**­­**

## CONTENTS

[1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE 3](#_Toc36457177)

[2. DEFINITIONS 3](#_Toc36457178)

[3. PRINCIPLES 4](#_Toc36457179)

[4. POLICY 5](#_Toc36457180)

[5. ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES 6](#_Toc36457181)

[5.1 Emergency, Disaster and Extreme Weather Event Response and Recovery Plan 6](#_Toc36457182)

[5.2 Emergency, disaster and extreme weather event committee 6](#_Toc36457183)

[5.3 Consumer safety and risk prevention 7](#_Toc36457184)

[5.4 Human Resource Responsibilities 8](#_Toc36457185)

[5.5 Communication 9](#_Toc36457186)

[5.6 Pay 10](#_Toc36457187)

[5.7 Managers Responsibilities 10](#_Toc36457188)

[5.8 Staff Responsibilities 11](#_Toc36457189)

[6. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES 11](#_Toc36457190)

[6.1 Fire 11](#_Toc36457191)

[6.2 Heat wave and extreme heat 13](#_Toc36457192)

[6.3 Storm 14](#_Toc36457193)

[6.4 Flooding 14](#_Toc36457194)

[6.5 Earthquake 15](#_Toc36457195)

[6.6 Power outage 15](#_Toc36457196)

[6.7 Poor air quality 16](#_Toc36457197)

[6.8 Human health epidemic 16](#_Toc36457198)

[6.9 Declaration of a natural disaster 17](#_Toc36457199)

[7. MONITORING 17](#_Toc36457200)

[8. DOCUMENT CONTROL 18](#_Toc36457201)

## PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Include details of what the purpose of the policy and procedure is and who and what it relates to.

In an emergency, disaster or extreme weather event the organisation may experience:

* increased demand for services
* disruption to service delivery
* damage the organisation’s infrastructure
* loss of access to information
* loss of access to essential systems, networks and communication
* reduced capacity or loss of staff
* loss of critical equipment and supplies
* loss of public infrastructure including power or water supplies

This policy provides a framework for managers and staff detailing service expectations, responsibilities, reporting arrangements and entitlements in the event of emergencies, disasters or extreme weather to ensure all staff are treated fairly and consistently with due regard for their health, safety and wellbeing, whilst maintaining essential service provision.

The scope of this policy is organisation wide and should be followed in the event of an emergency, disaster or extreme weather conditions.

## DEFINITIONS

A range of definitions have been included. You may wish to add others or use different definitions to ensure consistency across your policy and procedure documents.

**Disaster** - A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society at any scale due to hazardous events interacting with conditions of exposure, vulnerability and capacity, leading to one or more of the following: human, material, economic and environmental losses and impacts. The effect of the disaster can be immediate and localized, but is often widespread and could last for a long period of time. The effect may test or exceed the capacity of a community or society to cope using its own resources, and therefore may require assistance from external sources, which could include neighbouring jurisdictions, or those at the national or international levels. The most common causes of disaster in South Australia are fire, flood and storm.

**Emergency** - An event, actual or imminent, which endangers or threatens to endanger life, property or the environment, and which requires a significant and coordinated response. Like disasters, emergencies may be caused by fire, flood, storms, epidemics, but the impact is not so significant as to overwhelm a community’s capacity to cope and recover without external support.

**Extreme weather** - Signifies individual weather events that are unusual in their occurrence or have destructive potential. This can include a heatwave, severe storm. Extreme weather events may or may not result in a disaster. Eg severe storm may result in significant flooding and damage to infrastructure and homes, a heat wave may be considered a disaster if the health system becomes overwhelmed, significant power outages are experienced or transport infrastructure is damaged and services fail.

**Hazardous conditions** - includes anything that has the potential to be harmful, cause injury, or have adverse health effects. In the context of this policy, examples may include poor air quality due to smoke or dust, floodwater or ice across roads etc .

**Organisation –** An organisation is an organised group of people with a particular purpose. In the context of this report an organisation can include service providers, peak bodies, consumer peak bodies, advocacy groups, research organisations, government agencies or community groups.

