



Randy Feltface  
Melbourne International Comedy Festival 2021  
Photo: Nick Robertson

# Managing COVID in the workplace

9 March 2022

# Purpose of this session



**Remind**



**Answer common  
questions**

# What we'll cover in this session

- 1 COVID Safe Guidelines
- 2 COVID Safe Plan Requirements
- 3 Mandatory workplace vaccination
- 4 What to do if a worker tests positive to COVID-19
- 5 Leave and self-isolating employees
- 6 Questions

# COVID Safe Guidelines



LPA COVID Safe Guidelines for Auditions, Rehearsals and Performances



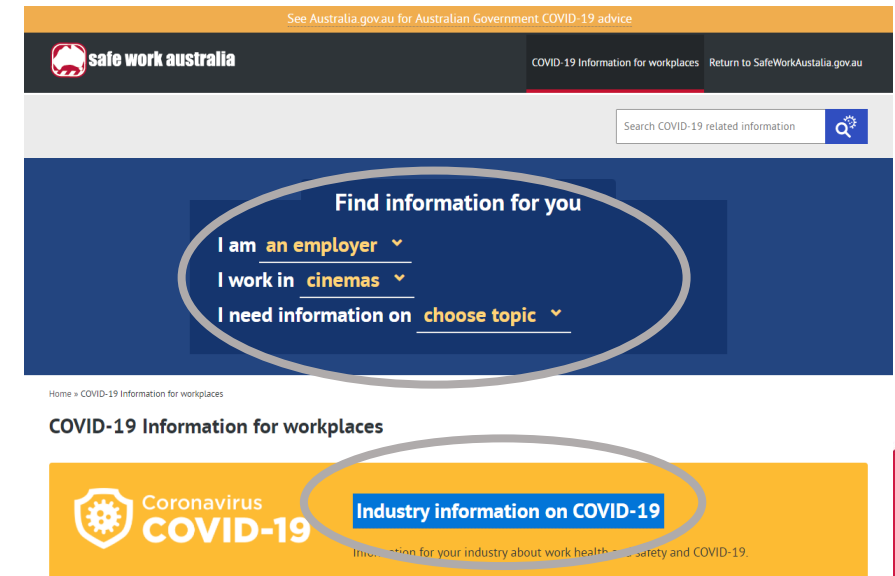
LPA COVID Safe Touring Guidelines



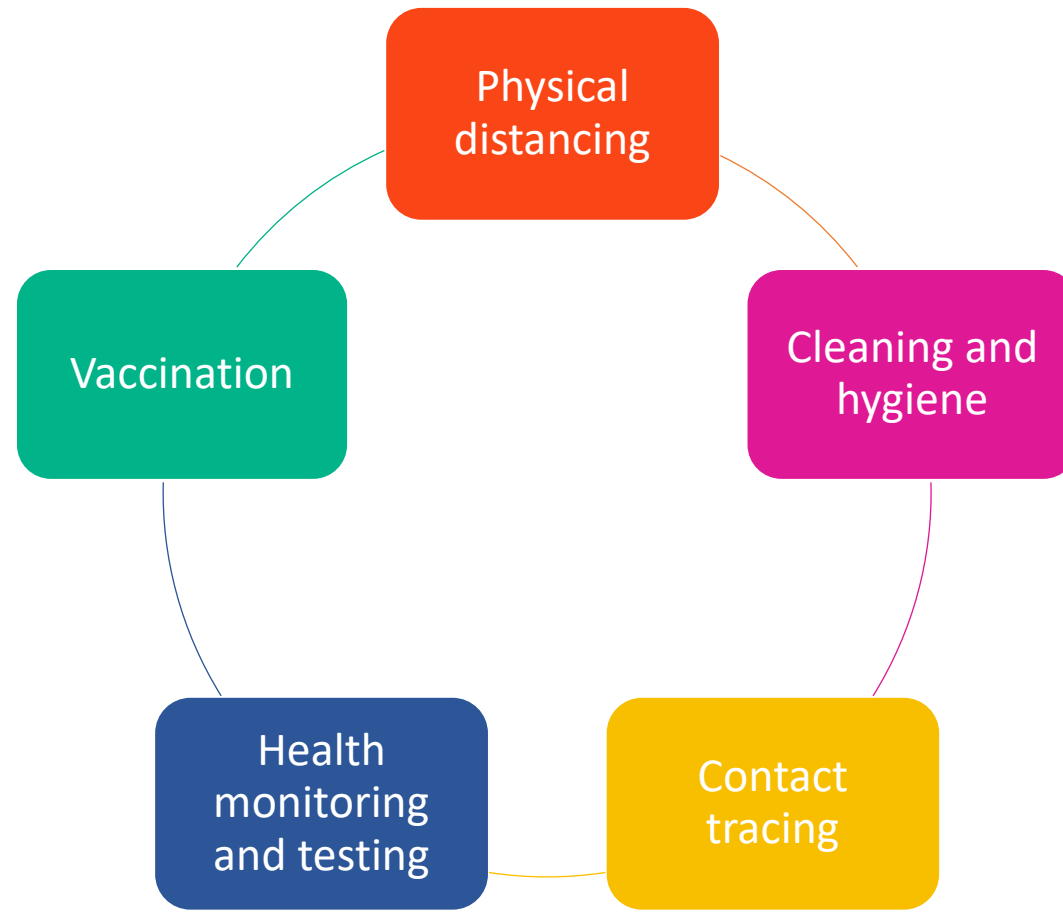
Guidelines for COVID Safe Theatres (PAC Australia)



