



NARARAVALLEY
BAPTIST CHURCH

COVID-19 INFECTION CONTROL POLICY

Version 1.1
6th July 2020

1. Document Revision and Review History

1.1. Revision History

Rev	Date	Author	Comments
1.0	25 June 2020	Leisel Burdon	As ministries and groups commence using the NVBC Facilities again in July, NVBC must outline requirements for COVID safe use and to protect those that use the facility and our community.
1.1	6 July 2020	Leisel Burdon	Review made from feedback from the NVBC Board.

1.2. Review History

Rev	Date	Issued By	Approved By	Authorisation Capacity	Publish to Web

Contents

1. Document Revision and Review History	2
1.1. Revision History	2
1.2. Review History	3
2. Introduction.....	5
3. Purpose	5
4. Legislative Requirements.....	5
5. Risk Management.....	6
5.1. Safety Plan.....	6
5.2. Incident Management.....	6
5.3. Education.....	6
6. Risk Mitigation requirements	7
6.1. Entry and Exit Points	7
6.1.1. Community health.....	7
6.1.2. Signage.....	7
6.2. Risk of Shared Objects	8
6.3. Infection Control Advice to Gatherers	8
6.4. Seating arrangements and use of space	9
6.5. Hand Hygiene	9
6.6. Use of gloves	9
6.7. Surface Cleaning	10
6.8. Sound desk, microphones, instruments and singing	10
6.9. COVIDsafe app.....	10
6.10. Food Handling.....	10
6.11. Communion and Offering	10
6.12. Updating personal details and maintenance of attendance logs	11
6.13. Management of a confirmed case of COVID-19 in our church community ..	11
6.14. Equipment	11
7. Appendix 1 – Contact Details.....	12
7.1. Positions:.....	12
7.2. Services:.....	12

2. Introduction

COVID-19 is a serious infectious disease that is passed from person to person through respiratory droplets and contact. While in Christ, we need not be afraid, we must be cautious and fulfil our duty of care to our congregation and the general public.

All organisations including churches are responsible for minimising transmission of disease. Because we as a community value Christ's injunction to love our neighbours as ourselves, we will seek to minimise the risk of the transmission of COVID-19 among our people, and subsequently, the wider public. This policy document outlines practices that we as a community commit to, to minimise the risk of transmission of COVID-19 among our staff, leaders, volunteers, members and visitors.

This Policy is supported by the NVBC COVID Safe Plan.

3. Purpose

The primary purpose of the NVBC COVID-19 infection control policy is to operate alongside government recommendations while providing direction to all NVBC staff, leaders and volunteers and external Hirer's on how to effectively prevent and manage the spread of COVID-19 within our community.

We as a church have a duty of care to protect staff, leaders, volunteers, regular attenders and guests from spread of disease. We also have a duty to the wider community to not perpetuate the spread of disease further. Therefore, we must remain vigilant and committed to enacting measures to prevent disease spread.

4. Legislative Requirements

Currently, the laws related to COVID-19 change frequently in response to our changing situation. In addition to reading this policy, it is the responsibility of the Senior Pastor and the NVBC Board to make themselves aware of these laws as they change and ensure pastors, staff and volunteers are made aware of laws as they change and are applicable to them. We always have a responsibility to operate within the scope of the law. Staff and Board must keep abreast of NSW Government regulations and abide by them always. The latest NSW government guidelines can be accessed through the following portals:

- General restrictions within NSW can be accessed here:
<https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/what-you-can-and-cant-do-under-rules>
- Guidelines for places of worship can be accessed here:
<https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/industry-guidelines/places-of-worship>
- Guidance from Baptist Churches of NSW and ACT can be accessed here:
<https://nswactbaptists.org.au/covid19/>

- Leaders and staff are encouraged to find ways to be regularly updated on changing legislation. This may include subscribing to new sites or following NSW Health on social media. Checking the above websites on a regular basis and before events.
- If legislation changes in such a way as to contradict anything in this policy, then that legislation will take priority over this policy document. This policy will be updated in due course to reflect this change in legislation.

