COVID-safe Plan for Student Residences

Attachment 1: Management of COVID-19 cases and high risk exposures in student accommodation

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Contacts

Director, Residential Experience: director.residential.experience@anu.edu.au

The Australian National University
Canberra ACT 2601 Australia

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Contents

Contents........................................................................................................................................................ 2
Overview........................................................................................................................................................ 3
Risks............................................................................................................................................................. 3
Principles of quarantine and isolation in residential accommodation..............................................3
Operational Matters................................................................................................................................ 3
Accommodation ........................................................................................................................................ 3
Notification ............................................................................................................................................. 4
Contact tracing..................................................................................................................................... 4
Moving to quarantine.......................................................................................................................... 4
Meal and food delivery .......................................................................................................................... 5
Waste management ............................................................................................................................... 5
Cleaning ..................................................................................................................................................... 5
Laundry ...................................................................................................................................................... 5
General Health Support ....................................................................................................................... 6
Mental Health ......................................................................................................................................... 6
Maintenance requirements .................................................................................................................... 7
Emergency Response ............................................................................................................................ 7
Security ...................................................................................................................................................... 8
Failure to Comply .................................................................................................................................... 8
Overview

This Attachment to the COVID-safe Plan for Student Residences has been developed specifically to deal with isolation (for those who test positive) and quarantine (those who are high risk exposures) in ANU student accommodation. The document is applicable to any residential Hall, Lodge, House or affiliate hall linked to the University.

Risks

Key to this protocol is a proactive approach to risk mitigation. Risks include:

- Public Health risks related to spread of COVID-19 to other students or staff.
- Mental health risks associated with remaining in quarantine.
- The manifestation or exacerbation of individual pre-existing health conditions during quarantine that require urgent treatment or management.

Principles of quarantine and isolation in residential accommodation

There are two types of requirements to quarantine or isolation which is covered in this protocol:

1. **Individuals who are COVID-19 positive** – Residents who test positive with a PCR test or RAT must isolate in an individual studio or single room apartment until cleared to leave by ACT Health.
2. **Individuals who have been identified as high risk contacts** - These residents must quarantine as instructed by ACT Health.

The operational support requirements for a positive case who is isolating, and an individual who has had a high-risk exposure in residential accommodation who is in quarantine are identical for the purposes of this document. In both cases they will be managed in a single self-contained apartment.

The exception is when individuals who live together in the same space are all required to quarantine as high-risk contacts such as when a whole multishare apartment or all residents who use the same shared bathroom facilities are affected.

Note that individuals who require quarantine for a short period of time while waiting for test results, such as those who have been identified as having a moderate risk exposure or have symptoms or COVID-19, can quarantine in place or in another suitable location where they do not need to use any shared facilities such as a bathroom or kitchen. They should practice COVID-safe behaviours, minimise interactions with others, and wear a mask at all times outside of their bedroom during this period.

Latest information on quarantine and isolation requirements can be found on the ACT Health website.

Operational Matters

Accommodation

The types of dwellings students that can be used for quarantine or isolation are:

- Individual studio or single room apartments – students must remain in their apartments at all times during quarantine or isolation.
- Multi-share apartments –
  - COVID-19 positive students should be moved to single apartments if required to isolate. Other occupants in the multishare will be regarded as household contacts and can quarantine in the multishare apartment.
If a resident is a high-risk contact from an external exposure, they should be moved to a single apartment to quarantine. Where appropriate separation can be maintained between the resident in quarantine and other residents, the Head of Residence can consider, on a case by case basis, to allow the resident to quarantine in place.

- Dormitory style accommodation is not suitable for longer periods of quarantine of a few days or longer, unless all other residents on that floor are also in quarantine.

**Notification**

Residents must notify their head of residence as soon as they find out that they are COVID-19 positive or require quarantine because of a high-risk exposure to a person who is COVID-19 positive.

The residence will arrange for the student to complete their period of quarantine in a suitable space, either within their residence, somewhere else on campus, or at an off site location (in accordance with ACT Health directions).

**Contact tracing**

If a COVID-19 positive student has been in the residence while potentially infectious (i.e. two days before becoming symptomatic or returning a positive test), residence staff must work with the student to determine whether any other individuals are household contacts (for example, those sharing a multi-room apartment or in an intimate relationship) or are at high or moderate exposure risk. These individuals must be informed of their status as soon as reasonably practicable and appropriate steps taken in accordance with ACT Health directives and any specific ACT Health guidance.