Work Safe Australia – industry information



# Key principles



# PCR and rapid antigen testing



Do you have advice on ongoing surveillance testing of employees?  
Is there a recommended frequency for rapid antigen or PCR testing?

- No prescriptive advice
- Undertake a risk assessment – consider factors such as:
  - Type of activity
  - Levels of community transmission
  - Vaccination status
  - High risk community
- Consultation with workers
- [TGA – RAT guidance](#)
- [RAT information for business owners](#)



**TIP:** Safe Work Australia has guidance on rapid antigen testing

How to keep your workplace safe



#### COVID-19 vaccines information

Information for employers, small businesses and workers on the COVID-19 vaccines and how to manage risks from COVID-19 in the workplace.

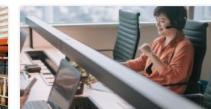
Vaccination information for your industry ▼



#### Risk Assessments

Assess the work health and safety risks from COVID-19 and put in place measures to manage those risks.

Risk assessment information for your industry ▼



#### Physical distancing

Information on requirements for physical distancing and measures to ensure people keep at least 1.5 metres apart.

Physical distancing information for your industry ▼



#### Hygiene

Guidance on implementing measures to ensure workers and others maintain good hygiene at the workplace.

Hygiene information for your industry ▼



#### Rapid Antigen Testing

Information about Rapid Antigen Testing in the workplace.

RAT information for your industry ▼

**Please note:** the Safe Work Australia rapid antigen test guidance, referred to in LPA's presentation, is not currently available, as it is currently being reviewed.



# COVID Safe Plan Requirements

## SOMETIMES

- Australian Capital Territory
- South Australia

## ALWAYS

- Western Australia
- Victoria
- Northern Territory

## NEVER BUT SHOULD ANYWAY!

- New South Wales
- Queensland
- Tasmania

A SUMMARY is available with your [LPA login](#)

# COVID Safe Plan Requirements – Example WA

WESTERN AUSTRALIA



- ✓ All businesses require a [COVID Safety Plan](#)
- ✓ Must display a COVID Safety Plan Certificate
- ✓ Industry-specific [COVID Safety Guidelines, Template Plans and Certificates](#)
- ✓ 'General' plan and guidelines must be used



# COVID Safe Plan Requirements – Example NSW



NEW SOUTH WALES

- ✓ Optional [COVID-19 Safety Plans](#). It's up to each workplace to identify appropriate control measures and to comply with public health orders and WHS law
- ✓ [Industry-specific COVID Safety Plans](#) and guidelines
- ✓ A copy should be kept on premises

# Mandatory workplace vaccination: Public health directions (QLD, VIC, NT, TAS, WA)

1 Workers and workplace access

2 Number of doses

3 Evidence required

4 Exemptions

A SUMMARY is available with your [LPA login](#)

# Easing of government vaccination mandates



How are companies responding now that vaccination mandates are being removed?

