

Policy Number	PGNSW011
Current Version	1.1
Policy Maintained by	General Manager, Programs & Quality
Reviewed & Approved by CEO	24 January 2022
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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 Playgroup NSW is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all our workplace participants, members, families, volunteers and community and has a duty of care to eliminate, or if that is not possible, minimise, so far as is reasonably practicable, the risk of exposure to infection from COVID-19 in the workplace both now and into the future.
- 1.2 This policy sets out the approach that all Service Providers and Community Playgroups must take to consider and manage COVID-19 risks to keep workplace participants, members, families, volunteers and communities safe. It is intended to be read in conjunction with other relevant safety policies and procedures. Whilst COVID-19 vaccinations are a critical step towards ensuring safer workplaces, it is important that physical distancing, good hygiene and regular cleaning and maintenance measures under relevant policies continue to apply, even if the entire workforce has been vaccinated.

2. DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Service Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisations that receive funding from Playgroup NSW to deliver services to Clients, including Workers of the Service Provider.
Community Playgroups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Playgroups run by Committee Members and volunteers
Clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clients is used to describe any individual, group, child or parent/carer to whom services or programs, which are contracted by Playgroup NSW, are made available. The term Clients used in this policy includes but is not limited to people with a disability, children, their parent or carer, their families, or members of the public.
Worker	A person is a Worker if the person carries out work (paid or unpaid) in any capacity for the Service Provider. The term includes employees, contractors, sub-contractors, consultants, volunteers and students (including apprentices, trainees, and those on work experience).
COVID-19 Vaccination	COVID-19 vaccination means the recommended number of doses (or as otherwise approved) of a COVID-19 vaccine approved by the

	Therapeutic Goods Administration for use in Australia. This includes booster doses, when required by Public Health Order and person is eligible.
COVID-19 Risk Assessment	A process which Service Providers and its delegates use to assess and manage the Workplace Health & Safety (WHS) risks from COVID-19.
Service Provider COVID-19 Management Plan	The documented approach to the management of COVID-19 which includes the COVID-19 Safety Plan, a risk assessment for each service setting, and the other minimum requirements set out in this policy.

3. NATIONAL COVID-19 VACCINATION ROLLOUT

- 3.1 The Australian Government is implementing a vaccination program and availability for anyone aged 5 years old and over. Booster doses are also now available to everyone 18 years and over who have had both doses of their primary course of a COVID-19 vaccine at least 3 months ago.

4. OUR POLICY

- 4.1 Our COVID-19 Management Policy for Playgroup NSW Service Providers and Community Playgroups will continue to be informed by any applicable laws, enforceable government directions and advice issued by Commonwealth and State governments.
- 4.2 The Australian Government's policy is that receiving a vaccination is voluntary, although it aims to have as many Australians vaccinated as possible.
- 4.3 The risks of COVID-19 have presented the need to have comprehensive vaccination requirements in place to:
- protect the communities we serve, noting that many are vulnerable
 - protect our employees and their families from potential sources of infection among the communities we serve
 - provide a safe environment for our employees to work together
 - ensure business continuity to the communities we serve.
- 4.4 Playgroup NSW will continually review WHS practices and medical guidance to assess the reasonableness of vaccination directions in line with the above factors.

5. VACCINATION EVIDENCE

- 5.1 Most premises in NSW are now open to everyone, regardless of full vaccination or not.
- 5.2 Playgroup NSW requires Service Providers to advise Playgroup NSW that their Workers are vaccinated.
- 5.3 For all other individuals attending a venue, Service Providers and Community Playgroups must comply with the requirements specified by the owner of the venue.

6. RISK ASSESSMENT AND RISK CONTROL MEASURES

- 6.1 Safe Work NSW recommends that all workplaces must assess (in consultation with their Workers) and look for ways to minimise the risk of COVID-19.
- 6.7 Various control options must be considered and the control that most effectively eliminates the risk of harm or minimises the risk in the circumstances should be chosen.