5. Risk Management

5.1. Safety Plan

The Senior Pastor, Board, or their delegate, are responsible for writing a COVID safety plan for every event or regular gathering. The NSW Government COVID-19 Safety Plan template must be used for this. This plan must be filled in, printed, signed by the gathering organiser and submitted to the Executive Assistant to be passed onto the Senior Pastor and Board. If appendices are needed, they can be written and attached to this safety plan.

For Church events or meeting, please use this COVID Safe Plan Template:

https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-05/covid-19-safety-plan-places-of-worship_2.pdf

For Community bookings, please use this COVID Safe Plan Template:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/industry-guidelines/community-centres-and-halls>

5.2. Incident Management

Any difficulties adhering to this policy, non-compliance or incident, should be reported to the WHS Officer, and an incident form must be filled in and provided to the NVBC Office. The WHS Officer will then be responsible for remedying this incident and will mediate this with the person(s) involved. They may escalate this to the Senior Pastor and/or the NVBC Board for consultation if required.

5.3. Education

All users of the NVBC Facility must undergo training in the risk mitigation requirements outlined in this policy. This training should be repeated annually for the duration of this pandemic to maintain competence. The Executive Assistant is responsible for this training. They may delegate this responsibility to someone who has previously undergone the training.

6. Risk Mitigation requirements

6.1. Entry and Exit Points

6.1.1. Community health

NVBC *strongly* encourages and reinforces the government guidelines to stay at home if you fall into either of the categories below.

- Anyone who in the last 14 days has had flu-like symptoms (Symptoms of COVID-19 can include fever, cough, sore/scratchy throat and shortness of breath, as well as other reported symptoms including loss of smell, loss of taste, runny nose, muscle pain, joint pain, diarrhoea, nausea/vomiting and loss of appetite.)
- Anyone who in the last 14 days has had contact with anyone who has COVID-19 or displayed flu-like symptoms as listed above, and has not been tested for COVID-19 and received a negative COVID Test result.
- Before any gathering at NVBC, we ask the organiser to remind those invited/attending to consider the above points before attending.

6.1.2. Signage

The following posters should be displayed at entrances:

- Maximum capacity posters for each room of the facility.
 - Please note under the 1 person 4 square Meter Rule the following apply-
Auditorium Facility:
Auditorium – 90 people
Foyer – 32 people
Foyer Toilets – 3 people
Parents Room – 3 people
Creche – 9 people
Prayer Room – 5 people
Hall – 35 people
Kids Church Rooms – 11 people per room

Office:
Reception – 4 people
Open Office Area – 10 people
Meeting Rooms/Individual Offices – 2 people
- Signage promoting handwashing, respiratory etiquette, social distancing and staying home when sick.
- Conditions for entry must also be displayed.
- All entry and exit points must be clear of obstacles to reduce cross-contamination and to make surface cleaning easier. Unnecessary furniture and objects should be removed, and all doors must be propped open.

- Where practical, entry and exit points should be considered one-way, either entrance or exit only. In the case of a single entry point, people should be discouraged from entering as others are exiting and vice versa.
- Alcohol Based Hand Sanitiser must be available at all entry points.
- During gatherings, a single welcomer will be stationed at the entry point. Their responsibility is to ask everyone entering if they are well, if they have been in contact with someone with flu-like symptoms. They will politely turn away anyone meeting these criteria. They will discourage physical contact and will encourage everyone to use Alcohol Based Hand Sanitiser as they enter. That same person will encourage everyone to use Alcohol Based Hand Sanitiser as they exit.

6.2. Risk of Shared Objects

NVBC will consider the risk before sharing any objects and asks all organisers of gatherings at NVBC to likewise consider the risk of sharing objects. When objects are to be shared they are to be shared in a COVID safe way eg cleaning with disinfectant wipes between or after use.

This means at Services, Bibles, pencils, connect cards will for the time being, not be used by attendees. Kitchen items such as glasses, jugs, plates and cutlery must not be used as outline by the government. Attendees are encouraged to refrain from sharing their personal items, food or drink. Single use cups will be made available in the kitchen for anyone needing a drink.

