

RE-OPENING
DANCE IN
NSW

COVID-19 GUIDANCE NOTES

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RE-OPENING DANCE in NSW COVID-19 GUIDANCE NOTES

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Acknowledgements and Disclaimer

This Plan has been adapted from the Dance and Physical Performing Arts Industry COVID Safe Plan (DPPA) written by Ausdance Queensland and has been developed in conjunction with Ausdance National and Ausdance Network (VIC, NSW, WA,SA,QLD) 'Return to Dance: Principles and frameworks for restarting dance post COVID-19'.

The Principles and Framework for Restarting Dance Activities Post COVID-19 directly references the Framework for Rebooting Sport in a COVID-19 Environment developed by the Australian Institute of Sport. Ausdance NSW acknowledges all the AIS Framework Project Team and contributors to the AIS Framework which can be found in [full here](#)

The DPPA Plan and the DCIP acknowledges and reflects information and questions raised by the dance sector.

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URLs

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Contents

About Ausdance NSW	04		
1.1 Purpose of this Document	05		
1.2 How to use this plan	05		
2. Introduction	06		
2.1 About COVID-19	06		
2.2 Definitions	06		
2.3 The Ausdance Network Return to Dance Framework and Guidelines	07		
2.4 'Get in, dance, get out' approach	08		
3. Planning and Preparation	08		
3.1 Risk Review and Checklist for Dance	08		
3.2 Dance Facility Floor Plan	09		
3.3 Clean Facility	09		
3.4 Good Hygiene	10		
3.5 Physical Distancing	10		
3.6 Controlling the Flow of Participants	11		
3.7 Communication and Cooperation	11		
3.8 Safety Promotion	12		
4. Business Practices	12		
4.1 General Business	12		
4.2 Check-in Procedure	12		
4.3 Use of Non-Contact Temperature Testing	13		
4.4 Attendance Records	14		
4.5 Working in External Venues	15		
5. Personnel Practices	16		
5.1 Staying Informed	17		
		6. Activity Practices	17
		6.1 Interaction	17
		6.2 First Nations Entities, Artists and Participants	19
		6.3 Disability and Dance	20
		6.4 Children and Young People	21
		6.5 At Risk Participants	21
		6.6 Risk Management and Review	22
		7. Acknowledgement	22
		Appendix A	23
		DCIP Risk Review and Checklist	
		Appendix B	29
		COVID Safety Plan Template	
		Appendix C	30
		Dance Facility Floor Plan	
		Appendix D	31
		COVID-19 Self-assessment template	
		Appendix E	32
		Suspected COVID Case Response	
		Appendix F	34
		Links	
		Ausdance NSW Membership	36

About Ausdance NSW

Ausdance NSW is the peak body for, leading dance in NSW. We provide advice, advocacy and dance programs in different contexts and environments, both directly and indirectly and in partnership with other state and federal government departments, local government authorities, dance companies, organisations, educational institutions, businesses, and dance studios.

Ausdance NSW forms a key partnership with sister organisation, Ausdance Victoria, providing links and pathways for artists in the sector across two integral states. As part of the Ausdance Network we are committed to work together with our state counterparts to advocate for and support the dance industry.

The Ausdance National Network

Ausdance is Australia's peak body for dance. Ausdance has a 40-year history of educating, inspiring and supporting the dance community to reach its potential as a dynamic force within local, national and international communities. The Ausdance network is a federated association of separately funded state/territory organisations with their own priorities and programs including Ausdance National, QLD, WA, NSW, VIC, SA and ACT.

Supporting Ausdance National and the Ausdance Network:

- We work collegially to develop communal resources, knowledge and deliver shared programs with the **National Ausdance Network**.
- Recognising the need and space for a national voice, **Ausdance NSW**, along with the respective state organisations, collectively advocated for solutions to avoid the winding down of Ausdance National.
- We have committed to support the new board of **Ausdance National**.
- We will advise on needs, trends as well as deliver national advocacy, events and projects including the **National Dance Forum**, and the **Australian Dance Awards**
- Participates in Network meetings and alongside **Ausdance Victoria**, plays a lead role in bringing together the state counterparts.

Overarching Goals

To **champion** innovation, creativity and diversity in dance.

To **advocate** and demonstrate high standards of professionalism in the dance industry.

To **mobilise** cooperation in support of dance development.

To **promote** dance creation, presentation and participation.

To **promote** the interaction of NSW dance within the national and international arenas.

Ensure the **stability** and sustainability of the organisation.

Mission Statement

To create, support and promote opportunities for dance in NSW and invest in its ongoing development.

1. Purpose of this Document

The purpose of this document is to assist in the safe return to dance activity in the state of NSW and provide guidance to planning safety measures taken by the dance community to manage a safe return to artistic, business and community activities.

Dance activities considered when writing these guidance notes include but are not limited to:

- All dance genres and practices
- Professional dance training, performance and competitions and company rehearsals
- Recreational and pre-professional dance training and performance including dance competitions
- Classes and training for children and adults
- Artist run initiatives and activities

These notes aim to assist the dance sector in adapting their practices and operations to ensure compliance with government directives for COVID-19 preparedness and safety.

These guidance notes aim to:

1. Detail ways to comply safely to government requirements
2. This guidance is opt-in– dance sector professionals do not need to operate in accordance with these notes. It is for guidance and support of the sector in NSW only.

NOTE: Dance practitioners and businesses must follow NSW work health and safety guidelines including registering a COVID Safety Plan at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19>

While these notes have been developed with industry peers and collaboration for the purposes of guiding dance activity for the sector back to operation, entities are to follow best practice recommendations which are relevant to their specific operations and circumstances.

These notes have been developed in conjunction with:

- Return to Dance: Principles and Framework for Returning to dance post COVID-19 (Ausdance National)
- Industry COVID Safe Plan for Dance and Physical Performing Arts (Ausdance QLD)
- The Australian Institute for Sport Toolkit
- Current NSW health advice

1.2 How to use this plan

1. Risk Review and Checklist for Dance – Appendix A
2. COVID Safety Plan Template – Appendix B
3. Dance Facility Floor Plan – an example in Appendix C
4. COVID-19 Self-assessment Template – Appendix D
5. Suspected COVID Case Response Plan – Appendix E
6. Links to state/ national government resources and further templates – Appendix F

2. Introduction

In early 2020, the arts industry in Australia began experiencing unprecedented upheaval as the impact of the global pandemic associated with COVID-19 reached our shores. The pandemic has affected communities and industries all around the world. In Australia, the arts and entertainment industry has been one of the most affected industries, in particular the performing arts as a result of nationwide shutdown of performance opportunities such as venues and festivals. The impact of social distancing has meant that many artists and arts workers, particularly in dance, have not been able to participate in other pursuits which also attract income such as teaching. Returning to dance activity is an essential part of the dance sector’s recovery and Ausdance NSW recognises the need to assist in supporting the sector to make necessary adjustments to practices to ensure the sector’s viability and safety.

These guidance notes have been written in consultation with the Ausdance Network, specifically Ausdance QLD, NSW-based companies and businesses as well as independent professionals.

2.1 About COVID-19

COVID 19 is a viral infection which presents with a wide range of severity. Antibiotics are not effective against viral infections. The majority of healthy children and young adults will have mild symptoms requiring no treatment. However, COVID 19 can be a very serious disease requiring care in hospital.

