**COUNSEL'S CHAMBERS LIMITED**

P: +61 2 9231 3644
E: admin@ccl.com.au
W: www.ccl.com.au
A.B.N. 72 000 111 302

Level 1 Selborne Chambers
174 Phillip Street Sydney
NSW 2000 Australia
DX: 973 Sydney

**Counsel's Chambers Limited**
**COVID-19 Recovery Plan (v2.3)**

Background

*Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Most people infected with the virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. However, some will become seriously ill and require medical attention. Older people and those with underlying medical conditions like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, or cancer are more likely to develop serious illness. Anyone can get sick with COVID-19 and become seriously ill or die at any age.*

*The best way to prevent and slow down transmission is to be well informed about the disease and how the virus spreads. Protect yourself and others from infection by staying at least 1 metre apart from others, wearing a properly fitted mask, and washing your hands or using an alcohol-based rub frequently. Get vaccinated when it's your turn and follow local guidance.*

*The virus can spread from an infected person's mouth or nose in small liquid particles when they cough, sneeze, speak, sing or breathe. These particles range from larger respiratory droplets to smaller aerosols. It is important to practice respiratory etiquette, for example by coughing into a flexed elbow, and to stay home and self-isolate until you recover if you feel unwell.*[1]

Governments, both State and Federal, responded to COVID-19 by implementing health measures, including vaccination programs, by locking down districts heavily affected by COVID-19, contact tracing and other practical, hygiene measures such as mask wearing and physical distancing.

As of **December 2022** in NSW, the rates of vaccination are high and the rate of transmission of COVID-19 within the community is <span style="color:red">**high**</span>. Public Health Measures were eased on 28 February 2022, although high levels of community transmission of new variants of COVID-19 continue. Business plans to return to normal operations must adapt to the risk environment.

Counsel's Chambers Limited (CCL) developed and maintained the Infectious Diseases Management Plant (IDMP) as the framework for risk mitigation and maintaining the delivery of services for Members during the initial phases of the pandemic.

CCL continually revises and updates this COVID-19 Recovery Plan (CRP) to document the process by which CCL will continue normal operations and maintain a level of preparedness to respond to rapidly changing health and legislative environments.

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[1] https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus#tab=tab_1

## Objectives of the CRP

1. The **First Objective** of the CRP is to minimise harm by:

   a) achieving **good physical and mental health** outcomes;

   b) reducing the risk of **COVID-19 coming into the buildings**; and

   c) **mitigating spread** of confirmed cases within the building.

2. The **Second Objective** of the CRP is to minimise impact on operations and business continuity by developing, maintaining and promoting:

   a) a set of effective **operating measures** related COVID-19;

   b) **preparedness and self-reliance** of CCL & Floors; and

   c) targeted and rapid **response measures** for with COVID cases and/or clusters within the building.

## Resources and support information

3. Information on which the CRP has been developed:

   a) [Media Release from Health NSW & Contact Designations](#);

   b) [Business information page from NSW Government](#);

   c) [Guidance for businesses with a worker who tests positive for COVID-19 & SafeWork NSW](#);

   d) [COVID-19 rules in NSW](#); and

   e) [Public Health Orders](#).

# CCL's WHS Obligations; Hazard Identification & Risk Assessment

4.  *[Risk](link) management is a proactive process that helps you respond to change and facilitate continuous improvement in your business. It should be planned, systematic and cover all reasonably foreseeable [hazards](link) and associated [risks](link).*

    *A risk assessment involves considering what could happen if someone is exposed to a hazard (for example, COVID-19) and the likelihood of it happening. A risk assessment can help you to determine:*
    - *how severe a risk is*
    - *whether any existing [control measures](link) are effective*
    - *what action you should take to control the risk, and*
    - *how urgently the action needs to be taken.*

    *The exposure of your workers and/or customers/clients to COVID-19 is a foreseeable risk that must be assessed and managed in the context of your operating environment.[2]*

    COVID-19 is clearly a hazard and through the CRP, that hazards associated with COVID-19 can be assessed in terms of consequence and likelihood; the necessary control measures are implemented, and the effect of those measures monitored regularly.