**Moving to quarantine or isolation**

Students who are unable to remain in their usual place of residence will be moved to a suitable location to complete their quarantine or isolation. COVID-safe procedures should be adhered to at all times. For the student, this includes:

- wearing a Particulate Filtration Respirator (PFR) throughout the process until they enter their room
- performing hand hygiene before and after moving
- avoiding touching surfaces and objects unnecessarily
- not sharing a lift or confined space with anyone
- keeping a distance of 1.5m from others
- managing their own belongings.

For staff, this includes:

- wearing a PFR throughout the process
- performing hand hygiene after removing and disposing of the mask
- not sharing a lift or confined space with the resident
- keeping a distance of 1.5m from the resident.

The student’s home residence is responsible for ensuring the student is briefed on the process, what they need to take if they move from their usual room and the welfare and practical support they will have access to during quarantine. All staff in the residence will have access to guidance material so they understand their responsibilities and how to minimise exposure whilst supporting students to move into quarantine.
Meal and food delivery
Deliveries will be made directly to the affected resident’s door by a residence staff member. All deliveries will be contactless. The protocols are as follows:

- All catered food will be in disposable containers.
- When delivery items arrive at reception, the staff will contact the student over the telephone or via email to arrange a drop off time.
- Staff in appropriate PPE will deliver the meals or groceries to the door of the apartment or common area. After the staff member has returned to the ground floor, the student will be notified of the delivery via phone. If food is to be delivered into a common area, students will be advised to stay in their rooms during the delivery time.
- The student must wear a mask when opening the door to collect the delivery.

Waste management
Specific waste collection times will be developed on a rostered basis, and students will be advised of these times. The protocol is as follows:

- Students must place their waste in sturdy, leakproof plastic bags and tie it securely (no loose items).
- When collection time approaches, students place their waste in these bags outside their room. Students must wear a mask when they open the door to place their waste outside.
- Staff will collect the waste in appropriate PPE and ensure the bag is held away from their clothes.
- Rubbish will be disposed of using normal processes. Once disposed of, gloves will be removed and hand hygiene performed.

Cleaning
Students will be responsible for cleaning their own rooms and apartments during their stay, including frequently touched areas and surfaces.

Laundry
Students will not be allowed to use laundry facilities. They will be advised to bring an appropriate amount of clothing and linen to cover the entire period.

If students do require laundry to be done due to unforeseen circumstances or in an emergency, reception staff should be contacted. A fee will be attached to any such laundry requests.

If the laundry is deemed to be urgent, the following procedures should be followed:

- Collection times will be advised and items should be placed in a sturdy, leakproof plastic bag and left outside the room. Students must wear a mask when they open the door to place their laundry outside.
- Staff should wear appropriate PPE when collecting and handling laundry and ensure the items do not touch their own clothes.
- Linen or clothing should not be shaken as this might contaminate the surrounding area.
- Linen should be emptied directly from the laundry bag into the washing machine without handling and laundered on a normal hot cycle then air or tumble dried.
- Once the items have been placed in the washing machine, remove gloves and perform hand hygiene.
General Health Support

Students are responsible for managing their own health. Students who are diagnosed with COVID-19 but are not severely unwell are encouraged to use the support of the ACT COVID-19 Care@Home programme to manage their symptoms.

In the event of a medical emergency, ANU staff and/or students should dial 000 and administer first aid using appropriate PPE. The 000 operator should be advised that the individual is in quarantine so that appropriate COVID-safe measures are in place.

The Public Health Lead – COVID Response Office should also be notified as soon as possible.

Mental Health

ANU will support mental health and wellbeing through a stepped care model (see Figure 1).

Fundamental to the Model’s approach to maintaining good mental health while in quarantine is the opportunity to feel a sense of community, purpose, academic engagement and social connectedness.

ANU will maintain regular contact one-on-one contact with each student, including via daily welfare checks. This will be done using dedicated student welfare specialists and trained student peer mentors. (Attachment B – Welfare Check in quarantine Standard Operating Procedure)

Students who have concerns about mental health or wellbeing will be able to book an online counselling session with a mental health provider from the ANU Counselling Centre via email at counselling.centre@anu.edu.au or phone: 02 6125 2442.