**Service provider** – Service providers provide or carry out activities, facilities or projects for the benefit or welfare of the community or any members who have a particular need by reason of youth, age, infirmity or disablement, poverty or social or economic circumstances. The focus of this project has been not-for-profit service providers, however service providers may also be government agencies or for profit businesses.

**Essential service provision** - the services which if interrupted would endanger the life, health or personal safety of the consumer. This may include services to assist with daily living such as getting people out of bed and toileted and ensuring access to food, water and medications.

## PRINCIPLES

Consider principles that are important to your organisation in an emergency, disaster or extreme weather context.

The organisation may recognise:

* it is crucial to continue to provide services for its consumers during an emergency, disaster or extreme weather event;
* it has both legal and moral obligations towards its staff ad consumers in the event of an emergency, disaster or extreme weather event;
* its responsibilities to all staff and volunteers, whether working in a fixed location or in the community, including when commencing or finishing work and assessing their travel options;
* that staff members have families and responsibilities outside of work that can also be impacted by emergencies, disasters or extreme weather events;
* that consumers may be more at risk in emergencies, disasters or extreme weather events than other members of the community, and may benefit from activities that support and increase preparedness and resilience to improve their ability to cope with emergencies, disasters or extreme weather events and enable them to recover more effectively afterwards.

## POLICY

The policy should address the things that your organisation is committed to doing that will guide the procedures and ensure you achieve your desired outcomes.

The organisation commits to:

* providing flexibility for staff while maintaining *essential* services to its consumers to maximise the health and safety of both staff and consumers;
* ensuring that staff who are unable to attend work, despite their best efforts, are treated fairly and consistently. Line managers will have a reporting procedure within their department for these eventualities, in accordance with this policy;
* supporting, where appropriate and possible, the sharing of skills and knowledge amongst team members to cover unplanned absences, in particular during emergencies, disasters and extreme weather events;
* involving the Chief Executive as appropriate in these arrangements to ensure a system wide view of the workforce distribution and service impact is maintained at all times;
* including an outline of the respective organisational and consumer rights and responsibilities in care support plans and associated servicer agreements regarding emergencies, disasters and extreme weather events;
* where possible, recruiting support staff from communities close to where home care consumers live;
* offering its consumers support to build their capacity and resilience to prepare for, cope with and recover from emergencies, disasters and extreme weather events;
* ensuring appropriate resources are available should an emergency, disaster or extreme weather event take place;
* engaging with its consumers in line with consumer engagement policies and procedures in planning for, responding to and recovering from emergencies, disasters or extreme weather events.

## ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Contact your local emergency service (CFS, SES, MFS) for advice and support to plan for events. Contact details can be found [here.](https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/emergencies-and-safety/during-an-emergency/emergency-numbers)

### Emergency, Disaster and Extreme Weather Event Response and Recovery Plan

The organisation has an Emergency, disaster and extreme weather response and recovery plan which contains:

* how to communicate with consumers and other services
* contact details of all members of staff and response agencies and other service providers
* details about the organisation, such as accounts, service providers (e.g. insurers, lawyers, and providers of telephone, internet, and utilities) and ­insurance policy numbers
* details of equipment needed to manage an emergency
* how to manage unplanned absenteeism of multiple staff members (including succession planning)
* the policy on the management of consumer health information – computer and paper-based systems
* the process for re-establishing operations after a shutdown
* Emergency Evacuation Plans for all the organisation’s sites
* specific plans for each of the organisation’s sites

### Emergency, disaster and extreme weather event committee

Will your organisation have a specific committee, or is there an existing committee that will undertake these roles?

The Emergency, disaster and extreme weather event committee (or other designated committee) will comprise of members of the executive and other staff deemed necessary by the Chief Executive. They will be responsible for:

* preparing the Emergency, disaster and extreme weather response and recovery plan,
* identifying emergency, disaster or extreme weather events and coordinating the response,
* enacting the Business Continuity Plan,
* preparing a training schedule for all people who may be involved in an emergency event,
* managing communication with staff, media consumers and their families,
* amending the Business Continuity and Emergency Response and Recovery Plans if there are any changes to organisational structures or suppliers and contractors, and
* following any emergency event, review the performance of the Business Continuity and Emergency Response and Recovery Plans, highlighting what was handled well and what could be improved upon next time.