    A comprehensive WHS Risk Assessment has been conducted in consultation with Staff and Floor's own COVIDSafe Plans. The CRP sets out the mitigation and control measures as part of the transition to living with COVID-19, where controls such as high vaccination rates, high levels of COVID-19 compliance and response readiness effectively reduce risks to health and business continuity. Examples of some areas covered under the risk assessment follow:

| Summary of WHS Risk Assessment process | | Potential Consequences | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Minor | Moderate | Major | Severe |
| Likelihood | Almost Certain | | 1 or 2 COVID transmissions in 7 days. | | |
| | Likely | | Close Contacts attending the office. | Floor and / or CCL Office closure. | |
| | Possible | | | | COVID Cluster (>10 in 7 days) or outbreak in the building. |
| | Rare | | | | |

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[2] https://covid19.swa.gov.au/covid-19-information-workplaces/industry-information/general-industry-information/risk-assessment

## Operating measures – Management

5. The **COVID-19 Management Response Team** (CMRT) has been assembled to:

   a) ensure that the plans objectives are met and respond to COVID-19 related matters;

   b) meet regularly to discuss emerging issues related to COVID-19;

   c) identify hazards specific to its operations and assess the risk of those hazards; and

   d) determine the appropriate responses and implement the necessary control measures to mitigate those risks.

6. The CMRT consists of CCL's:

   a) CEO – Debbie George;

   b) CIO – Michael Wright;

   c) Operations Manager – Lee Albert; and

   d) Facilities Coordinator & Safety Officer – Khiem Nguyen.

7. The CMRT will monitor conditions within the building, including:

   a) high volumes of positive cases of COVID-19 and case alerts;

   b) response readiness of CCL Staff and Floors in that eventuality; and

   c) compliance levels for contractors and visitors to the building where control measures are in place.

8. In formulating plans, assessing risk and updating the CRP, the CMRT will monitor changes to;

   a) Public Health Orders (PHOs);

   b) advice and requirements from Government NSW and/or Health NSW; and

   c) further compliance requirements as and when announced.

9. The CMRT will assess the risks and make the necessary adjustments to control measures and delivery of services – subject to change these measures are set out in Table 9.1 on the following page:

| Table 9.1: CONTROL MEASURES | | |
|---|---|---|
| Control measure | Control measure in effect | Measure ends / service resumes |
| CCL Staffing Levels in the office reduced | ✖ | |
| Face masks required indoors. | ✖ | |
| Face to face support for Maintenance suspended | ✖ | |
| Face to face support for Network suspended | ✖ | |
| CCL Staff to wear masks when providing face to face support ceases. | ✖ | |
| ~~Chambers vacated +~~ vaccination sighted to receive face to face support | ✖ | |
| Common touch point cleaning. | ✖ | |
| Additional daytime toilet cleaning. | ✖ | |
| 100% Fresh air cycle for Lockhart Chambers AC service. | ✖ | |
| Physical distancing in lifts recommended | ✖ | |
| Showers closed to Members, Clerks & Staff | ✖ | |
| Room capacity / density limits to DRC rooms at 1/2m$^2$ | ✖ | |
| Remote access pass renewal | ✖ | |
| Waste, recycling, secure bins services suspended | ✖ | |
| Bi-annual rubbish collection deferred | ✖ | |

## Operating Measures - Conditions of entry

10. As a condition of entry to CCL's buildings, all persons must observe the requirements outlined in Table 10.1 below:

| Table 10.1: CONDITIONS OF ENTRY | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Condition of entry:** | Members, Clerks, Staff and visitors | DRC Client | Contractor | CCL Staff |
| Not displaying symptoms of COVID-19. | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Check-in and out using Service NSW QR Code | | | | |
| Observe recommendations for physical distancing | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Be fully vaccinated[3] | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Wearing a mask is recommended where physical distancing is not possible | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Observe further requirements set out by Government NSW | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Complete a health survey or questionnaire when required. | | | | |
| Obey the DRC Terms & Conditions and COVID-19 Policy | | ✓ | | |
| Produce evidence of a COVID-19 test[4] | | | | ✓ |

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[3] Evidence of a medical contraindication plus a negative test result no older than 72 hours is also acceptable.