6.3. Infection Control Advice to Gatherers

Prior to the commencement or recommencement of any gathering, infection control advice must be sent to all those intending to come. This includes:

- Avoid all physical contact with others. This includes hugs, handshakes and touching other's belongings,
- Stay 1.5 meters away from other people at all times,
- Do not share items, food or drink,
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow,
- If you need to use a tissue, please dispose of it and wash your hands after
- Use Alcohol Based Hand Sanitiser when entering and leaving,
- If you are tested positive to COVID - 19 or are contact traced by a public health official within 14 days of attending a meeting, please advise church leadership of this.
- Stay home if you have:
 - meet any criteria of 6.1.1
 - been sick with fever or flu-like symptoms in the last 14 days,
 - been told to self-isolate by a public health official or doctor,
 - been in close contact with anyone with flu-like symptoms or who has been diagnosed with COVID-19,
 - have been tested for COVID-19 and don't have results yet.

- Extra precautions can be discussed with people in higher risk groups. These can include providing alternatives to attending in person such as using zoom, discussing risk mitigation strategies such as attending less frequently, wearing masks, attending for shorter periods of time and sitting further away from the group.

6.4. Seating arrangements and use of space

- The one person per 4m² rule must not be exceeded for any NVBC Worship gathering.
- Chairs must be spaced a minimum of 1.5 meters apart. Chairs can be clustered in 2 or more for household groups to sit closer together. Floor markings could be used to indicate where to place chairs. This will help with set up and will discourage attendees from moving their chairs.
- Household groups must remain a minimum of 1.5 meters apart. Ushers should be available to guide people to their seats to prevent people from breaching physical distancing protocols.
- The maximum number of people for each space will be displayed on the entry point to that space.

6.5. Hand Hygiene

For most hand hygiene activities, Alcohol based hand sanitiser should be used. This must be available at every entrance and everyone will be encouraged to use it as they enter the premises and as they leave. When hands are visibly soiled, it is recommended that hands are washed with soap and water, then dried completely with a paper towel. Paper towels must be available from a dispenser in all bathrooms and the kitchen. People are not to wash hands in the kitchen sink. Hand washing can only be done in bathroom sinks. A non-touch bin is available in every bathroom and kitchen.

Volunteers must be trained in proper handwashing protocols. Signage describing proper handwashing technique must be displayed above the sinks in each bathroom. Signage will be placed with Alcohol Based Hand Sanitiser at entry points also.

6.6. Use of gloves

The purpose of gloves is to prevent cross-contamination from one surface to another. Volunteers and staff are encouraged to only use gloves when they need to touch or handle a potentially contaminated surface or object. When using gloves, the following procedures must be adhered to:

- Gloves are to be worn on both hands,
- They are to only be worn while performing one task. For example: picking up and disposing of a used tissue, surface cleaning or counting money from offering,
- Avoid touching face, any body part, or non-contaminated surfaces while wearing gloves,
- Following this task, gloves are to be removed, disposed of in a bin and hand hygiene performed.

Gloves are not to be worn for extended periods of time. This is because it defeats the purpose of gloves which is to prevent the cross contamination of one surface from another. Incorrect use of gloves will increase the risk of disease spread. This is because extended or incorrect use of gloves gives people a false sense of security and discourages frequent hand hygiene which is a far more effective measure to prevent spread of disease.

6.7. Surface Cleaning

After every meeting, frequently touched surfaces must be cleaned by a person who has been adequately trained to do so. This may include a professional paid cleaner, or a volunteer.

For guidelines on effective environmental cleaning for COVID-19, please refer to the NVBC COVID-19 Cleaning Requirements and Checklist.

Gloves and cleaning products are all available and provided by NVBC.

6.8. Sound desk, microphones, instruments and singing.

Single-use disinfectant wipes must be located at the sound desk, along with a bin for their disposal. The sound desk operator is responsible for using these to wipe down all electronic equipment before and after use.