These notes are concerned with reducing the risk of transmission by implementing the framework outlined in the Return to Dance: Principles and Framework for Returning to dance post COVID-19 (Ausdance National) and reasonably reducing the risk of infection. Specifically, reducing the amount of time spent in close proximity to others (who may be infected) during exertion and other events associated with attending dance activities.

2.2 Definitions

TERM	DEFINITION
DCIP	Dance Sector in NSW COVID-19 Industry Plan
Entity	Any person or business where dance activity is part of and / or central to that operation / business such as but not limited to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dance Studios • Independent dancers • Artist run initiatives • Dance companies • Incorporated and non-incorporated dance groups
Premises	A building and the boundaries of the land the building is on
Facility	The entire area under the control of the Entity
Room / Area	The area that the Entity controls through the course of the dance activity particularly if the entity does not maintain control over the entire facility e.g. hiring one studio in a larger venue
Personnel	People engaged in the management and delivery of the activities such as; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative staff • Artists • Volunteers • Contractors

Participants	People who are part of the activity of the entity such as; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students • Artists • Parents, carers, extended networks of the participants
General public (GP)	Any member of the local community who may be affected by the activities of the Entity including operations and a potential infection
At risk person/people	The current health advice is that the following people are considered more at risk of infection; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • elderly people • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (as they have higher rates of chronic illness) • people with compromised immune systems (such as people who have cancer) • people with chronic medical conditions • people in group residential settings • people in detention facilities
Floor work	Dance specific term describing dance activity carried out mostly through bodily contact with the floor such as sliding, rolling, dropping and rising from, sitting, etc.
Risk Review and control	The process of identifying risks and putting measures in place (control) to eliminate or minimise the risk and harm associated with COVID-19

2.3 The Ausdance Network Return to Dance Framework and Guidelines

The Ausdance Network is made up of the following: Ausdance NSW, Ausdance Victoria, Ausdance SA, Ausdance QLD, Ausdance WA and Ausdance National. Each Ausdance branch is an independent organisation.

The Return to Dance Framework identified the following framework in which to understand and operate as entities return to activity.

Preparation: *‘...dance companies to review and safely prepare the environment and processes. A thorough risk assessment must be carried out and preparation will be specific to each individual dance environment. A resumption of dance activity should not occur until appropriate measures are implemented to ensure safety of all community members.’*

Education: *‘...Education for members of the dance community about COVID-19 risk mitigation strategies is crucial. Many dance practices and social norms within the dance community are incongruent with the concept of physical distancing. Education will reset expectations for new required behaviours prior to recommencing activities. Improved health literacy, including awareness of self-monitoring of respiratory symptoms (even if mild) will be required.’*

Environment: *‘The specific considerations for a safe resumption of dance in all forms will be dependent on the venue, studio or teaching environment. Considerations include physical distancing and cleaning.’*

For additional resources for implementing the framework see the appendices.

2.4 'Get in, dance, get out' approach

The Ausdance Network's Return to Dance Framework supports the use of a 'get in, dance, get out' approach which includes;

- Strategies to limit time and person-to-person contact on site should be implemented
- No use of change rooms or shower amenities
- Toilets may remain open but must be cleaned regularly
- Arrive dressed and ready for class or rehearsal wherever possible
- Arrive on time, leave on time
- Maintain good hygiene practices
- Eat off-site where possible
- All participants maintain at least 1.5m apart when not required for a specific dance activity
- Any tasks that can be done at home, should be done at home (costume or clothing repair, make-up), online meetings, etc.

3. Planning and Preparation

3.1 Risk Review and Checklist for Dance

Entities should complete a Risk Review and Checklist for every separate facility activities are held in (including rooms or parts thereof). The Risk Review must be consistent with up-to-date COVID-19 OH&S advice and consider;

- Availability of sanitation amenities
- High traffic times internal and external
- Sufficient room available for ingress into and egress from the room/area
- Internal and external waiting areas (such as car parks, drop off zones, etc)
- Cleaning protocols for dance and shared spaces
- If cleaning records and associated templates are required

The Risk Review can be conducted using the Checklist for Dance, see appendices.

3.2 Dance Facility Floor Plan

Entities can create a detailed floor plan for each facility where activity takes place. Not all dance entities and businesses manage an entire venue. These notes identify that a lot of dance activity is carried out in parts of facilities when the broader facility is not in control of the organisation or individual.

The floor plan should include;

- Clearly identifying the area of control the entity and areas which are shared e.g. dance studio (controlled) and bathrooms (shared)
- Management of high traffic areas
- Emergency exits
- Locations of hand sanitiser and cleaning products
- Any areas which are not accessible and alternatives for persons with disability
- Location of segregation area for suspected COVID-19 cases (if applicable).
- Be mindful that COVID planning should not interfere with emergency management such as evacuation plans.

An example floor plan is in the appendices.

3.3 Clean Facility

Cleaning with viricidal or antimicrobial products is proven to be one of the best ways in which to reduce the spread of COVID-19 as advised by the NSW Department for Health.

Entities must ensure that there are adequate resources, training and protocols in place for regular cleaning of the dance and associated areas.

Entities are advised to develop Cleaning Protocols specific to their operations and/ or business and circumstances. A link to Work Safe NSW cleaning advice can be found in the appendices.

Important considerations:

- Where shared amenities are used for multiple facilities, the Operating Business must confirm adequate measures are in place to sanitise the area. This may require consultation with the landlord or other tenancies within a shared use premises.
- Operating businesses under tenancies or hire agreements should consult with their premises owner/ operator to clarify responsibilities for cleaning of facilities where confusion exists.
- Where activity includes 'Floor Work' clean room/area protocols should include an enhanced cleaning schedule for floor surfaces.

More information on cleaning and disinfecting work spaces can be found [here](#).

3.4 Good Hygiene

The rate of transmission and therefore infection is lowered when individuals practice effective hygiene habits. Good hygiene practices specific to COVID-19 include;

- Not attending activities if feeling unwell
- Frequent hand washing or using alcohol-based sanitisers
- Not sharing water bottles or personal equipment
- Avoiding touching their face
- Limiting the touching of surfaces
- Limiting the use of shared equipment or cleaning after use
- Covering sneezes and coughs
- Change rooms and shower amenities must remain closed during stage 2
- Refreshing clothing after exercise

It is the responsibility of Entities to supply adequate cleaning and hygienic products for all people who may attend the venue including staff, participants, visitors and volunteers. Products include fresh water, soap, paper towels and alcohol-based hand sanitiser.

Entities may also require people attending the activity to bring their own hygiene products which can be confirmed during the checking-in procedure.

Federal government information on and resources for good hygiene during COVID-19 is [here](#).

3.5 Physical Distancing

Close physical proximity to others is known to be a risk for viral exposure and transmission. Physical distancing is the practice of maintaining a perimeter around a person to reduce the proximity between people, minimising the risks of transmission.

These guidance notes support the principals of physical distancing which are:

- 1.5m distance between people when gathering
- 4m² space per person when working or conducting an activity within a shared space
- Avoid physical greetings such as hugging, kissing or hand shaking

To comply with physical distancing measures, Entities should:

- Adhere to physical distancing recommendations as detailed within the Health Authority guidelines as much as reasonably practicable
- Provide visual indication of physical distancing measures to assist participants to follow.
 - These may include (but are not limited to):
 - floor markings
 - wall markings
 - spacing of furniture or materials
 - installing physical barriers in high traffic areas
- Actively promote the practice of physical distancing for all personnel, participants and guests.