[4] Either a PCR test or Rapid Antigen Test

## Operating Measures - CCL Staff & Office

11. To further support CCL Staff and the general operation of the office, the CMRT will consider and provide services to CCL Staff including, where required:

    a) COVID Leave for vaccination and testing;

    b) Mental Health support sessions;

    c) information about CCL's approach to dealing with COVID-19 including, where appropriate, details of the CRP;

    d) provision of Rapid Antigen Testing for CCL Staff;

    e) providing resources to assist managing contractors and third parties (virtual meetings, contactless interaction); and

    f) regularly meeting with CCL Staff and providing a forum to discuss the impact of COVID-19 and concerns that CCL Staff may have.

## Preparedness and self-reliance of CCL

12. The CMRT will at all times ensure that:

    a) CCL Staff are at all times equipped and prepared to work remotely and ensure preparedness to do so by making regular enquiry of all staff at regular Staff Meetings;

    b) COVID-19 Response checklists are current and up to date through regular review; and,

    c) a list of emergency contacts is maintained.

## Preparedness and self-reliance of Floors

13. The CMRT will communicate with Floors and provide, where required, necessary resources for Floors to develop and maintain preparedness and self-reliance with respect to COVID-19 by:

    a) encouraging Floors to develop and maintain their own policy / response plans / COVIDSafe Plans;

    b) encouraging Floors to maintain high vaccination rates amongst Members, Staff and Visitors alike to minimise the potential for harm;

    c) sharing information with Floors including positive case response checklists; and

    d) ensuring that Floors keep CCL up to date of all positive cases; and

    e) sharing resources for Members and Staff to work remotely when a positive case occurs.

## Response measures to confirmed positive cases

14. Where a positive case is confirmed in the building refer to and provide Clerk's with the Clerk's Checklist.

15. Where transmission of COVID-19 to three or more persons occurs within 48 hours, CCL will direct the Floor to:

    a) close the Floor as soon as possible;

    b) arrange cleaning of all affected areas; and

    c) have all Members, Staff and Clerk tested for COVID-19.

16. In the event of widespread transmission, further response measures may be required Health NSW are to be notified, closures and environmental cleaning may be required.

## Exposure of Staff and others to a potentially infectious person

17. Where a Member of Staff is designated as a close contact, that Member of Staff shall not attend the office and work from home where practical in accordance with advice from NSW Health.

18. Where the CMRT becomes aware that a Member of Staff may have been in contact with a person infectious with COVID-19, the CMRT may at its discretion:

    a) require that Member of Staff to undergo a Rapid Antigen Test which may be conducted at CCL's Office; and/or

    b) require that Member of Staff to undergo a PCR test; and/or

    c) not attend CCL's Office until the results of one or both have returned negative results.

19. Staff should never attend the office when feeling unwell. When unwell, sick leave is available to allow time for Staff to rest and recover, enable access to professional medical assistance and to prevent possible contagion within the office and making others unwell.

    This applies to cold and flu, COVID-19 or any other ailment that relates to personal health.

    Staff should always follow medical advice.

    Staff who have tested positive to COVID-19 should not attend the office in person for a minimum of 5 days and until they feel able to do so.

    Subject to production of a medical certificate, sick leave and, where appropriate, working from home arrangements will be available to facilitate staff staying away from the office when unwell.

## COVIDSafe Plans

20. CCL have a COVIDSafe Plan (and another for the NSW Bar Dispute Resolution Centre), which reflects the measures adopted in the CRP. The CMRT update the plan on a regular basis, subject to changes to Public Health Orders, advice from Government and Health NSW and necessary response / control measures.

## Measuring effectiveness

21. The following will be reviewed to determine the effectiveness and relevance of the CRP and whether changes are required:

    a) the number of reported positive case **transmissions** within the building per designated time period (i.e. >5 cases of **transmission** within the buildings over any given 7 day period);

b) reported positive cases within the building as a proportion of the community (infection rate Statewide vs infection rate at CCL)[5]; and

c) impact on Floors (closures per positive case numbers).

22. Where numbers are higher than within the community and / or increasing over time, the measures within the CRP, including response checklists, are to be reviewed.