### Consumer safety and risk prevention

Many centre based services may only need to consider consumer safety and risk prevention when consumers are actively engaged with the service. Home care service providers may have consumers with higher support needs and therefore feel more obligated to consider their consumer’s safety in emergencies, disasters and extreme weather events. The points below may apply to a range of different service types. Consider what action is appropriate for your service. Some useful links are included, but you may have other links you consider more appropriate for your organisation.

To ensure consumer safety the organisation will:

* ensure adequate staffing, food and water to maximise consumer safety and comfort for consumers stranded on site
* ensure risk assessments are undertaken and provide encouragement and support to consumers in the development of an emergency kit and emergency plan that addresses the risks that apply to their personal situation and the area where they live. The Red Cross RediPlan tool can be found [here](https://www.redcross.org.au/getmedia/eb80a653-73ff-4d87-9034-ea1d874c54c5/2017-03-06-RediPlan-Comprehensive-Guide.pdf.aspx)

Provide some direction about how staff will access consumer records in an emergency.

* maintain electronic and hard copy consumer contact records and emergency plans.

Will your organisation address the needs of consumers who may be impacted by an emergency, disaster or extreme weather event? Think about the criteria for who you contact during an event, in what conditions, and what to do if they don’t answer. If you have a process of developing an emergency plan with clients as part of the intake process, it can make this decision making much easier.

* contact the consumer by phone (or another previously agreed communication method) if staff believe that a consumer is at high risk from an emergency, disaster or extreme weather event to check on their safety and provide advice about implementing their emergency plan which should include contacting their next of kin or emergency contact.
* contact [Emergency services](https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/emergencies-and-safety/during-an-emergency/emergency-numbers) if staff are concerned for life or safety of a consumer who is unable to be contacted or who has chosen to stay home regardless of the risk. Consent should be sought to share their details with emergency services.

This point is most relevant to services that provide housing. Consider what action your organisation will take if consumers have to be relocated. Do you have temporary accommodation options available? Would you consider use of a hotel, and at whose cost?

* relocate any consumer considered to be at potential risk who does not have any other social supports before the risk becomes too great for any staff who may be required to assist in the relocation. Consumers may be temporarily housed: with family of friends, in emergency accommodation, in flexible office space, in a hotel room.

Consider what sort of weather conditions would be too hazardous to send consumers home in? This could depend on their form of transport, age, health and ability; therefore decisions should be made on the basis of the weather conditions and the individuals who may be impacted.

* It may not be safe to send consumers attending day programs home during hazardous conditions. Staff should liaise with their line manager to identify whether conditions are considered hazardous.

### Human Resource Responsibilities

Consider the implications of staff being unable to travel and the implications on service delivery.

If a staff member has concerns regarding their ability to travel, begin or continue working due to hazardous conditions or extreme weather they should notify their line manager in the first instance. Their line manager should risk assess the circumstances with the individual employee based on information from [emergency alert sites](https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/emergencies-and-safety/during-an-emergency/emergency-alerts) and direct them as appropriate on what actions should be taken to safeguard their immediate safety. They should discuss any essential care that they have been or are unable to deliver and the potential alternatives for delivery of care.

Are there any circumstances that would cause you to consider sending staff home early, and who will approve this course of action?

If local circumstances deteriorate to the extent that Management consideration is being given to sending staff members home before the end of their workday, approval to send staff home must be sought from the Chief Executive or delegate with priority being given to staff and consumer safety and be in accordance with advice from [emergency alert sites](https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/emergencies-and-safety/during-an-emergency/emergency-alerts).

Make sure this document is consistent with your policies on working overtime or working from home

If staff can work effectively from home, this should be agreed in advance with their line manager. In the event that employees are not able to leave their workplace due to poor or deteriorating weather conditions and are expected to continue working, arrangements should be put in place by the line manager for these individuals to take extended breaks during the prolonged working period.

If members of staff are stranded on site and unable to leave, the organisation will take all reasonable steps to support them.

