

ARGYLE COMMUNITY TRUST

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Policy Documents

# **COVID 19 – Policy v2**

13<sup>th</sup> May 2020

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## 1. Policy Statement

Argyle Community Trust is fully committed to ensuring that our programmes, clients, services, delivery and staff are safe and protected as well as possible during their work with the Trust.

In order to achieve this ACT will ensure that risks are assessed in line with H&S Policy and that all staff are made aware through appropriate training and information about the expectations placed upon them; this will include understanding of the Corona virus pandemic (COVID 19) symptoms and Government Health advice on how to reduce risk not just to themselves but those around them.

This policy will also set out the process for creating and disseminating new systems of work and required working practices that will need to be put in place to reduce risk of spreading COVID 19.

It is also important to understand that everyone should approach the health, safety and wellbeing of each other in the workplace with compassion and understanding.

*ACT will review this **COVID 19 Policy** at least every three months. In addition, more frequent reviews will be undertaken following any major incidents, incident learning outcomes, organisational changes or changes to legislation and Government advice.*

## 1. Aims and Objectives

**The aims of our policy are to:**

- Comply with all relevant regulatory requirements.
- Continually monitor and update recommendations set by the Government Health authority in relation to the COVID 19 pandemic and its spread.
- Increase Trustees and employee's awareness whilst encouraging full participation
- Outline the basic principles for setting up safe systems of work and provide a framework to guide managers' decision making processes.

**The objectives of this policy will be to;**

Set out recommendations and statutory requirements to manage the spread of COVID 19 using the following areas for action:

- *Social Distancing*
- *Personal Hygiene – hand washing and sanitising*
- *Safe Systems of Work, PPE and Risk Assessment*
- *Remote Working and Virtual Meetings*
- *Deliveries and Post*
- *Cleaning and Waste Disposal*
- *Premises Management*
- *Information Sharing and Reporting*
- *Working on external sites*
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## 2. Roles and Responsibilities

The responsibility for delivering the systems within this policy rests with everyone at Argyle Community Trust.

### Trustees

Trustees are expected to hold the Trust to account for fulfilling its public health obligations and therefore have a role to play in ensuring that the Trust has appropriate policies and procedures in place and that they are fit for purpose. Covid 19 will be included as an agenda item under the standing item for Health and Safety. Trustees should also ensure that any additional costs needed for training and delivering this policy are reflected in budgets and are adequately financed.

### Head of Community and Senior Managers

The Head of Community is accountable for ensuring that all areas of the Trust are complying with the actions set out in this policy. Senior managers have a role in ensuring that the policy and procedure is put into operation and that outcomes are recorded and discrepancies are acted upon.

### Health and Safety Manager

The overall responsibility for maintaining, updating and ensuring compliance of our Policy and its impact rests with the Trust's Health and Safety Manager. They will report back to the Argyle Community Trust Board and will be responsible for supporting managers in their understanding and fulfilling the operational implementation of the policy. There is also a requirement that the Health and Safety manager attends any EFL or EFL Trust updates and briefings and keeps abreast of current Government or PHE policy.

### Programme Managers

Programme managers have responsibility for planning and delivering programmes that are operationally compliant with this policy.

### Delivery Staff

Delivery staff are responsible for delivering programmes, sessions or lessons in line with Argyle Community Trust best practice. They should ensure that they are familiar with policies and procedures as well as expectations for their specific role. Delivery staff are also responsible for ensuring that they participate fully in any training opportunities offered with regard Covid-19 and that they read all updates provided and respond in a timely manner.

### External Partners

As the Trust works with a wide range of external partners it is important that they are made aware of our policy and that ACT minimum standards are equal to their operating procedures.