## Sensitive information relation to COVID-19

23. CCL will deal with the collection of **'Sensitive Information relating to COVID-19'** pursuant to the following conditions:

a) A person's vaccination status is considered sensitive health information under the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) and higher privacy protections apply.

b) CCL only intends to collect the minimum amount of personal information as to a person's vaccination status necessary to maintain a safe workplace and prevent and manage COVID-19.

c) Current knowledge of all available and current public health advice will be applied in directing any consideration of what constitutes necessary information and any protection and management required.

d) CCL will only collect vaccination status information if a person consents, unless an exemption applies, and the collection is reasonably necessary for the work, health and safety functions and activities of CCL. It is the responsibility of Floors and Members who engage contractors directly to make their own arrangements with their contractors to ensure that appropriate consent is obtained and that the vaccination status can be provided to CCL prior to any contractor requiring entry to any property owned and managed by CCL.

e) Consent of each person must be freely given and constitute valid consent, after each person acknowledges and agrees that the person:

   i. understands the need for and use of the information, namely the safety and protection of all persons who work in CCL's offices being a very small area of the workplace, and occupants and visitors in and about Chambers' buildings; and

   ii. has been provided with a genuine opportunity to provide or withhold consent without feeling any pressure resulting from any perceived imbalance of power.

f) CCL must advise persons how the information is to be collected will be handled. One exemption to CCL obtaining consent is where the information required or authorised by law, such as a specific requirement of a health notice or order or direction.

g) CCL will only disclose the vaccination status of a person on a "need to know' basis only.

h) CCL will take reasonable steps to keep such information up to date and secure.

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[5] 10K p/day in NSW @8.18M ~ 1 p/day in CCL Buildings @ 1,000.

## Annexure A – Resources to assist working remotely

To ensure that CCL Staff and Occupants are fully prepared to continue work as either a confirmed positive case or close contact, measures should be in place and maintained, including:

a) ensuring that receptions are able to operate the Arc console remotely, noting that software may be required to be updated from time to time;

b) preparing CCL Staff and Occupants to work from home by taking home their desktop devices and being familiar with the procedures to connect those devices to the CCL Network;

c) maintaining user support guideshttps://www.ccl.com.au/services#network-documents;

d) using the VPN service to access network resources from outside Chambers, which must be arranged in advance by completing the VPN Application Form and submitting it to support@ccl.com.au;

e) understanding which services do not require a VPN connection, namely;

   i. email including webmail;

   ii. spam quarantinehttps://spam.ccl.com.au;

   iii. Webex (messaging and phone services);

   iv. Voicemail; and

   v. Member Portal (logging support requests and accessing accounts);

f) Video Conferencing / Webex services.

## Annexure B – Clerks Checklist to a positive case of COVID-19:

1. Activate your COVID Response plan and notify CCL immediately.

2. Obtain consent to share the person's identity with others.

3. Notify CCL of any transmission of COVID-19 from the positive case to others within the buildings.

4. Where the positive case has been in the building within the last 24 hours you must assess the risk to other Members, Floor Staff and Visitors to determine:

   a. whether a temporary Floor closure is warranted; and

   b. the extent of cleaning and disinfection that may be required by identifying the areas occupied by the positive case within the last 24 – 48 hours.

5. Where transmission within the building results in hospitalisation or death, Notify SafeWork NSW using the Notification Page or on 13 10 50.

## Annexure C – Emergency Contacts

| Name | Phone Number | Email/Website |
|------|--------------|---------------|
| Healthdirect | 1800 022 222 | www.health.nsw.gov.au |
| Health NSW Contact Tracing | 1800 943 553 | |
| Coronavirus Info Line | 1800 020 080 | |
| Sydney Hospital | 9382 7111 | |
| | | |
| Kamakan | 1800 994 911 | andrew@kamakan.com.au |
| Forensic Cleaning | | |
| | | |
| Lee Albert | 0407 281 781 | lalbert@ccl.com.au |
| Debbie George | | dgeorge@ccl.com.au |
| Nathan Howes | 0407 910 361 | nhowes@ccl.com.au |
| Allied Security | 1300 003 456 | dominic.a@alliedmanagement.com.au |
| Dominic Alati | 0426 960 480 | |
| Jet Black Plumbing | 0420 233 377 | nsedgman@jetblackplumbers.com.au |
| Mark Spark (Electrician) | 0418 474 905 | mark@markspark.com.au |
| Sydney Water 24/7 faults | 132 090 | www.sydneywater.com.au |
| Police | 000 | |
| Police Assistance Line | 131 444 | |
| National Security Hotline | 1800 123 400 | www.nationalsecurity.gov.au |
| Day Street Police Station | 9265 6499 | |
| Fire Brigade | 000 | |
| Ambulance | 000 | |