Federal guidance and resources for physical distancing measures can be found [here](#)

3.6 Controlling the Flow of Participants

Managing the flow of people through a venue, facility or room/ studio within, is an important strategy in order to comply with the 4m² requirement where reasonably possible. This is called the ‘flow of participants’ and is particularly relevant to high traffic areas such as entrances/ exits, backstage areas, sides of stages / performance areas, doorways and common/ shared areas such as bathrooms.

Entities must put measures into place to control the flow of participants within the premises or facility. Entities must consider the effect participant traffic has on the immediate area around their premises or facilities. Measures are to be put in place such as:

- Staggering of activity times where multiple rooms/areas are within the same premises to limit traffic or gatherings in common spaces
- Established arrival times to minimise gathering while waiting for activities
- Coordination by personnel with the release of classes
- If practicable, set up separate entry and exit points to each room/area and use visual guides such as arrows to coordinate the flow
- Consultation with the tenancies and neighbours around them to ensure flow of participants does not negatively impact their ability to operate safely

Entities should consider controlling the flow of participants as an important strategy for maintaining the 4m² rule when completing their facility/ premises safety plan.

3.7 Communication and Cooperation

Safety during COVID is a shared responsibility. Each Entity should share information, actively consult and strategise with all members of their community and stakeholders to ensure effective and safe operation of activities and avenues to ask questions and provide feedback. This includes landlords, other tenants, participants, family members, staff and other related personnel.

Communication strategies can include but are not limited to:

- Contacting landlords, other tenants, etc. to discuss the Entities implementation of these guidance notes
- Consultation with adjoining business in relation to the flow of participants
- Communicating with participants and their networks/ families about the impact and requirements of the changes due to implementing COVID safety measures
- Developing a COVID communication plan including regular updates, review of policies and feedback and signage

3.8 Safety Promotion

Safety promotion is how you communicate your safety measures and best practice behaviours to anyone engaging in the activities of your business or anyone who may be impacted by your business. Safety promotion includes visible display of safety procedures, best practice guidance and business compliance inside and outside your place of business. Promotion may include posters, printed material or online instructions.

Examples of safety promotion may include:

- Activity times (high volume traffic)
- Requirements for entering and exiting room/area (check-in and collection procedures)
- Markings for physical distancing in waiting zones (if required)
- Participant behavioural expectations in relation to good hygiene and physical distancing
- Instructional posters on hand washing, hand sanitisation, physical distancing and COVID-19.

For Safe Work Australia Resource for pre-made signs and posters click [here](#).

4. Business Practices

4.1 General Business

General business practices are to be modified as necessary to limit the risk of exposure to COVID-19 such as but not limited to;

- Non-contact payment methods for services are preferred.
 - Where cash payment is accepted, hands should be sanitised immediately after each transaction
- Deliveries to the premises/facility provide prior notice to arrival or contactless delivery service with a designated delivery area
- Other variations appropriate to the business

4.2 Check-in Procedure

It is likely that dance studios will specifically want some guidance on ‘drop’ off and pick up procedures and how this should or could be done safely with young children. Check-in procedures provide first point of contact protection by identifying and preventing entry to individuals who may be infected with COVID-19 and thus preventing transmission within the Entity.

All facilities must ensure they have clear signage of the conditions of entry and the Entities’ right to refusal.

All facilities must have a check-in process for personnel and participants where:

- Personnel responsible for check-in has appropriate training to identify signs or symptoms of COVID-19.
- Clear entry sign advising of right to refusal is displayed.
- Any persons with signs or symptoms of COVID are to be refused entry.
- On entry participants are to be queried if they have experienced symptoms of COVID (this may be achieved through individual or group interaction).
- Non-Contact temperature testing is recommended where available such as through a self-monitoring questionnaire each time staff or participants enter the facility.
- Operating Businesses should consider that refusal of entry can cause anxiety or conflict in participants. It is important to provide personnel with guidance to assist in resolving conflict if it occurs.
- People conducting the checking in process should have adequate Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) such as goggles, mask, hand sanitiser, etc. and education as to how to use it properly.

4.3 Use of Non-Contact Temperature Testing

Entities may utilise non-contact forms of temperature testing. Temperature testing has been shown to be an effective way of identifying a possible COVID-19 infection may only present in some asymptomatic individuals.

During the pandemic, the temperature of individuals can be measured using:

- Infra-red forehead thermometers which require no contact with the body
- Tympanic thermometers with disposable covers that limit contact of the thermometer cover to one individual
- Thermometers that required cleaning before re-use are not recommended

Results of temperature testing are to be interpreted as follows:

- Temperature of 37.5C or greater is considered high
- Temperature of 37.3C or 37.4C is considered borderline
- Temperature of 37.2C or below is not considered elevated

Any person presenting with an elevated temperature should:

- Not be penalised in anyway (other than being refused entry) so as not to deter people from voluntarily presenting for testing
- Be sent home immediately to isolate or kept in an isolated area until they can be collected
- Make contact with local doctor for further advice
- Follow the guidance for suspected COVID-19 cases as detailed in the appendices

Any person presenting with a borderline temperature should:

- Rest for 10 minutes in a segregated area then have their temperature re-checked.
- If the recorded temperature remains borderline, they should be considered as having an elevated temperature and follow the guidance above.

All elevated and repeat borderline temperature measurements should be recorded on an incident report for further monitoring and risk review by the Entity.

4.4 Attendance Records

Attendance records for any individual visiting the business should be maintained to assist in contact tracing if required. Attendance records should be detailed enough to allow thorough contract tracing if any individuals attending the businesses or participating in activities contract COVID-19 or have been in contact with COVID-19 cases.

Attendance records must be kept securely for at least 56 days and should contain at a minimum:

- Full Name
- Phone or Mobile number
- Address
- Date and time of visit
- Activity/Purpose of visit
- Record if a person is a minor, if so carers name and contact details must be included
- Keep the self-checklist for each person on each entry to the facility

4.5 Working in External Venues

Ausdance NSW is continuing to develop these guidance notes in relation to dance performances which occur in venues not controlled by the Entity such as theatres, sporting stadiums.

Entities should seek a cooperative relationship with venues with mutual and shared obligations to maintaining COVID Safety.

Venues operating under one or more Industry Plans for COVID Safety will have additional restrictions and requirements outside of the scope of these guidance notes. Industry Plans supersede these guidance notes.

