

# Infection Control Policy

## Purpose

Effective infection control is central to providing high quality support for clients and a safe working environment.

Salvation Army Housing Victoria (SAHV) will maintain the highest standards of infection control, by ensuring an infection control program that prevents and or controls the spread of infections in order to protect clients, visitors and personnel.

SAHV acknowledges that infection control is an integral element in the provision of quality support and assistance through its service provision.

All areas where SAHV personnel and others are at risk of exposure to blood borne pathogens, infectious diseases and potential infections are identified, assessed and controlled in consultation with relevant workers.

Infections can be transmitted or spread in a variety of ways, including:

- Airborne - coughs or sneezes release airborne pathogens, which are then inhaled.
- Contaminated objects or food - pathogens may be spread to food or other objects, if a person's hands are dirty or contaminated.
- Skin-to-skin contact - the transfer of some pathogens can occur through touch, or by sharing personal items, clothing or objects.
- Contact with body fluids - pathogens in saliva, urine, faeces or blood can be passed to another person's body via needles, cuts, or abrasions, or through the mucus membranes of the mouth and eyes.

Infection control in the workplace aims to prevent pathogens being passed from one person to another.

The foundation of good infection control is to assume that everyone is potentially infectious.

Basic infection control procedures include hand washing and keeping the workplace clean.

Infection control is integral to consumer support, not an additional set of practices.

Clients' rights are respected at all times; they are involved in decision-making about their support, and they are sufficiently informed to be able to participate in reducing the risk of transmission of infectious agents.

## Scope

SAHV recognises that all employees have a responsibility for ensuring infection control measures are implemented.

All staff are required to adhere to this policy.

## Policy Statement

### Principles

1. Effective infection control is central to providing high quality support for clients and a safe working environment.
2. SAHV will do this through adhering to all relevant federal and state Public Health Orders.
3. Infections and applicable controls are monitored and revised if changes occur that would invalidate the assessments or when the control measures are no longer considered effective.

4. SAHV personnel are trained to implement relevant policies and supporting procedures in relation to Infection Control which include appropriate response to situations where there is an infection and infection transmission is prevented and managed as far as possible through the application of standard precaution practices.
5. All hazards or potential hazards where there is a risk of infection are reported and recorded as soon as possible.
6. Infection control protocols specific to the task and level of risk are developed and implemented that cover SAHV's services where workers may be exposed to or are dealing with spills of bodily fluids, infectious waste or handling needles and other sharp objects that are potentially contaminated.

### Risk Assessments Risk

7. Appropriate information, instruction or training is provided to SAHV workers and others regarding Infection Control processes or personal protective equipment (PPE) involved.
8. Appropriate signage is available in the areas where potential infection hazards are identified.
9. All waste that is potentially infectious is disposed of in accordance with jurisdictional legislative requirements i.e. The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) and Australian standards which include the use of 'sharps' containers and appropriately identified colour coded waste containers / bags.

### Definitions

Contact Transmission	Contact transmission usually involves transmission of an infectious agent by hand or via contact with blood or body substances. Contact may be direct or indirect.
Contact Transmission: Direct	Direct contact transmission occurs when infectious agents are transferred from one person to another, for example, a consumer's blood entering a healthcare worker's body through an unprotected cut in the skin.
Contact Transmission: Indirect	Indirect contact transmission involves the transfer of an infectious agent through a contaminated intermediate object or person, for example, an employee touches an infected body site on one consumer and does not perform hand hygiene before touching another consumer.
Infection	Infection requires three main elements — a source of the infectious agent, a mode of transmission and a susceptible host.
Infection Control	Infection control is preventing the transmission of infectious organisms and managing infections if they occur.
Infectious Agents	Infectious agents are biological agents that cause disease or illness to their hosts.
Pathogens	Pathogens are "bugs" such as bacteria, viruses, protozoa or fungi
Standard Precautions	Standard precautions are work practices which require everyone to assume that all blood and body substances are potential sources of infection, independent of perceived risk

### Related Documents

Procedure:	Complaints Resolution Procedure
Policy:	Incident Management Policy (TSA)

**Document Control**

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