

DOCUMENT TYPE	Policy
TITLE	COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS) EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND RECOVERY
NUMBER:	POL-3011

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy guide to the Administration in a proactive response aimed at reducing the impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on the community.

DEFINITIONS

Coronavirus (COVID-19) means Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus.

Pandemic means (of a disease) prevalent over a whole country or the world.

Emergency Response means the organisation and management of resources and responsibilities for dealing with all aspects of emergency.

Financial Hardship means difficulty in paying the repayments on loans and debts when they are due.

Essential Services means services of the utmost importance, indispensable.

POLICY STATEMENTS

The COVID-19 pandemic will present many challenges for the community and Local Governments will play a key role in supporting community members, community organisations and local businesses during a time of unprecedented change.

The COVID-19 event will undoubtedly compromise the Shire's ability to achieve some of its strategic and operational goals and the aim of this policy is to provide a framework to the Administration which meets the changed needs of the community, while ensuring that important strategic and operational priorities are not compromised.

The Shire will commit to the investigation and development of COVID-19-specific responses including policies, plans and programs designed at lessening the impact of COVID-19 on the community while ensuring that important strategic and operational priorities are not compromised. These responses will be made under ten key objectives.

OBJECTIVES:

The Shire's response to COVID-19 will be established in the following objectives;

(1) EMERGENCY RESPONSE

The Shire recognises the unique vulnerabilities of the community. The Shire will work collaboratively and supportively with key emergency agencies to ensure a targeted and local response to COVID-19.

(2) FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

The Shire recognises that community members, community organisations and local businesses will face financial hardship in the coming months due to the impacts of the virus. The Shire will develop a COVID-19 Financial Hardship Rates and Sundry Debtors Policy which address the financial impacts on households and businesses who acquire goods and services from the Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley.

(3) SERVICE DELIVERY THROUGH IMPROVED TECHNOLOGY

The Shire recognises that many of its services are delivered in person, and that there are both statutory and discretionary services provided by the local government which are required for the good government, community safety and wellbeing of residents. The Shire will assess service delivery processes and where possible improve the access and delivery of these services with improved technology and digital processes.

(4) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Shire recognises that economic development initiatives will be increasingly important in the recovery period of the pandemic. The Shire will prioritise the preparation of projects which will have a direct effect on local employment, local businesses and local infrastructure in an effort to promote a quick economic recovery.

(5) ADVOCACY

The Shire recognises that significant advocacy is required at both a State and Federal Level to ensure that Government meets the needs of the community, both in response to the pandemic but also in the recovery phase. The Shire will work collaboratively with key agencies, community groups and businesses to advocate for these needs. The Shire is also committed to ensuring that the community can remain resilient in these challenging times and will prioritise advocacy in relation to the Shire's COVID-19 response.

(6) VULNERABLE PERSONS

The Shire recognises that there are people in the community who are vulnerable in terms of their physical and mental health, demographic and economic position with regard to the impacts of the pandemic. The Shire will commit to working with key agencies in a collective approach to ensure that no one gets left behind.

(7) OPERATIONAL BUSINESS CONTINUITY

The Shire recognises that there are essential services which it provides for the wellbeing and good governance of the community. The Shire will prioritise these essential services with an aim to support emergency response to the pandemic foremost.

(8) COLLABORATION

The Shire recognises that there are a number of organisations, agencies and community groups working towards a common goal in the Kimberley to preserve the region's social and economic wellbeing. The Shire will commit to working collaboratively with these groups to develop solutions to issues incurred by the pandemic.

(9) ENGAGEMENT

The Shire values the input of its citizens in strategy development and decision making. The Shire will commit to ensuring appropriate levels of engagement in understanding issues and impacts and as an aid to making better and more informed decisions.

(10) STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Shire will consult with the community on any change to the strategic priorities to ensure that the Local Government is meeting the strategic needs of the community into the future.

APPLICATIONS

This policy applies to Council, Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley Staff, and the Community.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

The Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley must work together with State and Federal Agencies to minimise the effects of COVID-19. This includes measures in response to directions under the *Emergency Management Act 2005*, *Public Health Act 2016*, and Federal Government determinations.

OPTIONAL HEADING

Risk: Failure to manage a governance framework which transparently embraces good governance practices.

Risk: Failure to develop appropriate, meaningful policies which enable the administration to perform in an effective and efficient way.

Control: Review policies and procedures in accordance with review schedule.

DOCUMENT AND VERSION CONTROL

Responsible Directorate		Planning and Community Development	
Responsible Officer		Director Planning and Community Development	
Statutory References		<i>Public Health Act 2016 (WA)</i> <i>Emergency Management Act 2005 (WA)</i> <i>National Health Security Act 2007 Quarantine Act 1908.</i>	
Related Documents		POL-1014 Policy Management PSF-1004 COVID Risk Analysis	
Amendment History (Adoption and last 3 amendments)			
Version	Date Issued - Resolution Number	Item #	Description of Change
1.0	28/04/2020 - 118202	12.3.1	Council Adoption
1.1	15/11/2023 – CEO053	--	Reference Updates as per POL-1014 Policy Management (Previously CP-GOV-3114)
Date of Next Review		April 2025	