General principles for dance activities in hired performance venues:

- Entities should share their COVID Safety plans with venues
- Use of venue ticketing systems is recommended to assist in contact tracing should it be required
- Social distancing measures must be put in place including areas for the general public and back-stage in accordance with government regulations
- All necessary precautions should be taken to reduce transmission between performers as outlined in these guidance notes
- Consider closing dressing rooms where possible to minimise the risks of transmission in closed spaces and cross-contamination through dressing room surfaces and use.
- Where this is not possible or safe to open, social distancing requirements must be adhered to. Consider using other temporary spaces which can be converted to additional dressing room space to lessen congestion.
- Space requirements should factor in additional space for belongings and costumes to be kept separate
- If used, cleaning schedules should be implemented for dressing rooms
- Where cloak rooms are required, minimise contact with belongings such as the use of tray's which can be cleaned and where the owner places items in and out of the tray.
- Dancers to arrive ready to perform and where possible, recreational, pre-professional and competition dance performances are advised to remove costume requirements so that dancers can participate in multiple performances without the need to change costumes
- For companies where costumes are necessary consider providing options to separate costumes directly after use for laundering
- Dancers to use shoes to reduce the risk of transmission via dance floors
- Performances and audiences be staggered to allow for social distancing measures to be implemented and reduce congestion in high traffic areas such as front of house and back-stage
- Entities need to ensure that all back stage staff contracted to the Entity are trained in the COVID Safety Plan
- Check-in procedures for all Entity participants and staff need to be conducted
- Entities should communicate to their audiences and performers that they should only attend events if they are feeling well
- Hand sanitisation stations should be placed throughout the back-stage areas. Back stage staff / personnel should be supplied with PPE including their own hand sanitiser where possible to use between job related tasks.

5. Personnel Practices

The Entity should ensure that personnel are informed, protected and aware of their responsibilities regarding their safety and the safety of others during the activities of the business.

Responsibilities

Personnel must:

- Present fit for duty (i.e. individuals experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 must not attend activities)
- Be aware of the health of participants before, during and after activity.
- Ensure participants maintain good hygiene and physical distancing practices and model these behaviours for others.

Education and Training

Education for personnel in the dance industry about COVID-19 risk mitigation strategies is crucial and records of training in relation to COVID-19 must be kept. Many dance practices and social norms within the dance sector are incongruent with the concept of physical distancing. Education will reset the expectations for the new required behaviours prior to recommencing activities.

Personnel must be educated in:

- Hand and respiratory hygiene
- Physical distancing
- Signs and symptoms of COVID-19
- Environmental cleaning
- Measures to take in the event of a confirmed or suspected COVID case

Additional recommended education for personnel:

- Conflict resolution techniques
- Workplace health and safety practices

NSW COVID Safe Training can be sourced [here](#).

5.1 Staying Informed

Entities have an obligation to keep up to date with the Ministry for Health directions, and update safety plans accordingly. Entities are responsible for staying informed of any issue or development that may increase the risk to their participants, personnel and others including:

- Changes to regulations or restrictions
- Outbreaks or clusters in their area
- Contact with individuals who may be infected

Entities should:

- Delegate responsibility for staying informed
- Check information and plans prior to activities to confirm information for COVID-19 guidance is accurate and up to date
- Provide a clear platform for their community to communicate changes to operations and practices, updated authority guidance, incidents or issues that impact the business.

6. Activity Practices

6.1 Interaction

Dance is a physical activity with a wide range of exertion and contact levels. For example, a dance class for young children is rarely aerobic, focusing on group dynamics and technique instead appropriate with their age. In addition, a professional dance company rehearsal while preparing for elite performance and presentation may also frequently not be aerobic due to the need to learn choreography, refine steps, work on character, etc.

Dance teachers and choreographers are skilled at varying movement and class content. They are qualified and able to ensure that classes, if needed, are not aerobic, or facilitated in an interval fashion so as to reduce the impact exertion and aerobic activity may have on the spread of viruses.

Dance also involves a range of contact from minimal touch for corrective purposes, mid-range touch in partners styles such as ballroom and ballet to full body contact in styles such as contact improvisation.

Therefore, these notes advises the following, to be applied as needed for the range of interaction activity that takes place in dance studios and contexts.

Basic principles for interaction:

- Use of voice amplification technology to reduce vocal effort (less droplet spread)
- Reducing music volume in dance classes to reduce the need for teachers to yell/ speak at higher volumes which require more effort
- Consider the physical arrangement of class activity e.g. set travelling steps starting from alternating sides and finishing away from starting position to minimise slipstreaming effect and panting post exertion near others
- Consider having set groups which do not change week to week to limit potential spread (i.e. no swapping classes, and within each class having smaller groups which do all their travelling steps together).
- Ensure adequate ventilation of the facility/ room
 - Be mindful of air-conditioning/ fan direction and minimise number of participants lined up in that airflow path.
- Avoid unintentional/ unnecessary contact
- Personnel are to be conscientious of physical distancing measures
- Activity leaders carefully plan activities to minimise contact wherever possible
- Regular sanitisation be promoted and normalised. Personnel should role model this behaviour
- Regularly sanitising to reduce risk protecting both themselves and the participants
- Consider a ‘shoes off’, ‘clean feet’ or ‘specific dance shoe’ policy in facilities or rooms/ areas where floor work is being conducted
- Ensure adequate time between classes to clean the space, and allow ventilating of the room

To calculate the allowable number of persons within a single room/area under this Industry COVID Safe plan the Entity is to:

1. Calculate the total floorspace available (not to include fixtures).
2. Subtract from the total floorspace 1.5m walkways to all emergency egress points.
3. Divide the remaining space by the 4m² physical distancing guidelines.

The importance for each participant to have the ability to leave their designated space without infringing on the space of those around them must be considered as part of the floorspace plan. The Entity must also ensure that cleaning and hygiene standards can be achieved and maintained for the number of people requested.

6.2 First Nations Entities, Artists and Participants

Dance for First Nations people in Australia is an integral part of passing on cultural heritage to the next generations and forms an important part of education for the young and emerging.

Priorities within the First Nations performing arts community include self-determination, ensuring the safety of Elders and prevention of cultural knowledge loss, safeguarding spiritual and mental wellbeing as well as being mindful of the overwhelming concern that many First Nations artists are sole-traders and have thus been impacted financially by COVID-19. Please refer to Blakdance’s Re Futuring as Recovery for the Arts as well as their website for up-to-date priorities, information and resources.

First Nations consultation during the creation of the Ausdance QLD Dance Industry Plan on which this Plan is based, identified unique needs Entities should consider prior to commencing activities:

- Transmission is lower in outdoor settings compared with indoor. This may be relevant for some First Nation communities and dance practices. COVID safe planning must still be put in place
- Awareness that language differences can create barriers to communicating risk and safety promotion
- Family Groups often travel and attend activities together which should be considered when planning for attendance and maximum numbers
- Consideration for training as needed in workplace health and safety practices to achieve best practice guidance

When applying best practice guidance to First Nations participants the Entity should consider:

- Enhanced communication strategies to overcome potential language barriers for risk and safety promotion. These could include:
 - The use of pictorial representations of risk and safety information. A range of Posters can be accessed [here](#)
 - Direct conversations with participants and family groups
 - Establishing estimated attendance numbers prior to activities through communication with family groups
 - Developing internal training or seek external guidance for education in workplace health and safety standards.

6.3 Disability and Dance

Best practice in dance education and training prioritises access for current or future Deaf, hard-of-hearing and disabled students and instructors in the context of COVID-19. Prioritising access in COVID recovery minimises discrimination ‘on the basis of physical, intellectual, psychiatric, sensory, neurological or learning disability, physical disfigurement, disorder, illness or disease that affects thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgement, or results in disturbed behaviour’ as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1992. It is vital to recognise and respect individual differences in colleagues, clients and customers in the dance studio. Specifically, best practice includes ensuring accessible and inclusive spaces, communication, safety and hygiene as well as informed consent.