## 3. Communication and Training

### 3.1 Communication

Communicating information about our working practices, both internally and externally plays an essential role in both, ensuring that policy is put into practice and in reassuring and supporting staff, customers and partners. The following minimum levels of communication will be implemented:

- Trustee briefing and meeting will have Covid19 actions and concerns as a standing agenda item.
- All manager and department meetings will have 'Covid19 actions and concerns' as a standing agenda item.
- Written staff briefing papers with Q&A sections to outline how to respond to scenarios will be circulated

We will also:

- Circulate safety messages regularly via Whatapp groups, intranet screen savers and wallpaper, email footers and other internal communication mediums.
- Ensure that our venues have visible reminders and posters and other visual aids regarding generic and venue specific Covid19 public health advice and venue requirements.
- Include Covid19 requirements on purchase orders, SLA's, contracts of work and joining instructions for any necessary face to face meetings.

**It is essential that all employees can identify the symptoms of the virus; PHA information will be circulated and included in training.**

**It is essential that all employees know how and when to report symptoms, contacts or shielding information and are updated with any changes in requirements by PHE within 24 hours. (paragraph 6)**

### 3.2 Training

In order that all staff are able to fulfil their role in implementing this policy's aims and objectives the following training will be delivered at such time as a return to work is made clear.

- Management training – to explain and outline policy requirements
- Written staff briefing papers with Q&A sections to outline how to respond to scenarios
- Virtual Training Hangouts – to outline requirements and offer practical examples of working scenarios
- Return to work training – when furloughed staff return to delivery
- Induction training – for newly appointed staff

In ACT venues, training will be given to venue staff on procedures for managing social distancing, cleaning and waste disposal.

## 4. Operational Practices

### 4.1 Social Distancing

Everyone must keep two metres apart, wherever possible. For working practices which necessitate closer working than the recommended public health advice, these will be facilitated with appropriate safety measures, such as face coverings, PPE or protective screening.

The need for all employees to social distance applies equally to work and social areas as well as changing facilities.

Floor markings, spaced two metres apart, will be applied in all ACT facilities in order to help everyone to respect social distancing in queues.

Installation of partitions and barriers, such as screens, where possible will be used to improve segregation where social distancing cannot be achieved.

## **4.2 Personal Hygiene – hand washing and sanitising**

Everyone should wash their hands when they arrive into work and when they get home as well as between different work locations and venues. This should also occur while at work after blowing their nose sneezing or coughing, eating or handling food.

Ideally, hands should be washed with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds; if this is not possible hand sanitiser should be used.

Washing facilities and/or hand sanitiser will be installed or made available in ACT facilities prior to return to delivery. e.g. entrances, breakout rooms, classrooms and training rooms.

## **4.3 Safe Systems of Work**

### **4.3.1 Movement**

Non essential travel should be avoided and employees should travel alone where possible. Where shared travel is necessary, ensure good ventilation and social distance. If it is not possible to avoid crowded situations, face coverings should be worn by both participants and staff.

All movement around the site should be planned for social distancing, this will include the introduction of separate entry and exit doors where possible, one-way systems and limits upon room occupancy and numbers in lifts etc.

### **4.3.2 Signing in and eligibility to work**

To ensure contact tracing all staff should sign in to any venue they attend and have a register of all attendees. ACT would recommend that all staff use the Government recommended tracing App.

Thermal scanning will be a prerequisite to delivering sessions and participation in groups. Staff should not attend work if they are displaying symptoms of Covid-19 or if a member of their household is. Staff should not attend work if they have tested positive or if a member of their household has tested positive for Covid-19.

### **4.3.3 Work Processes**

Activities should be planned to reduce the number of people involved at any one time; this will include staggering arrival times, lunch breaks, use of equipment in order to make social distancing easier to achieve.

ACT will reconfigure some activities and job roles in order to separate staff eg: reception staff, kitchen food preparation. Where possible staff role will be organised to minimise contact with different cohorts in order to reduce the number of individuals they come into contact with.

Participants and staff will NOT use communal changing facilities and should stagger use and/or encourage player to arrive and leave in kit. This should be adhered to for the remainder of the National Emergency period.

Sharing of equipment should be avoided (during stages 5-3) or discouraged where ever possible (during stages 2-1); where this must be shared, cleaning of equipment and washing of kit at high temperature (above 60°) must be ensured.

#### **4.4 PPE**

The specific need for PPE will be established using Government guidelines and activity-specific risk assessment. Where it is established that there is a need, ACT will provide the relevant equipment for employees. Training will be provided on the safe use of PPE. In some instances, it may be appropriate for vulnerable participants to be provided with face coverings/ masks.