The Risk Assessment will form a core component of the Service Provider's COVID-19 Management Plan.

- existing risk assessment and management procedures already in use by Service providers may be adapted to consider the risk in relation to COVID-19.
- Service Providers should consider the hierarchy (or order) of controls when managing hazards and risks in the workplace.

The Risk Assessment should identify relevant control measures in response to the particular circumstances and conditions to the individual playgroup. These control measures should then be worked through when managing risks. In the first instance the focus should be on eliminating risks. If this is not reasonably practical, the objective is to seek to minimise the risks by identifying and then working through other appropriate alternatives.

7. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 Risk assessment considerations include:

- worksite or locations where it is necessary to protect Workers and Clients from further community transmission
- if there is a greater risk that Workers will be exposed to the virus due to the operating environment (for example, Workers who work with children where physical distancing is not always possible)
- if the Worker works with at risk populations (for example, children, people with disability, or other worker groups who work with at risk populations).
- Service Providers and Community Playgroups should also consider risks posed by unvaccinated Clients, visitors and other third parties that are on site or potentially in contact with Workers and Clients and consider appropriate mitigations. This may include restrictions on access for unvaccinated visitors.

- 7.2 The following are examples of the risk control measures that should be considered. The actual measures chosen will correspond to the level of risk identified in the risk assessment.

Risk control measures include but are not limited to:

- implementing control measures to prevent COVID-19 entering workplaces, and supporting Workers to adhere to public health requirements
- where appropriate and lawful, implementing vaccination requirements to reduce the risk of infection, transmission and serious illness
- implementing controls to reduce direct contact with Workers and Clients (where reasonably practicable), including:
 - physical distancing
 - barriers and/or modifying workplace layouts to create adequate space at counters, between workstations, seated areas etc.
- modifying shifts, hours and rosters to reduce peak periods. For example, stagger start and finish times, days of the week from home or office
- actively support flexible work arrangements, including working from home or other locations

- implementing controls to reduce environmental exposure, including
- inspecting and reviewing air conditioning and ventilation systems
- cleaning and disinfection of high traffic areas and shared surfaces
- providing cleaning products and instruction for cleaning workspaces
- providing instruction and amenities for personal hygiene and infection control, and providing appropriate personal protective equipment, for example gloves and masks.

8. OUR EXPECTATIONS OF OTHERS

- 8.1 It is important that all workplace participants, members, families, volunteers comply with our safety policies and accept responsibility for their individual actions and responsibilities in helping us achieve a COVIDSafe workplace.

9. SERVICE PROVIDERS

- 9.1 Playgroup NSW requires all Service Providers to take appropriate and comprehensive measures to minimise the risks of COVID-19 transmission and infection. These measures are required to protect the health and safety of all workers and clients in circumstances where there is a risk to those workers and clients contracting COVID-19.
- 9.2 The risks of COVID-19 have presented the need to consider comprehensive measures to:
- protect the Clients, noting that many are vulnerable
 - protect Workers, and provide a safe environment for Workers to work together and provide services to the Clients they serve
 - ensure business continuity for playgroups.
- 9.3 Under work health and safety (WHS) laws, employers have a duty of care to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of Workers at work and those affected by their work. In relation to COVID-19, this means that Service Providers must manage the risk of COVID-19 to Workers and others in the work environment.
- 9.4 As services and work environments are all different, the risks and appropriate measures to manage these risks will vary for each Service Provider.
- 9.5 Playgroup NSW requires all Workers of Service Providers to be fully vaccinated, including a booster dose when required and eligible. Service Providers must provide proof of vaccination of Workers if requested by Playgroup NSW.
- 9.7 Service Providers must comply with and take all reasonable steps to ensure their Workers comply with relevant public health orders which may be in place pertaining to their workforce at any given time.

10. SERVICE PROVIDER REQUIREMENTS

10.1 Service Provider COVID-19 Management Plan

Playgroup NSW requires all Service Providers to have a documented COVID-19 Management Plan.

