Property Closure

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Applies From:	Immediately		

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to recognise the need for Ara Institute of Canterbury (Ara) to close and secure all or some of the buildings or property belonging to Ara in times of emergency, critical maintenance, or public holidays. During such occasions, emergency and security systems and procedures designed for occupant or property safety may be isolated or otherwise ineffective. Some or all emergency escape routes may be locked and no longer accessible. Unauthorised entry under such conditions will be hazardous and is therefore prohibited.

1.2 Scope and Application

This policy applies to all colleagues, learners, and visitors of Ara.

1.3 Formal Delegations

a Obligations are outlined in the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, Building Act 2004, Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017, Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Fire Safety, Evacuation Procedures, and Evacuation Schemes) Regulations 2018, and the individual building (those belonging to Ara) approved Fire Evacuation Schemes.

b Under the Public Service Act 2020, the Chief Executive (CE) (as the employer) is responsible for ensuring compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015. Section 36 "Primary Duty of Care" of Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 stipulates that the person controlling a place of work must take all practicable steps to ensure that hazards are managed so that they do not cause harm to employees, contractors, sub-contractors, customers, or members of the public. Further, Section 45 "Duties of Workers" of Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 states that all employees have a legal obligation to take all practicable steps to ensure their own safety while at work and that no action or inaction while at work causes harm to another person.

c At Ara, all managers are responsible for ensuring good health and safety practices are followed within their areas and activities under their responsibility.

d The Associate Director – Safety, Health and Wellbeing acts as advisor on health and safety matters and helps to promote and manage relevant policies and practices.

1.4 Definitions

a **Emergency:** any significant event or expected event that may directly or indirectly cause or risk harm to those on Ara property or result in the loss of security to persons or property. Could include loss of infrastructure, e.g., power or water supply, serious weather event, or loss of management e.g., Civil Defence event.

b **Closure:** The evacuation and lock down of part or all of Ara property. Closure may be required, but not limited to an emergency, for planned maintenance, or for a holiday period.

Related Ara Procedures	Related Ara Policies
• CPP501b Accident and Incident Reporting • CPP504a Incident Management Plan	• CPP501 Health and Safety • CPP504 Incident Management and Business Resumption
Related Legislation or Other Documentation • Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 • Building Act 2004 • Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017 • Fire Safety and Evacuation of Buildings Regulations 2018 • Public Service Act 2020	**Good Practice Guidelines** (indicate if attached to policy or where they can be found)
References •	
Notes This policy incorporates "Procedures for Emergency Closure of Ara" endorsed by Te Kāhui Manukura (predecessor) 21/09/01. Established in 2008, this is policy is based on the former procedure titled "Procedures for Emergency Closure of Ara".	

2 Principles

2.1 In times of emergency, critical maintenance, or public holidays, there may be cause to close part or all of the property or buildings belonging to Ara.

2.2 During such occasions, emergency and security systems and procedures designed for occupant or property safety may be isolated or otherwise ineffective. Some or all emergency escape routes may be locked and no longer accessible. Unauthorised entry under such conditions will be hazardous and is therefore prohibited.

2.3 The decision to close Ara and/or cancel classes will be made by the CE or delegate, in consultation with the Director – P&C or delegate. The decision is expected to be associated with issues of health, safety or security for learners and employees.

3 Associated procedures for Ara Corporate Policy on: Property Closure

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3.1 Initiation of Closure

a The decision to close Ara and/or cancel classes will be made by the CE or delegate, in consultation with the Director –P&C or delegate. The decision is expected to be associated with issues of health, safety or security for learners and colleagues.

b In a city-wide or national emergency, Ara management are expected to work with any agency given executive authority.

3.2 Levels of Closure

a There are three different levels of closure that will be considered on each occasion:

i Partial site/s closure, with some or all of the learners and employees vacating the premises.

ii Cancellation of some or all classes, with or without all colleagues vacating the premises.

iii Closure of entire site/s, with all learners and colleagues vacating the premises.

b Depending on the reason for and level of closure, colleagues may be required to stay on site and undertake other duties, even if classes are cancelled. This decision will be communicated to colleagues via their manager, on directive from the CE or delegate.

3.3 Shutdown

a Controlled shutdown of building systems and plant, e.g., refrigeration, will be managed by Facilities Management in consultation with departments. Departments requiring secure or specialised storage facilities must develop contingencies in consultation with the Head of Facilities Management.

3.4 Communication

a A folder containing the Incident Management Plan and other relevant documents (e.g., the Business Resumption plans) will be kept in the CE's office with duplicate copies in the office of the Director – P&C, the Security Office in the Rakaia Centre, and the central administration Electronic copies of the documents will also be kept on Waituhi within the Facilities section.

b Facilities Management will provide pre-prepared notices for doors, with relevant details filled in as appropriate to the specific situation. The notices will clearly define the scope of the closure, the reason for the closure and the levels of colleagues/learners affected. A team of "runners", reporting to Facilities Management, will be identified to distribute the notices.

c The Communications team are responsible for a communication plan which will be formulated and updated regularly. The plan will include a site map and a prioritised list of the areas which need to be briefed individually, as soon as a decision to close has been made. The plan will identify the communication channels to be used for communicating a closure event and the decision to reopen to learners and colleagues.

d The Contact Centre will switch their service to an external telephone agency if an emergency closure occurs.

3.5 Reoccupation

a Reoccupation of buildings will be controlled by Security employees under the direction of Facilities Management.

b IT, heating, safety, and security systems will be reinstated before a general authority to reoccupy is given.

c The decision to reopen Ara will be made by the CE or delegate, in consultation with the Director – P&C or delegate.

d No persons will be permitted entry into Ara buildings during periods of closure, including the Christmas break, without the prior authority of the CE or delegate.