Government advice will be reviewed and policy updated accordingly. Currently, Face masks and gloves are only required in clinical settings – however we are aware that this may change.

Staff who wish to wear PPE during work activity in order to feel safe; to manage anxiety or improve confidence will be supported in doing so following discussion with their line manager.

#### **4.5 Risk Assessment**

Existing risk assessments will need to be reviewed and a separate row included for Covid related risks – including social distancing, hand washing and any other appropriate risks outlined in this policy. This will be included in staff return to work and Covid training.

Risk assessment will need to be created for any new activities or locations.

#### **5.6 Remote Working and Virtual Meetings**

For the duration of the National Emergency all meetings and training will be conducted by video conference or telephone.

In instances where physical meetings cannot be avoided, effective social distancing (5.1) and safe systems of working (5.3) should be followed.

#### **5.7 Deliveries and Post**

Staff may need to come into contact with delivery drivers or mail persons and collect items, letters, or parcels and on occasion sign for them. If this happens the person delivering the item is to place it down and back away from the receiving staff member maintaining social distancing. If the item is required to be signed for then the person receiving is to give their details but not sign for the item electronically as the driver can sign this on the staff member's behalf reducing contact. Once the item is received and checked outer wrappings should be disposed of correctly.

There is currently no evidence that it is unsafe to handle post, however hand washing after handling post and unpacking parcels is advisable.

#### **5.8 Cleaning and Waste Disposal**

There will be regular cleaning of touch points, such as door handles, hand rails, lift buttons, vending machines using cleaning methods and products in line with COSH training.

Cleaning Schedules will be used to support this and show a frequency which will reflect how often touch points are cleaned.

Staff should seek to minimise the use of shared tools, if this is not possible, then the equipment must be cleaned between each user.

With all elements of the business waste is generated and must be disposed of correctly following the guidelines set and agreed with ACT approved Waste Contractor.

Staff are to remember that hand washing is essential when finishing handling waste. (5.2)

In addition, where cases of Covid19 have been established, specific methods of disposal, including double bagging and segregating this waste must be adhered to.

## **5.9 Premises Management**

Information will be visible and displays should outline policies and expectations whilst on site. Floor marking and stickers will be used to advise staff and visitors of social distancing zones.

All spaces will be assessed for maximum occupancy numbers and this will be indicated to users and included in signage on doors. Safe systems for entrance and egress will be established and signposted. (5.3.1). Premises management plan will be completed and published along with internal and external guidelines.

Hand sanitiser and hand washing stations will be provided and visual displays will direct staff and visitors to utilise these on arrival and between activities.

## **5.10 Bookings and Payments**

All bookings should be taken on-line or by phone where this is not possible, this is to avoid un-necessary contact and limit the amount of paper changing hands.

Payments should be made on-line or via contactless devices on site.

## **5. Information Sharing and Reporting**

It is essential that all employees are clear about what procedure they should follow if they begin to feel unwell, both in the workplace and at home. Return to work training will include this information. In addition, ACT Staff COVID Briefings will be distributed within 24 hours of any change in Government requirement and will include;

- What to do and how to report if staff feel unwell with COVID Symptoms
- What to do if participants feel unwell
- What to do if testing positive for Covid 19 or if a member of your family tests positive

## **6. Working on external sites**

ACT will ensure that agreements / SLAs with external partners include assurances that the Covid19 policy and procedures is equal to the minimum standards set out in this policy before any work commences. Checklist Appendix i

Staff who deliver from or visit other premises should ensure that they are fully briefed about how safer working practices are being operated upon that site including health and safety and safeguarding lead staff. Ideally a briefing / induction session will be arranged.

## 8. Mental Health and Wellbeing

### 8.1 Supporting Staff

Everyone is naturally concerned about the Virus so ACT advises all line managers to be alert to mood or behavioural changes in employees ensuring that it is made clear that there is a platform for discussing concerns. Constructive dialogue is the best way for the resolution of concerns. The following are available:

- Senior Managers contact details available to all Staff
- Staff Forum
- MyConcern to be extended for reporting concerns about a colleague
- Signposting online training links and aids to promote mental health and wellbeing.