- **Space:** Ensure wheelchair-accessible entrances (no stairs, ramp and inward-opening/ajar/ automatic doors) to venue and accessible bathroom facilities. Ensure the space remains in the same configuration for vision-impaired or blind people.
- **Communication:** Ensure all COVID-19 information is communicated clearly and concisely be it written or spoken. For all digital communication to your dance community, (eg. via Facebook and in your E-news) ensure images are verbally described in the image’s caption and ensure that information can be read via screen readers (eg. avoid screenshots of Twitter posts). Depending on student/ staff/ parent cohorts, (eg. Deaf/hard-of-hearing, blind/vision-impaired or people with intellectual disability), consider providing Auslan-interpretation of health updates, Braille versions of items such as COVID safe badge, other signage at your venues and Easy Read versions of all or select COVID-related communications. For spoken communication to people with companions ensure communication is directed squarely to the person and not their companion.
- **Safety and hygiene:** Ensure all surfaces are cleaned and maintained in accordance with these guidance notes and that new cleaning products are specified in communications with your dance community to avoid any allergic or anaphylactic reactions.
- **Informed consent:** Ensure dance students with lived experience of disability fully understand the health risks and rules throughout the COVID recovery period and consent to participating in class with the knowledge they can withdraw from a course or program at any point.

6.4 Children and Young People

Children and young people appear to be less likely to become infected, and even if infected, the majority have very minor symptoms. However while rare, they can still become infected and transmit infection, therefore COVID safe measures must still be put into place for this age group.

Measures to be considered in application of risk controls:

- Adults to model COVID safe behaviour
- Ensure the children and young people use hand sanitiser or wash hands as often as practical, especially after eating, before and after using shared equipment such as props, on entry, exit to the room/ area and when required during activities
- Be creative with activities and consider incorporating physical distancing and good hygiene practices into the dance experience
- Limit physical contact with others wherever possible
- Encourage and praise individuals who display good hygiene practices
- Have attending parents and guardians assist through modelling and encouraging good hygiene practices.
- Considerations should be made to modify best practice guidance where beneficial such as moderating check-in processes to enable communicating with parents or guardians prior to activities.

6.5 At Risk Participants

The unique challenges working with at risk participants creates in a COVID environment have been considered in the development of these guidance notes. The following benefits to restarting dance activities as soon as possible were identified:

- Activity, especially expressive and creative activity, is an essential aspect of many people's life.
- There are substantial allied health benefits to commencing dance activity such as improved overall health, mental and physical resilience, social connection, illness prevention (such as with Dance with Parkinson's).
- Dance is often used as a remedial therapy in some contexts such as supported accommodation facilities and aged care homes.
- Activity is important in the mental health and wellbeing of participants and professionals in the field.

Considerations when applying a best practice for at risk participants:

- Medical advice should be sought by participants/ parents/ guardians/ carers before resumption of activities.
- Businesses working with at risk participants must adhere to the highest conditions of COVID-19 protection possible.

It is recommended that businesses working with at risk participants use rigorous WHS Plans to assist with risk management and review.

6.6 Risk Management and Review

An must be able to demonstrate good governance over safety planning. A responsible person should be appointed to deal with COVID-related safety matters. Entities must detail how complaints relating to COVID-19 will be managed.

It is recommended that Entities form a committee of stakeholders to regularly review and maintain record of:

- The effectiveness and currency of their COVID Safety Plans
- Any identified or potential cases within personnel or participants
- The effectiveness of emergency measures
- Any changes to status of Heath Authority Guidance
- The status of current COVID controls in place
- Any barriers to implementing COVID safe measures (i.e. unable to procure supplies)
- Meetings should be recorded by a checklist of items to ensure all items are covered and issues addressed as soon as reasonably practicable.

Operating Businesses with established WHS or Safety Management Systems may be able to absorb the COVID Plan governance function within their current safety governance structure.

The Ausdance Network recommends the application of the Model Code of Practice for operational risk management from Work Safe Australia, which can be found [here](#).

7. Acknowledgement

These notes has been adapted from Ausdance NSW’s Dance Sector OVID-19 Safety Industry Plan (DCIP) and the Dance and Physical Performing Arts Industry COVID Safe Plan (DPPA) written by Ausdance Queensland.

The DPPA Plan and the DCIP has been developed in conjunction with ‘Return to Dance: Principles and frameworks for restarting dance post COVID-19’ created by Ausdance National and the Ausdance Network (VIC, NSW, WA, SA, QLD, National).

These notes acknowledges and reflects consultations with and sector analysis as to the needs and conditions of the dance sector.

DCIP Risk Review and Checklist for Dance

This Dance Industry Checklist has been developed to assist workers in the dance sector to prepare a COVID safe environments for dancers and other participants. For dancers, this checklist provides a quick reference to COVID safe practices specific to dance and expectations.

This checklist will assist Entities assess their readiness to open and should be used in conjunction with the Plan and the NSW government's COVID Safety Plans specific for the gym, indoor recreation and sports industries. Keep a copy of this checklist for your records.

- ❑ Read/ complete the guidance notes and Ausdance Return to Dance Framework
- ❑ Refer to the Safe Work Australia **COVID resource kit** for helpful information and guidance
- ❑ Refer to the New South Wales Government's COVID-19 website <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19> to view up to date information on the specific restrictions in place.
- ❑ Complete a COVID-19 Safety Plan - <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/covid-safe-businesses>

CHECKLIST

Preparation of facility

- ❑ Consult with your landlord/ landowner/ facility manager on the conditions to restarting your activities including the use of the DCSIP Plan best practice guidance and exemptions
- ❑ Inform adjoining businesses, tenancies or neighbours of resumption of activities. This could include direct contact, informational posters, promotional materials or social media releases
- ❑ Ensure participants, parents or guardians have been communicated about conditions/ restrictions on restarting activities, for example:
 - Changes to activities
 - Limitations to allowable numbers on premises
 - Check-in procedure and health requirements for attendance
- ❑ If your facility has been closed, check the condition of the equipment and amenities are fully functioning, such as gas, electricity, toilets and hand washing amenities
- ❑ Cleaning protocols created for frequently touched areas and surfaces to be cleaned between activities with detergent or disinfectant (including shared equipment, tables, counter tops and sinks). Surfaces used by participants, such as chairs, flooring where 'floor work' is conducted, and tables must also be cleaned between clients
- ❑ Close communal amenities such as change-rooms, showers, kitchens, etc.
- ❑ Enhanced cleaning protocols put into place for toilets, this may include cleaning records to monitor frequency, shared responsibilities and effectiveness of cleaning