Do you have any provisions that would enable you to care for consumers if they were stranded on site? Do you have any requirements of staff to document their additional working hours?

If consumers are stranded on site, the organisation will ensure adequate staffing, food and water to maximise consumer safety and comfort. All employees are expected to keep a diary log of their working times and rest breaks.

In the event of severe weather requiring staff members to collect or care for dependent family members, for example the closure of schools, staff and managers should refer to the organisation’s Personal Leave Policy.

### Communication

When do you require staff to communicate with managers during emergency, disaster or extreme weather conditions?

All staff should ensure they are familiar with this policy and procedure, and should have access to work and mobile contact details for their line manager.

Staff due to travel in hazardous conditions should consult with their line manager before commencing travel and notify the line manager of their safe arrival.

Your business continuity plan (BCP) should address loss of telecommunications. Make sure content here is consistent with the BCP.

If telecommunication networks are down, staff should consult their line manager (if possible) on the appropriate action to be taken. Plans for this eventuality should be addressed in the business continuity plan.

How will you access accurate information or communications in an emergency situation? Address contingencies here.

At a minimum, each work location will have an emergency kit that includes a battery operated radio tuned in to 891 AM ABC Adelaide and Digital radio.

All employees are encouraged to keep mobile phones charged when hazardous weather conditions could impact on power supply.

### Pay

Consider the pay implication of emergencies, disasters or extreme weather. It is advisable to have a policy in place to assist staff and managers making decisions. Are the pay implications any different if the organisation directs staff not to work, or if staff request permission to not work? What about casual staff? Ensure this policy is consistent to other policies referring to pay and working conditions.

Staff unable to attend work due to an emergency, disaster or extreme weather event may avoid loss of income by agreeing alternative arrangements with their line manager, in accordance with the options outlined in 4.3 above.

Staff will not be penalised for arriving to work late due to problems encountered whilst travelling to work during hazardous conditions.

If the Chief Executive or senior management decides to close the service part way through a work day, staff will be paid for their normal hours for the day, and casual staff will be paid a minimum of 3 hours pay.

Apply your organisation’s policy on overtime/TOIL or flexi-time below. Consider how casual staff will be funded.

Staff required to work overtime to care for consumers in emergencies will be paid for their time/ be eligible to take TOIL or Flexi-time as per the (name your relevant EBA/ award or policy).

### Managers Responsibilities

All managers will be expected to have a reporting procedure within their Department for emergencies, disasters or extreme weather that:-

* Treats all staff fairly and consistently – recognising the circumstances of staff at work in an office or service location, those providing home or community based services and those travelling to and from work.
* Ensures that adequate communication takes place with their staff where these circumstances arise.
* Demonstrates due regard for the Health and Safety of staff, particularly where special conditions apply such as pregnancy or disability.
* Supports staff who work long hours to maintain services.
* Ensures business continuity plans incorporate provision of safe staffing levels during periods of extreme weather.
* Ensures staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to support consumers before, during or after emergencies, disasters or extreme weather events.

### Staff Responsibilities

Ensure this policy is consistent with leave policies and your business continuity plan.

Where a member of staff is unable to access or attend the workplace due to an emergency, disaster or extreme weather and they have made contact with their line manager in accordance with this policy, the manager will confirm with the employee that they can do one of the following:-

* Work from home or from an alternate premises
* Reallocate days off
* Where staff are part of flexi-time system, flexi-leave may be used; alternatively, staff may take lieu time owed for the day/s or shift/s lost
* Annual Leave may be used; In some circumstances when staff have exhausted annual leave for the current year, managers can agree for annual leave to be taken from the following year’s entitlement;
* An agreement may be made between the manager and the individual for the time lost to be made up over a mutually agreeable period
* If none of the above are possible, unpaid leave will be granted

Employees should not take unacceptable risks with their health and safety during adverse weather.

Some consumers may need more support to enable them to consider and plan how they could best respond in emergencies, disasters or extreme weather. This is more likely to be the case for consumers receiving home based support. Home care providers may consider inclusion of risk assessments in the policy as below.

Employees will ensure that risk assessments have been undertaken with consumers and plans/strategies are in place to minimise any harmful impact from emergencies, disasters or extreme weather events.

