

COVID-19 RISK ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION PLANNING FOR SCHOOL BOARDING PREMISES

Purpose of this document

The Department of Education and Training fact sheet *Advice for schools in managing the risk of COVID-19 transmission in school boarding premises* [\(insert hyperlink\)](#) provides guidance for Victorian school boarding premises on lowering the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) transmission. The advice notes that school boarding premises must undertake a systematic risk assessment and mitigation process to manage the risk posed by coronavirus (COVID-19) within their facility. This requirement is consistent with advice issued by the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC).

This document is intended to support school boarding premises to undertake a risk assessment, develop appropriate risk mitigation strategies and processes, and develop individual action plans for each student at a school boarding premises. It is also intended to support school boarding premises to plan for and manage potential outbreak scenarios, including through identifying actions to be undertaken if a premises needs to temporarily partially or completely close.

This document should be read in conjunction with the fact sheet for school boarding premises as well as the Department of Education and Training's [Health and safety advice for return to onsite schooling in the context of coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#). School boarding premises should also keep in mind their child safety obligations and any relevant regulatory requirements, including those for international students.

Who should use this document

All Victorian school boarding premises are required to undertake a risk assessment related to the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) within their facility. School boarding premises are encouraged to use this document as a guide.

Section A: Risk identification and minimisation plan

The below table identifies risk management strategies that school boarding premises should consider to limit the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) transmission. It is recognised that each school boarding premises is different and will face different issues and challenges in managing the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19). School boarding premises should consider and implement actions that are appropriate to their specific setting.

Risk management strategy	Example actions (Refer to fact sheet for further advice)	Is the school boarding premises currently achieving this? (If YES, list implemented actions and consider any need for further actions; if NO consider and decide on actions to be implemented)	Action(s) to be implemented	By when?	Lead person
Reducing the number of boarders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraging boarders whose primary place of residence is close to school to stay home and attend as day students Supporting families of children choosing billeting out with other families, with appropriate actions to support student protection 				
Revising sleeping arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preference for single rooms for sleeping Where single rooms are not available, consider cohorting students who are also together in class/sport within a dormitory 				
Reducing mixing between different groups of boarders/ cohorting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staggering dining times in shared dining rooms Allocating boarders to specific shared communal facilities, such as bathrooms, toilets and recreation areas 				
Physical distancing between adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requiring all staff and adult visitors to the premises to maintain 1.5 metres physical distancing 				

Limiting visitors to the school boarding premises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limiting visitors to school boarding premises to those providing essential services and parents, guardians, relatives and others who may be providing care or support to students or staff at a school boarding premises as necessary 				
Infection control (including hygiene and cleaning)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducting routine extended cleaning of school boarding premises Encouraging regular hand hygiene for all staff and students Infection control training for staff 				

Section B: Planning to respond

Building on the risk identification and minimisation planning above, school boarding premises need to develop strategies outlining the planned response to scenarios such as single or multiple cases and/or close contacts being identified amongst the boarders. School boarding premises should also conduct scenario planning for a temporary partial or full closure of the facility should there be required. Should a confirmed case in the premises occur, school boarding premises should contact the coronavirus phone line on 1800 338 663 to seek advice on next steps.

Response strategy	Considerations for inclusion	By when?	Lead person	Is action completed? (Y/N)
Development of individual action plans for students	<p><i>Actions to be undertaken if:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The student is a suspected or confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) and needs to be isolated The student is a close contact of a confirmed case of (COVID-19) and needs to be quarantined It becomes necessary to temporarily close the facility due to an outbreak <p><i>In cooperation with the student and family consider:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether it is safe and/or practical for the student to return home for isolation or quarantine If the student is to return home for isolation or quarantine, how will the student return home? 			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>If the student cannot return home for isolation or quarantine, what alternative accommodation and supervision arrangements will be arranged?</i> • <i>If the student remains at the school boarding premises for isolation or quarantine, how will separation from other boarders be achieved?</i> • <i>Any alternative accommodation arrangements that need to be organised for the student in the event that the school boarding premises temporarily closes and the student is unable to return home (including considerations for international students)</i> • <i>Any individual circumstances that may affect the actions taken for the student</i> 			
Scenario planning for single and multiple confirmed cases and/or close contacts, where the school boarding premises remains open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Implementation of affected students' action plans</i> • <i>Implementation of appropriate actions for affected staff</i> • <i>Actions to protect the health and wellbeing of other students and staff within the school boarding premises</i> • <i>Communications plan</i> 			
Scenario planning for single and multiple confirmed cases and/or close contacts, where the school boarding premises needs to temporarily close	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Implementation of affected students' action plans</i> • <i>Implementation of appropriate actions for affected staff</i> • <i>Actions to protect the health and wellbeing of other students and staff within the school boarding premises</i> • <i>Actions to relocate and supervise students</i> • <i>Communications plan</i> 			

Further resources

Department of Education and Training resources:

- *Advice for schools in managing the risk of COVID-19 transmission in school boarding premises* **(insert hyperlink)**
- [Health and safety advice for return to onsite schooling in the context of coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

[Department of Health and Human Services resources:](#)

- [Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\) confirmed case: What you need to know](#)
- [Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\) suspected case: What you need to know](#)
- [Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\) close contact: What you need to know](#)