Microphones and instruments are not to be shared. Microphones are to be wiped down by the person using them before and after use.

Until further notice, there will be no congregational singing. We may have one singer only who remains 3 meters away from others.

6.9. COVIDsafe app

The Australian Government has released the COVIDsafe app – a tracking app that tracks your close contacts through Bluetooth. It allows public health officials to contact trace people who have been in contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19. As per NSW Government guidelines, staff are advised that this app is beneficial for tracking the spread of COVID-19 and they advised to consider downloading it.

While not mandatory, NVBC encourages staff, volunteers and attendees to download and use this app if they feel it is right for them. NVBC understands that some may have concerns regarding privacy, so will respect anyone's choice to not download or use it. Under no circumstance will anyone be pressured or coerced to download this app by NVBC staff, leaders or volunteers.

6.10. Food Handling

As a general rule, food and beverages will not be served during a gathering. Disposable cups will be made available in the kitchen to those wanting water. If food is to be provided, it must be commercially pre-packaged and put out by someone who has performed hand hygiene prior to doing so. Similarly, if beverages are to be provided, they must not be self-serve. Rather, they must be made and poured by one person who has performed hand hygiene.

6.11. Communion and Offering

Until further notice, communion will be suspended. This may be amended, but only following risk assessment, and implementation of risk management strategies. Under no circumstances are Communion Elements to be provided unless they are commercially prepared and individually wrapped and the approval is given from the NVBC Elders and Board.

We will continue to encourage people to give electronically. Offering will not be collected during the service. A locked box will be placed at the back of the church if people wish to give a cash offering. Volunteers counting money must use gloves in accordance with the above recommendations.

6.12. Updating personal details and maintenance of attendance logs

When we resume meeting, everyone will be asked to update their personal and contact details. We will also endeavour to obtain the contact details of any new attendee or guest. This will then be updated in Elvanto. Attendees will be informed that the purpose of collecting personal information is to keep accurate records in case they are needed by the government public health unit.

A log of attendance must be conducted for every meeting or gathering. This must be documented in Elvanto during the gathering, not after so as to minimise mistakes. Attendees to regular meetings will be kept through the Meeting Minutes. Other Meetings or gatherings will be provided with other means of recording attendees. These logs of attendance must be kept for a minimum of 28 days by the NVBC Office.

It has been our usual practice to keep personal details of attendees and attendance logs to track attendance patterns, to contact attendees regarding church activities and business and to provide pastoral care as it is needed. Permission has already been obtained to use personal details in this way. When collecting details of new people or visitors, we will ask permission to use their contact details in this same way. If that permission is not given, then their details will only be kept for the purposes of COVID-19 tracing and nothing more.

6.13. Management of a confirmed case of COVID-19 in our church community

If a person has been contact traced or diagnosed with COVID-19 within 14 days of attending a meeting, then the NSW Public Health Unit must be contacted for advice. They can be contacted by calling 1300 066 055. Their advice must be complied with, without exemption. Responsibility for notifying the Public Health Unit belongs to the Senior Pastor. They may delegate this to an appropriate person if they choose to.

6.14. Equipment

Appropriate stock levels of the following items must always be maintained:

- Latex free gloves. Latex containing gloves should be avoided due to risk of latex allergy
- Disinfectant cleaning solution (NVBC has purchased Trifecta)
- Single-use disinfectant wipes
- Paper towel dispensers in bathrooms and kitchen and must be regularly refilled with paper towel
- Touch free bins are to be monitored and emptied regularly.
- Disposable cups in the hall kitchen
- Alcohol based hand sanitiser containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Liquid soap
- Tissues

7. Appendix 1 – Contact Details

7.1. Positions:

Position	Name	Contact Number
Senior Pastor	Craig Corkill	0448 113 381
NVBC Board Chairperson	David Hughes	0408 497 596
Executive Assistant	Leisel Burdon	0413 594 709
WHS Officer	Leisel Burdon	0413 594 709

7.2. Services:

Service	Contact
Service NSW COVID Hotline	13 77 88