If consumers have an emergency plan (either developed independently or with support from your organisation), how will staff know the content of the plan in an emergency situation? Will your staff have access to records if the power is out? Do you expect staff to contact consumers or their carer and advise them to enact their emergency plan?

Employees will maintain electronic and hard copies of consumer’s emergency plans, including emergency contact details.

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

### Fire

This section may be more relevant for organisations based in bushfire prone areas, or with consumers in bushfire prone areas.

The Organisation’s Service Manager will subscribe to the CFS warning email by emailing [listserv@cfslist.sa.gov.au](mailto:listserv@cfslist.sa.gov.au?subject=SUBSCRIBE%20CFS-SUBSCRIBERS%20ANONYMOUS&body=SUBSCRIBE%20CFS-SUBSCRIBERS%20ANONYMOUS) to subscribe with the subject "subscribe CFS-subscribers anonymous" and message "subscribe CFS-subscribers anonymous". Managers will also check ABC radio 891 AM, the [CFS website](https://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/warnings_and_incidents/current_cfs_warnings.jsp) and Alert SA app to receive accurate and up to date information about the status of any fires.

Home care providers and other services that require staff to undertake travel in bushfire prone areas should consider when they will or will not allow their staff to travel. Rate your services as essential or non-essential services to assist in your decision making. Having guidelines around “watch and act’ or ‘emergency warnings’ can assist the decision making process, although some services may choose not to travel at all in catastrophic conditions, particularly if they consider their services non-essential. A practice of recruiting staff that live in the same area as the consumers you service can also be helpful as they may already be in the vicinity of their consumers and able to provide services without increasing their risk.

Staff working in high fire risk areas in the Adelaide Hills or regional areas must exercise vigilance and check with their line manager before travelling on days rated as catastrophic fire danger. Only travel to provide essential services will be approved on days where the region’s fire danger rating is catastrophic. No staff will be approved to travel into areas rated as catastrophic if there is also a ‘Watch and Act’ or ‘Emergency’ warning in place for the region.

Where consumers have an emergency plan, consider whether your staff would contact consumers/carers to advise them to enact their plan. The benefit of doing so is that family members may be able to take the consumer to a safer location, or manage the consumer’s care needs for a period, thereby reducing the need for staff to take any increased risk while ensuring the safety of the consumers. Alternatively, the plan may be for the organisation to move the consumer prior to the catastrophic conditions.

Where catastrophic fire conditions are forecast for the following day, staff should contact affected consumers and/or their carer or emergency contact person and recommend they implement their emergency plan, reminding the person that they cannot expect emergency services will be able to protect or evacuate them the following day.

Consumers have a right to make their own decisions, and sometimes they may make choices that staff are uncomfortable with. If people decide to stay home regardless of fire risk, we must respect that decision. Make them aware of how to contact emergency services if they change their mind, but advise them that calling emergency services does not guarantee that anyone will be able to rescue them. You may request the consumer’s/carers permission to let emergency services know that the consumer will remain in the area. You may or may not wish to maintain phone contact with the consumer throughout the day.

If a consumer remains in a fire zone during catastrophic conditions where essential service provision is not possible, best efforts should be made to contact the consumer/ carer and their emergency contact person to check on their welfare. Emergency services should also be notified and provided the name, address and details about their mobility and any other relevant conditions.

Information about fires and incidents, warnings and rating can be found on the [CFS website](https://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/home.jsp).

### Heat wave and extreme heat

Some health conditions or medications can impair a person’s ability to regulate their body temperature. This can put them at increased risk during extreme heat or heat waves. Older people and young children can also be at increased risk. Heat can also pose a risk for anybody who is spending significant periods of time in the sun, particularly if they are being physically active. Think about the risks for your consumer group and the kind of activities you provide. How hot is too hot?

The key source of advice regarding heatwaves is [SA Health.](https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/healthy+living/protecting+your+health/environmental+health/healthy+in+the+heat/healthy+in+the+heat)

Consumers at increased risk in heatwaves due to advanced age, disability or illness should be encouraged to register with Telecross Redi. More information can be found on the [Red Cross website](https://www.redcross.org.au/get-help/community-services/telecross/telecross-redi) or call Red Cross on 1800 188 071 or (08) 8100 4510 with enquiries.