The Service Provider COVID-19 Management Plan should at a minimum include:

- the requirements outlined in NSW Government [COVID-19 Safety Plans](#)
- a risk assessment for each service setting, and a plan to respond to each risk in day-to-day business

- Provider can continue to deliver services during a COVID-19 incident
- processes and activities to respond to a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 in the workplace
- processes and activities for supporting a client with a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19
- processes and activities for managing the risks associated with supporting a Client who is unvaccinated
- processes for recording visitors to the workplace, including the use of QR codes, where this is still a requirement
- processes for supporting testing, tracing and isolation of Workers and Clients exposed to COVID-19 in line with public health requirements
- processes for recording, monitoring compliance and managing contraindications when vaccination is a requirement to control COVID-19 risk.

10.2 If services already have a COVID-19 Safety Plan, business continuity plan and a risk assessment, these documents can be considered together as the Service Provider COVID-19 Management Plan provided they address all the other minimum requirements listed above.

11. COMMUNITY PLAYGROUPS

11.1 Community Playgroup coordinators and committees must be compliant with NSW Government COVID Rules and Restrictions, specifically relating to the following:

- Public Health Orders - Compliance with Public Health Orders and other venue guidelines.
- Mask wearing – All participants over the age of 12, in indoor areas must wear a mask.
- COVID-19 Safe Check in and QR codes – Individual groups will need to check venue requirements and provide QR Codes if the venue requires it.
- Vaccination evidence – Adhere to premises guidelines relating to proof of vaccination.
- Risk Assessment – Complete a Risk Assessment specifically related to the individual circumstances of the playgroup. To reduce risks associated with COVID-19, you may consider holding the group outdoors, use signage relating to hygiene and social distancing and regularly assess proper cleaning needs.
- A written COVID-19 Safety Plan specifically related to the individual circumstances of the playgroup must be always kept on the playgroup premises. The link here outlines the safety plan to be completed: [COVID Safety Plan Template](#)

12. NON-COMPLIANCE

12.1 Where a Service Provider chooses not to follow the terms set out in this policy, Playgroup NSW reserves the right to withhold payment of the funds as agreed in the terms of the Service Level Agreement.

12.2 The Service Provider and Community Playgroups will be liable for the payment of any fines, and other penalties issued as a result of non-compliance with the Public Health Orders and other applicable laws.

13. RECORD KEEPING

It is the responsibility of the Service Provider and Community Playgroups to ensure compliance with any requirements relating to the COVID-19 pandemic and to ensure this is in accordance with government guidelines or other guidelines as required by the venue owner.

14. PUBLIC HEALTH ORDERS PER STATE AND TERRITORY

- Commonwealth: [Federal Register](#) 
- New South Wales: [Government Gazette](#) 

15. RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

- NSW Public Health Orders
- Public Health Act 2010
- Work Health and Safety Act (NSW) 2011
- Work Health and Safety Regulation (NSW) 2011
- Safe Work Australia: COVID-19 vaccination guidance for employers, small business and workers
- Safe Work NSW: Guide to help you stay safe at work during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Fair Work Ombudsman: Coronavirus and Australian workplace laws
- NSW Government: Code of Practice - How to manage work health and safety risks
- Office of the Australian Information Commissioner: Understanding your privacy obligations to your staff
- Australian Human Rights Commission: COVID-19 vaccinations and federal discrimination law

16. VARIATIONS

PGNSW reserves the right to vary, replace or terminate this Policy from time to time.

Acknowledgement

I acknowledge:

- *receiving the COVID-19 Management Policy for Playgroup NSW Service Providers and Community Playgroups*
- *that we will comply with the Policy; and*
- *Playgroup NSW's insurance cover for playgroups continues, however, these insurances will not cover incidents or illness related to COVID-19 (e.g., loss of deposit on an event due to COVID-19, transmission of COVID-19 to an attendee or any fines related to breaches of PHOs).*

**Service
Provider/Community
Playgroup Name:**

Signed:

Title:

Date:
