public health advice and whole-of-public-sector policy settings indicate that this is required.</li> <li>b. Applicable health advice/social distancing requirements to be strictly observed.</li> <li>c. Communications prior to event advising workers not to attend the event if unwell, experiencing symptoms, or meet other criteria for potential exposure (e.g. close contact, awaiting test result, been to an area identified as high risk of exposure). Any workers who attend the event that are showing symptoms of being unwell will be asked to leave.</li> <li>d. Hand hygiene items available at event.</li> <li>e. Signage to promote hand hygiene.</li> <li>f. Organise food and drink items that are not on share platters or designed to be shared amongst a group.</li> <li>g. Cleaning and disinfecting regimes established and implemented. Where the event is being held at a venue, the organisers must liaise with the venue to confirm cleaning protocols.</li> <li>h. Physical distancing.</li> <li>i. Hold events outdoors where practicable or open windows/doors to increase airflow (end of year function to be held outside)</li> <li>j. Mask wearing in accordance with public health restrictions at the time of the event.</li> <li>k. Alcohol based hand sanitiser and/or access to hand washing facilities with soap, is provided and maintained, at the event.</li> <li>l. Business continuity planning to ensure coverage of services and/or business operations during event and in the event of an outbreak.</li> <li>m. Promote a number of ways of getting home safely after the event in communications prior (public transport, carpooling with masks/doors open, taxi / uber).</li> </ul>	Social Club President Manager, HR and Entitlements Office of the Clerk (end of year event)

**Appendix B: WHS Risk register template for MLAs/their staff/OLA managers and staff**

<b>Risk / Hazard</b> What is the thing that can go wrong?	<b>Harms to health / safety</b> What is the harm that the risk/hazard could cause	<b>Likelihood</b> Refer to risk matrix at Appendix D	<b>Impact</b> Refer to risk matrix at Appendix D	<b>Risk rating</b> Refer to risk matrix at Appendix D	<b>Internal controls</b> List the procedures, strategies, controls, policies etc that are in place to manage risks	<b>New treatments</b> List any additional treatments that are required to eliminate risk or minimise risk. Include who is responsible for implementing and by when.
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						
6.						
7.						
8.						

## Appendix C: Risk matrix (From ACT Insurance Authority (ACTIA) as at September 2021)

Likelihood of Consequence	Description	Historical Frequency	Expectation	Matrix	1	2	3	4	5
	Almost Certain	Occurs on most occurrences of the activity	Expected to happen this time	5	Medium	High	High	Extreme	Extreme
	Likely	Occurs on some occurrences of the activity	Expected to occur on one of the next few occasions	4	Medium	Medium	High	High	Extreme
	Possible	Infrequently occurs here	Could occur at some time in the future. Would not be surprised if occurred	3	Low	Medium	Medium	High	Extreme
	Unlikely	Has never occurred here	Might occur but unlikely. Would be surprised if it occurred	2	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High *
	Rare	Has never occurred here, but may have / has occurred somewhere	Might occur, but only in exceptional circumstances. Would be very surprised if occurred	1	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High *

### Impacts of physical or psychological harm

People Injuries (physical & psychological)	Direct physical and psychological injuries to people (staff, contractors, customers) arising from the risk occurring.	No injury or treatment required.	Injury which: • Requires treatment (not hospitalisation); and/or • Impacts capacity to work for a period of one week or less; and/or multiple people sustain injury/ies not requiring treatment.	Injury which: • Requires hospitalisation; and/or • Impacts on capacity to work for a period of greater than one week; and/or multiple people sustain injury/ies which: • Require treatment • Impact their capacity to work for a period of one week or less.	Single injury which: • Is life-threatening (including loss of limbs); and/or • Results in permanent disability; and /or • Results in permanent (partial or total) impact on capacity to work; and /or multiple people sustain injury/ies which: • Require hospitalisation • Impact their capacity to work for greater than one week.	Death and/or multiple injury/ies which result in: • Permanent impact on capacity to work; • Permanent disability.
	The impact to people arising from Natural Disaster related events is covered under the Emergency / Disaster Management categories					