Other free support can be provided 24 hours a day, 7 days a week via ANU Crisis Support Line on 1300 050 327 or via SMS Text message service on 0488 884 170.

Support and assistance is also available through the Student Safety and Wellbeing student.wellbeing@anu.edu.au.
Maintenance requirements

No staff should enter rooms during the quarantine period except in an emergency.

Where possible, if urgent maintenance is required during quarantine or isolation, the student will be moved to another room while wearing a mask and the room will be cleaned before the maintenance worker is permitted to enter.

If the student cannot be moved, maintenance staff must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and wear full PPE (droplet and contact precautions). A second staff member must be present to monitor the person undertaking maintenance to ensure there are no PPE breaches. All surfaces are to be wiped down prior to work being undertaken.

A safe distance of at least 1.5 metres must be maintained between staff and students at all times, and students must wear a mask. Students in multi-room apartments will be asked to remain in a room separate from the maintenance staff (e.g. they should remain in their room if a maintenance staff member is in the shared area).

Maintenance services will be coordinated through the quarantine residence. The residence should follow the protocols agreed with the Director, Residential Experience and documented in the Residential Heads and Deans Teams folder regarding notification of rooms which are housing students in quarantine. The Director or their delegate is responsible for informing maintenance and security services of any rooms being used for quarantine.

Emergency Response

If there is a Fire Alarm, the standard protocols must be followed. Students must be briefed on emergency fire evacuations in advance on their first day of quarantine. Where possible, students should don a mask and perform hand hygiene before evacuating the quarantine area. Additional masks and gloves will be available if required.
Students in quarantine or isolation will evacuate to the same area and ensure they stand at least 4 metres from all other residents.

Staff who are undertaking the Fire Evacuation role must ensure all fire wardens immediately don a mask and eyewear, where possible, before evacuating quarantining students. When in the emergency evacuation point, a roll call of all individuals will be taken. All staff and students are to remain in place and wait for ACT Fire and Rescue to arrive. ACT Fire and Rescue will advise when it is safe to return back into the building.

Security

The building is controlled by access cards. Fire exits will be checked on a regular basis and monitored by CCTV.

A network of CCTV monitors cover the external building including all exits. The dedicated quarantine facility also has internal CCTV which will be monitored 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The ANU Quarantine Operations team will provide ad-hoc roving perimeter and carpark patrols for the duration of the quarantine. Security guards will not be permitted to enter the quarantine areas unless in an emergency.

Failure to Comply

If a resident fails to comply with quarantine and general COVID-19 protocols as advised by the residence, the Residence will view this as a breach of

- Section 3 (g) of the Occupancy Agreement where residents are required “to comply with lawful notices and reasonable directions from the University”
- Section 3.1 (a) - requires occupants to not “intentionally cause injury or harm to another person”
- “the Rules of the Australian National University” as per section 3.3 (b).

Failure to comply with these obligations by failing to adhere to the overarching Residential Guidelines and Protocols and this protocol will result in termination of the resident’s agreement as per Section 3.2 of the Occupancy Agreement.

Disciplinary matters can also be escalated to the Office of Student Conduct (OSC) who will institute disciplinary actions in accordance with ANU established procedures for students for non-compliance as outlined at https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2018L00319/Html/Text#_Toc508885910

Due to the seriousness of breaching quarantine and general COVID-19 protocols, any breach by a resident will be deemed misconduct. It is misconduct if a student engages in conduct that:

is dishonest, unethical, or otherwise demonstrates a lack of integrity or a lack of respect for the safety or wellbeing of other members of the University community; or

intentionally, recklessly or negligently causes risk or danger to the health or safety of another member of the University community.

If, in a case to which section 12(1) (powers of, and action by, Vice-Chancellor) applies, the Vice-Chancellor is satisfied that the respondent is likely to have engaged in conduct that is misconduct, the Vice-Chancellor may, before an inquiry is held into the conduct:

deny the respondent access to all or any University facilities, to all University premises, any University premises or any part of University premises, or to all or any activities conducted by or on behalf of the University, for a specified period or until the inquiry has been completed and its finding dealt with under this instrument, whichever happens first