- ❑ Ensure hand washing basins are available including clean running water, liquid soap, paper towels suitable for expected use
- ❑ Ensure hand sanitising stations available and for personnel and participants to easily sanitise hands before and after (and during if required) activities
- ❑ Ensure sufficient sanitation supplies are available for personnel and participants. Consider keeping additional stock or local supplier contact lists to reduce the risk of running out.
- ❑ Physical distancing markings made by placing floor or wall markings or signs to identify 1.5 metres distance between persons in activity areas, common spaces, walkways and waiting areas
- ❑ Seating/ furniture spaced at least 1.5 metres apart or removed/ restricted where adequate spacing is not possible
- ❑ Barres and floors marked to show required distances
- ❑ Lost property to be discarded at the end of the day such as bottles
- ❑ Signs and posters positioned within activity areas, common spaces, walkways and waiting areas where able to inform and promote safe practices, such as:
 - Activity schedules
 - Check-In and collection procedures
 - Physical distancing & good hygiene guidance
 - Behavioural expectations
 - Entry and exit signs or path indicators to control flow of participants within room/ area
- ❑ Maximum allowable participants have been calculated as detailed in these guidance notes and in accordance with NSW Health regulations
- ❑ The Floorplan prepared as detailed in the guidance notes and clearly identifies a separate room or if not available, an isolated area for use when there is a suspected case of COVID or if a participant becomes unwell during activities
- ❑ The Floorplan clearly identifies flow of participants:
 - Entrances
 - Exits
 - Isolation area
 - Location of hand sanitisers/ cleaning equipment and shared areas such as toilets
- ❑ Record any additional measures taken to reduce risk in the preparation of the facility:

Personal Practices

Physical distancing and personal hygiene expectations:

- Personnel have been provided guidance on their responsibilities on resumption of activities, for example:
 - Presenting fit for duty,
 - Monitoring the health of participants,
 - Modelling and encouraging good hygiene and physical distancing practices
- Personnel have been trained or provided guidance on:
 - Hand and respiratory hygiene,
 - Physical distancing,
 - Signs and symptoms of COVID-19,
 - Measures to take in the event of a confirmed or suspected case of COVID event,
- Additional education or guidance has been considered, such as:
 - Adapting class material for physical distancing
 - Workplace health and safety practices
 - Dealing with conflict
- Record and additional training, guidance or behavioural expectations for personnel:

Business/ Entity Practices

- Checking in procedures implemented including:

Log of personnel, participants and visitors (sign in and out with times)

- Collection and storing of COVID self-assessment questionnaire
 - Cleaning and preparation of no contact temperature device/s
 - Inducting new participants to COVID Safety procedures including hygiene practices, locations of COVID safe PPE, entrance, exit and suspected case protocols
- Waiting in the studio/ waiting areas not permitted – only in exceptional circumstances such as guardians running late for children and young people
- Belongings, bags, water bottles, etc should remain separate and avoid contact with other people’s belongings

- ❑ Entities consider participants enrolling in the same classes each week to avoid potential cross-contamination from varied groups on a regular basis
- ❑ Participants/dancers to arrive 'dance ready' i.e. in dance wear for class
- ❑ No classes to be viewed by an audience except where assistants/ carers are required
- ❑ Deliveries coordinated for contactless service or scheduled to minimise contact on deliveries
- ❑ Contactless payment methods should be preferred, where cash transactions take place ensure to wash hands or sanitised immediately after
- ❑ Participant attendance to be recorded to assist in health authority contact tracing in the event of a suspected COVID-19 exposure. Records are to be stored securely for a minimum of one month
- ❑ Timetables and Activity times are staggered / changed when required to reduce number of participants in common areas or using amenities at the same time this includes ensuring participants in separate studios enter / leave via separate pathways or entrances/exits are staggered. Ensure participants are informed of arrival and completion times to minimise waiting or unintentional gatherings
- ❑ Timetables reflect the additional time needed to adhere to cleaning protocols
- ❑ Consider the mental health and wellbeing of returning participants including allowing additional time to rebuild technique and adjust to new dance environments in a COVID Safety context. Adapt class and entity outcomes / expectations to allow for this.
- ❑ Consider the impacts of lockdown on the technical skills of participants. Adapt business activity to allow participants to build up their skills again at their own pace.
- ❑ Teachers and facilitators have considered participant placement in the class mindful of air-conditioning / air flow directions to avoid groups of people in the same pathway as air-conditioning to avoid 'slipstreaming effect' outline the guidance notes
- ❑ Corner work has been configured so as to avoid participants congregating in groups at the same corner after exercise i.e. Avoiding groups of people panting, exasperating together in close proximity near the same equipment such as barres.
- ❑ Entity's inform personnel through signage and regular communication to speak up if feeling unwell. Encourage a 'no punishment' culture as a safe culture – where people suspected of being affected by COVID-19 are taken care of as well as personal and participants at the Entity /activity.
- ❑ Personnel and participants are to be encouraged to download and activate the Australian Government COVID Safe app. Devices must be left switched on, and with Bluetooth enabled while in activities where devices are able to be taken into the studio (acknowledging personal devices are not allowed in most dance studios in community or professional level settings)

Risk Management and Review

- ❑ Establish a COVID committee, group of stakeholders or clearly identifiable person responsible to monitor and review levels of risk and the effectiveness control measures put in place
- ❑ Delegate responsibility for local / government health authority alert monitoring to ensure up to date with current guidance
- ❑ Establish communication protocols to advise community, participants and personnel of updates to business practices, updated authority guidance, incidents or issues that impact the operating business
- ❑ Entity has developed and communicated a procedure for a suspected case of COVID-19

Activity Practices

- ❑ Ensure activities have been carefully planned and physical instruction of participants is provided by demonstration wherever possible to minimise physical contact
- ❑ Encourage participants to bring their own water bottles to limit water bubbler/tap use
- ❑ Encourage hand sanitation on entry, exit and as required during activity

Children and Young People

Note: Only complete this section where working with children and young people

- ❑ Staff are given instruction on how and when to model COVID Safe practices with children and young people as mentors and facilitators in the studio
- ❑ Encourage participants to use hand sanitiser frequently
- ❑ Physical contact is actively discouraged
- ❑ Consider developing activities that incorporate physical distancing and good hygiene practices
- ❑ Attending parents, guardians or caretakers assist in monitoring and encouraging behavioural requirements
- ❑ Record any additional measures used for working with children and young people

At Risk Participants

Note: Only complete this section when working with at risk participants

- Medical approval has been obtained by participants/ parents/ guardians/ carers for resumption of activity or
- Reasons for being at risk have been discussed with participants/ parents/ guardians/ carers and informed consent provided (appropriate for dance and senior settings for example age being the only risk factor)
- Individual circumstances have been assessed for any risks to participants that may prevent safe resumption of activities
- Record any additional measures for working with at risk participants

First Nations Participants

Note: Only complete this section where working with First Nations participants

- Elders and family groups have been consulted and informed on the risks and safety precautions of COVID-19
- Language barriers have been considered when communicating risk and safety promotion
- Elders and family groups have been advised of the restriction guidelines and recommended to advise of attending numbers in advance of activities
- Record any additional measures put in place for working with First Nations participants