Outdoor activities should be cancelled, re-located indoors or concluded by 12pm on days forecast to be above 36 degrees.

Consider whether your consumers travel long distances by public transport or potentially unreliable cars. Do you have capacity to transport consumers in air-conditioned vehicles? Can some of your services be provided remotely, via telephone or online?

All programs that require consumers at risk in heatwaves due to advanced age, disability or illness to travel should be cancelled on days forecast to be over 38 degrees.

Is there a point where you consider it too risky to have any consumers travel in extreme heat? You may also consider whether your consumers live in poor quality housing without any cooling. They may prefer to come to your air-conditioned service for respite from the heat.

Where the forecast is 42 degrees or above any consumers scheduled to attend the service should be contacted and offered another appointment or offered services over the phone if possible.

Some services may extend hours to 7pm at the discretion of the Chief Executive and in consultation with line managers and staff.

Water should be made available to consumers visiting the service on hot days, and home care consumers should be encouraged to drink plenty of cool water.

Staff should carry water whenever travelling in temperatures above 36 degrees.

Relevant to homelessness services only.

Homelessness services should implement Code Red as directed by Department for Human Services and encourage consumers to find cool places to attend.

### Storm

Severe storms can happen anywhere. They can be over within minutes or hours, but the damage they leave behind can be hazardous and longer lasting.

The Key source of information regarding storms is [SES.](https://www.ses.sa.gov.au/site/storm.jsp)

Storms can bring torrential rain, strong winds, large hailstones and lightning. They can also unroof buildings, cause flash flooding, damage trees and bring down powerlines. This can make it hazardous to travel or be outside. Outdoor activities should be cancelled or brought indoors, and travel should be scheduled to take place before the storm if possible, or afterwards. Follow advice from SES. Do not travel in extreme conditions or on flooded roadways.

For assistance due to storm damage contact the SES on 132 500. For all emergencies contact 000.

### Flooding

Consider whether your service is located in a flood prone area. Less detail will be required where flood risk does not apply.

Managers should research the potential for flooding in the local area by checking the Department for Environment and Water [flood awareness map](https://www.waterconnect.sa.gov.au/Hazard-Management/Flood-Awareness/SitePages/Home.aspx).

On days of high flood risk, managers should monitor SES [flood warnings](https://www.ses.sa.gov.au/site/get_involved/incidents_warnings.jsp) and [social media](https://www.facebook.com/SAStateEmergencyService), the [BOM SA website](http://www.bom.gov.au/sa/forecasts/adelaide.shtml), [local media](https://www.abc.net.au/local/)and other reliable sources for information, updates and advice.

If sandbags are required, go to the [SES website](https://www.ses.sa.gov.au/site/get_involved/incidents_warnings.jsp#sandbag) to find out where they can be collected from.

If the service or surrounding roads are at risk of flooding, contact any consumers due to attend the service and advise them that their appointment is cancelled and can be re-scheduled. Staff should unplug electric appliances and computers and store them on high shelves. Anything stored on the ground should be places on top of desks where possible.

If water does enter the building, the electricity should be turned off at the power box.

For assistance due to flood damage contact the SES on 132 500. For all emergencies contact 000.

Staff are advised not to travel through floodwaters.

### Earthquake

Earthquakes are uncommon in SA, so some organisations may choose not to include this section.

Earthquakes are not common in Adelaide however they are more frequent in regional areas, particularly north of Adelaide and up through the Flinders Ranges, and along the eastern side of Eyre Peninsula. Most of these earthquakes are not strong enough to do significant damage.

In case of an earthquake, staff are advised to quickly DROP, COVER and HOLD.

DROP to the ground close to you - no more than a few steps or less than two metres away - where you can avoid injury from falling debris.

Take COVER under something strong, like a sturdy table.

HOLD on to it until the shaking stops.