### 8.2 Staff Forum – Consultation

Employees have the absolute right to work in an environment free from serious or imminent danger or harm and should not suffer detriment for acting on a reasonable belief of serious or imminent danger. ACT considers that employees are often better placed to put ideas forward on how to resolve concerns and that this can be achieved through early dialogue and consultation which will be provided through the regular meeting of a staff forum.

Where normal consultative arrangements do not resolve the issues, employees are entitled to raise a grievance

## 9. Protecting Vulnerable Staff and Ensuring Equality

ACT has a responsibility to make sure that steps taken do not have an unjustifiable negative impact on some groups compared to others, for example, those with caring responsibilities or those with religious commitments and will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled workers and those with health risks are not being put at a disadvantage.

In line with Government Guidance, SSP will be paid from day one to all staff that need to self isolate.

### 9.1 Vulnerable Staff

Staff who need to be shielded will be furloughed if they cannot work from home and ACT will aim to manage work rotas in order to support these staff. Where staff have family members who are vulnerable risks will be assessed and measures put in place to address needs. For information about family support, compassionate leave and parental leave, staff should consult the Staff Handbook.

### 9.2 BAME

Following data published by UK Government, ACT acknowledges that staff and participants from BAME backgrounds have an increased risk with regard to the impact of Covid19. Activities will be risk assessed with this in mind and additional precautions, provision of PPE or re assignment of roles will be completed in consultation with individuals and groups who may be effected.



## 10. Customers

ACT has undertaken Government compliant Risk Assessments and all actions outlined in the *Working safely during COVID-19 Guidance for employers, employees and the self-employed*. This information will be communicated through on-site signage and ACT websites.

Communication of revised visitor arrangements will precede any site visits in order to make sure people understand what they need to do to maintain safety.

## References

1. Corona virus (COVID-19): Returning to the workplace guide. Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
2. COVID- 19: Working Through This Together - Confederation of British Industry, Chamber of Commerce, PHA.
3. OUR PLAN TO REBUILD:  
The UK Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy - May 2020
4. Working safely during COVID-19 in offices and contact centres  
Guidance for employers, employees and the self-employed - 11 May 2020

## Appendix i

### Check and Challenge Check List – Working in Partnerships

All questions need to be satisfied before agreement for staff to work.	In Place		To be actioned Date	By whom
	Yes	No		
<b>4.1 Social Distancing:</b> Are social distancing methods established?				
<b>4.2 Hygiene:</b> Is hand sanitizer available at entrances and exits to rooms?				
<b>4.3 Signing in:</b> Is there an arrival system in place?				
<b>4.3 Signing in:</b> Is there a temperature check on arrival?				
<b>4.3 Movement:</b> Are staff and participants aware of any one way or movement systems?				
<b>4.3 Work Processes break times:</b> Are processes in place for managing 'free time / breaks with regard to social distancing?				
<b>4.4 PPE:</b> Are there any activities that require PPE ie. less than 1m distance? Does the school have PPE available?				
<b>4.5 Risk Assessments:</b> Does the school have written risk assessments for all activities?				
<b>5.1 Reporting:</b> Does the school have a named person to whom concerns should be reported?				
<b>5.2 Reporting:</b> Does the school have a system for registering and tracking all people on site?				
<b>5.8 Cleaning and Waste:</b> Does the school have an upgraded Covid cleaning schedule?				
<b>5.8 Cleaning and Waste:</b> Are there systems in place for disposing of waste where a known infection has occurred?				
<b>5.9 Premises management:</b> Has maximum room occupancy been established?				
<b>5.9 Premises management:</b> Are visual reminders of expectations on display?				
<b>5.9 Premises management:</b> Are floor marking and social distancing stickers in use?				
<b>Other concerns by ACT manager?</b>				

## Appendix ii – Risk Assessment

Full risk assessment can be found – link for internal staff

<G:\Shared drives\Business Continuity and Corona 2020\Risk Assessment for return to work with COVID risks 12052020.docx>