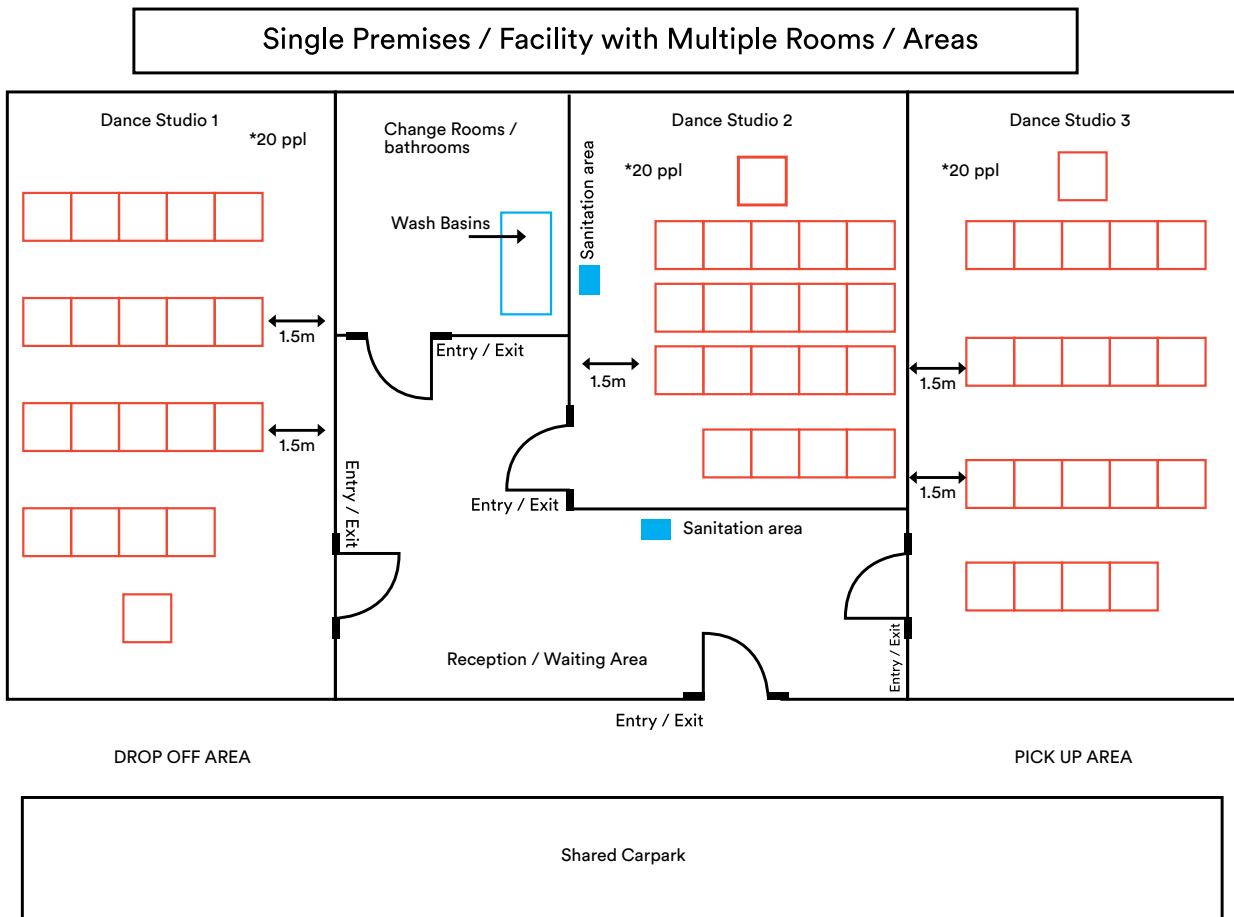
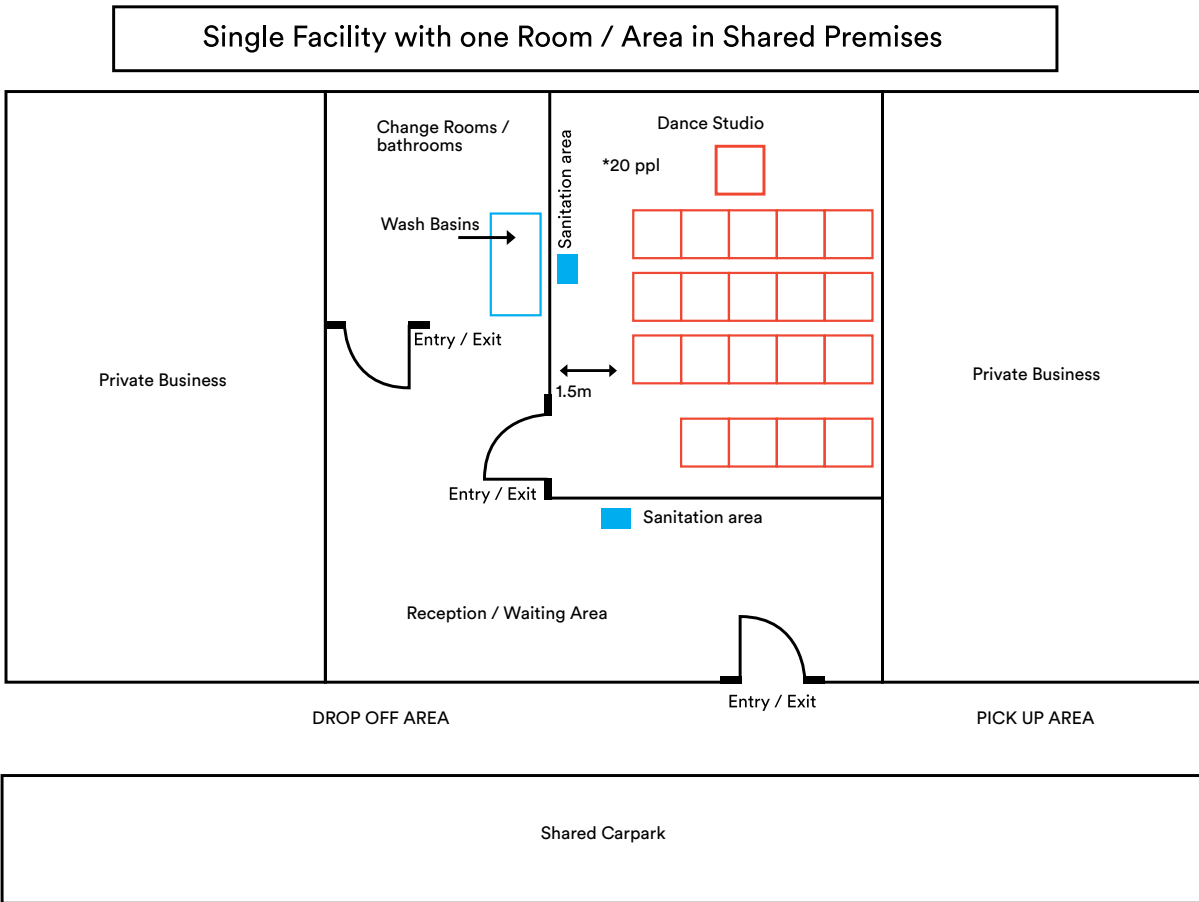
Appendix B

COVID Safety Plan Template

All business must register their COVID Safety Plan and display their registration badge (downloadable from the website). This link is direct to the COVID Safety Plan templates for the Gym, recreation and indoor sports industries:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/industry-guidelines/sports-recreation-and-gyms>

Example Dance Facility Floor Plan



COVID-19 Self assessment Questionnaire

Entities can use this questionnaire each time personnel and participants / dancers enter the Facility.

Entities are to follow safety measures for a suspected case of COVID-19 if a person answers YES to either question.

1. Have you been in contact with any confirmed cases of Coronavirus COVID19 in the last 14 days? Please circle.

YES NO

2. Do you feel unwell now?

Symptoms include but are not limited to;

- Fever
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Fatigue
- Shortness of breath
- Loss of sense of smell/taste

Please circle

YES NO

If you have answered yes to either of the questions above please do not participate in activities today.