For more information about earthquakes, go to <https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/emergencies-and-safety/types/earthquake>

### Power outage

Power outage should also be addressed in your business continuity plan, so ensure the information in both documents is consistent. Consider implications for staff and consumers. If a blackout is in a localised area, consider whether staff have the ability to work from home.

Site Managers should register with SA Power Networks' free messaging service, [Power@MyPlace](https://pamp.apps.sapowernetworks.com.au/) to get SMS or email power outage alerts. The alerts will tell you:

* if SA Power Networks is aware that there is an outage in your suburb
* the estimated time the power will be restored
* when the power is restored.

During periods of prolonged or widespread power outages and during emergency events, listen to your local [ABC radio station](http://reception.abc.net.au/) for updates.

If power is expected to be restored in less than 2 hours, staff are encouraged to have a team meeting, tidy the office area or any other tasks that do not require power. Staff may request to go home and use flexi or toil time owed.

If power is not expected to be restored in less than 2 hours, staff should use mobile phones to contact any consumers expected to the service and cancel their appointments. A notice advising of the service closure should be placed on the door and staff may go home. As it is a forced closure, staff will be paid their normal wages for that day. Casual staff will be paid a minimum of 3 hours pay.

If the outage is due to local storm activity, staff are advised to drive with caution and follow the advice of SES.

### Poor air quality

Poor air quality from smoke, dust or other pollutants can be a risk for staff or consumers with an existing respiratory condition and many other chronic conditions. Prolonged exposure can also be of concern for children and anyone being physically active outdoors.

If air quality is a concern, staff should consult the [EPA website](https://www.epa.sa.gov.au/data_and_publications/air_quality_monitoring) to access accurate information about the air quality rating before undertaking outdoor activities. The age and health status of staff and participants, and level of exertion required for outdoor activities should be considered if the air quality rating is poor, very poor or hazardous.

Staff should consult with their line manager to identify ways to minimise exposure to potentially harmful levels of smoke, dust or other pollutants. Harm can be minimised through use of P2 masks, moving activities indoors, re-scheduling or cancelling outdoor activities, or modifying the activity to require less exertion.

### Human health epidemic

The Covid-19 Pandemic may require more detail than below. In pandemic conditions, consider what action may be taken if a staff member or consumer is diagnosed with the virus. Under what conditions will you cancel events or non-essential services?

The key source of information regarding responding to a human health epidemic or pandemic is [SA Health](https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/public+health/disaster+preparedness+and+resilience/disaster+preparedness+and+resilience).

Staff are advised to have the influenza vaccine each year to protect themselves and any vulnerable consumers. Free vaccines will be made available to staff each year and will be promoted on the intranet and via email to all staff.

Staff who are unwell with a contagious condition are advised not to come to work until they are clear of contagion. Staff should attend their GP to receive appropriate healthcare and a sickness certificate to cover their time off work.

### Declaration of a natural disaster

If a natural disaster is declared, and your service is forced to close, consider whether staff will be paid during that period, asked to take leave, work from home or be stood down without pay. Consider impact on casual employees. If your normal service cannot be delivered will you re-orient your service team to meet the immediate needs of the community? How will you support staff members who experience a significant loss?

Where the government declares the area of the workplace to be a natural disaster area, employees will be considered to be on paid leave until notified that they are required back at work. This could be between one-to-five days depending on the level of devastation. Any further leave must be approved by the organisation.

## MONITORING

In line with document management procedures this policy will be reviewed at least every three years, and in in addition should be reviewed for effectiveness following any emergency, disaster or extreme weather event.

Amendments or variations to the Emergency, Disaster and Extreme Weather Policy and Procedure will only be made by agreement of the Senior Executive.

## DOCUMENT CONTROL

Use your Organisations document control template here.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Title: | Emergency, disaster and extreme weather policy and procedure |
| Version number: | 1 |
| Author: |  |
| Status: | Draft/ approved/ superseded |
| Implementation date: |  |
| Approved by: |  |
| Last review date: |  |
| Next review date: |  |

# *This project was funded under the Natural Disaster Resilience Program by the South Australian State Government and the Commonwealth Department of Home Affairs.  Views and findings associated with this project are expressed independently and do not necessarily represent the views of State and Commonwealth funding bodies.*