## Appendix D: Workplace exposure tool (also [available here](#))

<b>When is an assessment required</b>	<p>ACTPS employees who test positive for COVID-19, and have attended work during their infectious period, must notify their manager so a workplace exposure risk assessment can be conducted. If they were not in the workplace during their infectious period, then no assessment is required.</p> <p>The risk of infection with COVID-19 following exposure to someone who has tested positive increases if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- workplace contacts spent a long time with the person who has COVID-19, and interacted closely with them</li> <li>- if the person was indoors with someone who has COVID-19 (the risk is lower if both were outdoors)</li> <li>- if the exposed person or the person with COVID-19 were not wearing face masks (the risk is lower if they were both wearing a face mask properly)</li> </ul>		
<b>Workplace contact risk rating</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>LOW</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MODERATE</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>HIGH</b></p>
<b>Type of workplace exposure</b>	<p>Interactions that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• outdoors for any length of time, with or without physical distance adhered to or masks worn;</li> <li>• in well ventilated indoor space for any length of time, where physical distance was &gt; 1.5m and masks worn;</li> <li>• in a small enclosed space (such as a small meeting room or vehicle cabin) for &lt;30 continuous minutes, with masks worn</li> </ul>	<p>Interactions that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in well ventilated indoor space for &gt;30 minutes with <i>either</i> physical distance or mask wearing not adhered to</li> <li>• in a small enclosed space (such as a small meeting room or vehicle cabin) for &gt; 30 continuous minutes, with masks worn</li> </ul>	<p>Interactions that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prolonged (more than 4 hours) while indoors (except large/well ventilated space); or</li> <li>• in a small enclosed space (such as a small meeting room or vehicle cabin) for &gt;30 continuous minutes <b>and COVID safe practices for mask wearing and physical distancing were not consistently adhered to during interaction.</b></li> </ul> <p>NOTE - Interactions that take place outdoors, or in large well ventilated indoor areas would not be considered high risk, unless exceptional circumstances exist, such as sustained failing of multiple safety controls, eg extended close physical contact without masks or interactions over multiple consecutive days.</p>
<b>Action required by the workplace</b>	<p>Workplaces must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• confirm that safety controls were being communicated (such as with signposting) in the workplace at the time of the interaction and at point of assessment</li> </ul> <p>Where that condition is met, it is not necessary to advise workplace contacts that a person who has tested positive was in the workplace.</p> <p>Where measures were not effectively communicated in the workplace, review safety arrangements with a view to improving communication.</p>	<p>Workplaces must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• notify employees and other work-related contacts (where practicable) that they have been identified as moderate risk contacts and to follow the ACT Health guidance <a href="#">Checklist and template</a></li> <li>• provide employees with access to onsite rapid antigen testing (where available) or leave to access a PCR test. If an onsite rapid antigen test result is negative, the employee can continue to attend the workplace</li> <li>• implement work from home arrangements for affected employees, if possible, if waiting for test results</li> <li>• if working from home is not possible, or the employee is unwell, provide <a href="#">leave</a> while in quarantine</li> <li>• maintain ongoing contact with affected employees</li> <li>• implement immediate action to review workplace COVID safe practices</li> </ul>	<p>Workplaces must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• notify employees and other work-related contacts (where practicable) that are identified as high risk contacts as soon as possible to follow the ACT health guidance</li> <li>• if possible and the employee is well, implement work from home arrangements for affected employees</li> <li>• if working from home is not possible, or the employee is unwell, provide <a href="#">access to leave whilst required to be in quarantine</a></li> <li>• reinforce the workplace COVID safe controls for the workforce</li> <li>• maintain ongoing contact with affected employees</li> <li>• take immediate action to review workplace COVID-safe practices</li> </ul>
<b>Action required by workplace contacts</b>	<p>All workers should continue to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• monitor closely for symptoms of COVID-19</li> <li>• undergo a rapid antigen or PCR test for COVID-19 if they develop any symptoms and quarantine until receiving a negative result and symptoms resolve.</li> </ul> <p>Employees can continue to attend the workplace if they do not have symptoms.</p>	<p>Employees identified as moderate risk contacts must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have a rapid antigen or PCR test as soon as possible and quarantine until a negative result is received. If onsite rapid antigen testing is not available, leave the workplace – where onsite RAT is available, it should be used to limit movement and minimise work impacts</li> <li>• follow the ACT Health guidance for a <a href="#">moderate risk contact</a>; including having another rapid antigen or PCR test on day 6 from last date of exposure, if the first test was undertaken before day 5. There is no need to quarantine while awaiting results of the day 6 test if asymptomatic.</li> <li>• monitor closely for symptoms for the 14 days following the exposure</li> <li>• get tested if symptoms arise and quarantine until a negative result is received <b>and</b> symptoms resolve</li> </ul> <p>Employees can attend the workplace if they receive a negative test result <b>and</b> do not have symptoms</p>	<p>Employees identified as high-risk contacts must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• leave the workplace (if at work) and have a rapid antigen test or PCR test as soon as possible.</li> <li>• quarantine for 7 days from the date of last exposure, regardless of the initial test result</li> <li>• follow the ACT Health guidance for a <a href="#">high risk contact</a></li> </ul> <p>Employees can attend the workplace after they receive a negative test result, complete 7 days of quarantine and if they do not have symptoms</p>
<p><b>Requirements for release from quarantine on return to the workplace:</b>  ACT Health only provides written clearance (email and text) from isolation for people who have tested positive for COVID-19.</p> <p>High and moderate risk workplace exposure contacts must follow the advice on the ACT Health website at the conclusion of their quarantine period.</p>			