Suspected COVID Case Response

This action plan is intended to:

- Be read in conjunction with Guidance Notes for the Dance Sector published by Ausdance NSW
- Support Entities to manage the various scenarios that may arise due to COVID-19
- Be applied in conjunction with any organizational or site-specific considerations as a part of an approved Industry COVID Safe Plan.

A participant or personnel member with symptoms:

1. For severe symptoms contact emergency services immediately (000) and / or Health Direct COVID-19 Symptom Checker <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/symptom-checker/tool>
2. Immediately notify the Entity / organisation of their concerns (if the individual is not at the facility at the time, they must not attend the site and should contact by phone or email)

The Entity should record the reported concern on an incident report for further monitoring and review.

3. The person must be sent home immediately to isolate or kept in an isolated area until they can be collected

Refer to the [Department of Health COVID-19 Isolation Guide](#)

4. The person must contact local doctor or call a local health line for further advice.
5. If testing is required, the personnel member or participant must remain in isolation until the results of the testing is known.
6. If a positive test result is confirmed, the individual must follow all advice from Australian and State Government in relation to the management of COVID-19. They must also inform the Entity of the positive result.

The Entity should use this information to review the current risk level to their other participants and personnel.

8. If a negative test result is confirmed, the individual may be permitted return to activities after notifying the Entity of the result and are asymptomatic for 48 hours.

A personnel member or participant comes into contact with a known or probable COVID-19 case: (as per the case definition in the Communicable Diseases Network Australia Guidelines for Public Health Units)

1. On confirmation that they have come into contact with a known COVID-19 case, the personnel member or participant is to be immediately quarantined, treated and tested if they satisfy the definition of a probable, suspected or close contact case, as directed by the Public Health Unit.
2. This includes if they receive notification of contact via the Australian Government's contact tracing app.
3. The relevant Public Health Unit will direct further management of the individual.
4. The individual should notify the operating business of the confirmation of probable contact with the Entity.

The Entity should record the reported event on an incident report for further monitoring and risk review.

5. If a positive test result is confirmed, the individual must follow all advice from Australian and State Government in relation to the management of COVID-19. They must also inform the Entity of the positive result.

The Entity should use this information to review the current risk level to their other participants and personnel.

6. If a negative test result is confirmed, the individual may be permitted return to activities after notifying the Entity of the result.

Appendix F

Links to state and national government information and templates and other resources

Work Safe Australia

Work Place Checklist: <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/workplace-checklist-covid-19>

Risk Register: <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/template-and-example-covid-19-risk-register>

Federal Government Resources

COVID Safe Planning Tool: <https://www.pmc.gov.au/nccc/resources/planning-tool-help-businesses-reopen-and-be-covidsafe>

National Roadmap: <https://www.pm.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/covid-safe-australia-roadmap.pdf>

Suspected Case Factsheet: https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/03/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-people-with-a-suspected-case_3.pdf

New South Wales State Government Resources

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19>

COVID 19 Safety Training: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/apps-and-tools/covid-19-infection-control-training>

Australian Institute for Sport: <https://www.sportaus.gov.au/return-to-sport>

Safe Work Australia: www.safework.nsw.gov.au/resource-library/COVID-19-Coronavirus

New South Wales Peak Body Resources

Ausdance National Return to Dance Principles and Framework: <https://ausdance.org.au/news/article/return-to-dance-principles-and-framework-for-restarting-dance-activities-po>

PAC Australia: <https://paca.org.au/covidsafetheatres/>

Sport NSW: <https://www.sportnsw.com.au/sport-nsw-ongoing-covid-19-response/>

Medical sources on COVID-19

https://www.euroga.org/system/1/user_files/files/000/045/111/45111/150d3060c/original/Social_Distancing_v20_White_Paper.pdf

https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/26/7/20-0764_article

Other Information

Our Community: <https://www.ourcommunity.com.au>

AON Insurance: <https://aoninsights.com.au/covid-19-planning-response-toolkit/>

Royal Academy of Dance Guidance for Safe Dance Post COVID-19

<https://media.royalacademyofdance.org/media/2020/06/12134243/Guidance-for-the-safe-return-to-dance-following-COVID-19-12-June-2020-1.pdf>

Looking after dance floors

Show Floors:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57f90df32e69cfd1ffabb07d/t/5ed5df046d4510241df44b-dc/1591074569610/Show+Works+Covid-19+disinfecting+procedure.pdf>

Harlequin Floors:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57f90df32e69cfd1ffabb07d/t/5edf40b259693155e-92fae0f/1591689395730/Harlequin+Cleaning+Instructions+Daily+Cleaning+%26+Deep+Clean.pdf>

Deep Cleaning

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57f90df32e69cfd1ffabb07d/t/5edf40b259693155e-92fae0f/1591689395730/Harlequin+Cleaning+Instructions+Daily+Cleaning+%26+Deep+Clean.pdf>

Vinyl Floors:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57f90df32e69cfd1ffabb07d/t/5edf40cfcdecab-3f581af076/1591689425017/CM+001+Care+%26+Maintenance+Instructions+Vinyl+floorings.pdf>

Access in dance training and education

Every Body Dancing – DirtyFeet’s Disability Inclusion and Access Plan from 2019:

https://cdn.moble.com/w/157/334237/file/DFEveryBodyDancingWEB_version.pdf

Australian Disability Discrimination Act from 1992:

https://humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/GPGB_quick_guide_to_discrimination_laws_0.pdf

Health and Wellbeing Resources

<https://supportact.org.au/>

<https://headtohealth.gov.au/covid-19-support/covid-19>

Memberships

Ausdance NSW is dedicated to the dance sector. Members are supported by experienced staff members who understand career pathways in dance. We are passionate about all areas of the sector, whether you are an independent dancer, educator, company, cultural group, studio owner, or a student.

Members are a vital part of our organisation and we are continuing to broker new relationships with organisations, government agencies, dance companies, major educational institutions and venues, to provide you with resources, services in-kind, and discounts.

Membership, Services and Support

We are continually striving to increase our membership base, benefits and resources. Ausdance NSW members receive the following benefits:

- Advocating for members' needs
- 10% discount in store at **Bloch**
- 40% off a subscription for **Dance Australia magazine** and 50% off as a student
- 20% discount off the 5% platform fee for Pozible
- Eligibility for the **Dance Artist in Residence (DAIR)** program
- Eligibility for the **Innovating Dance Practice (IDP)** program
- **Grant auspicing** as part of which funds are managed by Ausdance NSW
- Partnership with **AON insurance** to offer a member discounted dance policy
- **One-on-one** career advice/mentoring from one of our team members
- Exclusive information, invitations & offers via members-only e-newsletters
- Exclusive workshops, masterclasses such as the **Professional Learning Series (PALS)** program
- **Promotion** of shows, events, workshops, classes and other dance-related member activities
- Access to materials such as funding opportunities and OH&S resources
- Invitation to our end-of-year industry event, **Glance@Dance**
- Automatic membership with the **World Dance Alliance Asia Pacific (WDAAP)**

For more information on becoming an Ausdance NSW member head to our website here <https://ausdancensw.com.au/us/become-member>

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