## *Employees*

- Develop a workplace vaccination policy
- For new employees, include vaccination as a term in the contract of employment

## *Audiences*

- In some states (e.g. Vic, WA), patrons must be 'fully' vaccinated to enter an entertainment venue
- In other states, the mandatory vaccination requirement has been removed or only applies in certain settings (e.g. NSW).
  - Venues can make it a condition of entry. Patrons must be advised of this condition at the time of purchasing tickets

A [TEMPLATE POLICY](#) and [TEMPLATE CONTRACT CLAUSE](#) is available with your LPA login



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PERFORMANCE  
AUSTRALIA

# What to do if a worker tests positive to COVID-19

1

Direct the worker to wear a mask, return home and self-isolate

2

Identify workplace contacts

3

Contact all workplace contacts

4

Inform all workers to watch for symptoms and test if they have symptoms

5

Implement control measures to reduce the spread

6

Inform any relevant authorities

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# What to do if a worker tests positive to COVID-19: Example WA

**WESTERN AUSTRALIA**



## **Confirmed case**

1. Self-isolate for 7 days
2. No symptoms – leave isolation without testing
3. Symptoms – cannot leave isolation

## **Close contact**

1. Self isolate for 7 days – from last date of contact with confirmed case
2. PCR or Rat test
  - Positive = see above
  - Negative = repeat RAT in 24 hours
3. Day 6 RAT or PCR
  - Positive = see above
  - Negative = leave isolation on Day 7

# What to do if a worker tests positive to COVID-19: Example WA

**WESTERN AUSTRALIA**



## **Reporting to WA Department of Health**

1. If a worker tests positive to COVID-19:
  - Notify the WA Department of Health 1300 316 555

## **Reporting to Worksafe WA**

1. If a person contracts COVID-19 while carrying out work and:
  - Dies
  - Is required to have in-patient treatment in a hospital

A GUIDELINE is available from [WA Health](https://www.wa.gov.au/government/department-of-health)

# Managing COVID cases on tour



What's your advice for managing a positive case in a touring party while on the road?

- Follow requirements applicable to the relevant jurisdiction
- Positive case must immediately isolate. If not already isolating, wear surgical mask while in transit
- Extend accommodation booking
- Notify close contacts and monitor for symptoms
- Consider testing touring party
- Minimise contact with others outside of the touring party
- Consider whether it is still viable for tour to continue
- Monitor mental health and wellbeing





# Leave and self-isolating employees

- 1 Working from home
- 2 Paid personal/carer's leave
- 3 Unpaid carer's leave
- 4 Paid annual leave
- 5 Unpaid pandemic leave
- 6 Leave without pay

A SUMMARY is available with your [LPA login](#)

# Key take outs



Use the most up-to-date information



Undertake a risk assessment



Consult



Review and update your policies

# Questions?



With government restrictions/guidelines relaxed & vaccination rolled out, business continuity is now the main focus for arts companies. To what extent should venues continue to apply controls above and beyond what is mandated for purpose of health and safety?

- Risk assessment
- Compliance & enforcement
  - patrons (conditions of entry, ticket terms and conditions)
  - workers (employment contracts, workplace policies, venue hire agreements, contractor agreements)

# Questions?



Could various Work Cover claims be made for loss of wages for independent artists due to COVID positive result, unable to work, isolation or quarantine... or the insurance that artists get, cover them?

- Yes. If the organisations Workcover policy covers the independent artist.
- Otherwise the independent artist should take out their own insurance.

# Questions?



Many artists are requesting COVID cancellation terms in contacts.  
At what point will the fee be guaranteed if the event is cancelled?

## Independent Contractors:

- Depends on the terms of the contract

## Employees:

- **Performers** – prior to commencement of work - 2 weeks' pay
- **Production and Support Staff** – depends on terms of contract and length of service

# Questions?



Do employees need to provide a negative test result before returning after close family contact isolation or Covid infection?

- Sometimes, not always depend on your jurisdiction.
- It can be written into your COVID Safe Plan if you have through the process of developing the Covid Safe Plan determined that it is necessary.

# Questions?



# Thank you for your attendance!

Housewarming, **Darwin Festival 2021**. Photo: Elise Derwin

