Viral Response Module v2021-2022: Version Updates

This annual update to the Fitwel Viral Response Module (v2021-22) integrates the very latest research regarding viral transmission in the built environment. **Given the rigor of the science behind v2020-21, this update does not introduce new strategies. Instead, it provides clarifications and expanded pathways for achieving strategies, as well as additional policy templates to support implementation.** The VRM remains a flexible tool to safeguard building occupants from contagious diseases caused by pathogens ranging from a novel virus, like the one that led to the COVID-19 pandemic, to better known viruses, like influenza A and B, which cause seasonal flu outbreaks.

General Updates

Changes Impacting Entity / Enterprise Certification:

- **Update the format of policies and protocols** to facilitate the adoption and implementation. *VRM policies and protocols are available for free download at www.fitwel.org/fitwel-standards*
- **Updated the structure of most policies and protocols** to clarify the requirements and facilitate the process of adoption and implementation. For example, more clarity is provided on how the policies and protocols must be implemented within individual assets.
- **Updated compliance documentation requirements** to incorporate elements that support asset-level implementation and facilitate VRM Asset Approval.
- **Key Strategy Update:** Removed Minimum Requirement status from "Establish a Paid Sick Leave Policy" and added an Alternative Compliance pathway for achieving partial credit for this strategy.

Changes Impacting Asset Approval:

- **Updated requirements for Asset Approval statements and narratives** to clarify how policies and protocols are implemented within the asset.

Changes Impacting Module Strategy Requirements

1. Enhance Indoor Environments

MR: Minimum Requirement
DS: Dependent Strategy

	ID	Strategy	Version 2021-2022 Content Updates
MR	**1.1**	Establish an Enhanced Indoor Air Quality Policy	1. Updated ventilation requirements to: – no longer require natural ventilation. – include an additional compliance pathway for projects able to achieve ≥ 4 air changes per hour. – include separate guidance for the ventilation of occupied buildings during a contagious disease outbreak and during all other times. 2. Updated filtration requirements to: - include guidance for mobile filtration units or portable air cleaners - include separate guidance for the filtration of occupied buildings during a contagious disease outbreak and during all other times
DS	**1.1.1**	Establish a Humidity Control Policy	No change
	1.2	Establish an Enhanced Indoor Air Quality Testing or Monitoring Policy	1. Separated the two compliance pathways into two distinct policies. 2. Integrated a new pathway for assets that have not been occupied for the past 12 months to demonstrate compliance.

	ID		Strategy	Version 2021-2022 Content Updates
	1.3		Establish a Legionella Water Management Policy	No change
	1.4		Establish an Enhanced Cleaning, Disinfecting, and Maintenance Policy	Updated requirements to include: – guidance for cleaning and disinfection during periods when there is not an active contagious disease outbreak. – regular site inspections as a qualifying auditing method.
DS	**1.4.1**		Establish an Enhanced Green Purchasing Policy	No change

2. Encourage Behavioral Change

	ID		Strategy	Version 2021-2022 Content Updates
	2.1		Establish a Surface Cleaning Protocol	1. Updated surface cleaning protocol requirements to: - no longer require surface cleaning stations be placed near shared office equipment. - clarify that both cleansers and disinfectants meet the supply guidelines. 2. Added an Alternative Compliance pathway which provides partial credit for projects that establish and implement a protocol for surface cleaning closets, where the necessary supplies for surface cleaning can be accessed.
MR	**2.2**		Establish a Face Covering Protocol	Updated the strategy requirements to explicitly focus on face covering guidelines rather than broader personal protective equipment (PPE).
DS	**2.2.1**		Establish a Face Covering Provision Protocol	Updated the strategy requirements to explicitly focus on face covering guidelines rather than broader personal protective equipment (PPE).
MR	**2.3**		Establish a Hand Hygiene Protocol	No change
MR	**2.4**		Establish a Health Promotion Signage Protocol	Updated requirements to clarify that the following signs only needed to be posted during a contagious disease outbreak: – Physical distancing guidance – Face covering guidance – Cleaning protocols for wiping down high-touch surfaces after use – Reminders to stay home when sick – Coughing and sneezing etiquette
	2.5		Establish A Health Programming and Services Protocol	Updated the strategy requirements to: – require that programs and services be made available to full-time employees, rather than all occupants. – add mental health counseling as a qualifying service or program. – allow virtual programming to meet the strategy requirements at all times, not only during active contagious disease outbreaks. – clarify that third-party provided services and programs can meet the requirements of a qualifying services or program.
DS	**2.5.1**		Establish A Social Support Group Protocol	Updated the strategy requirements to: – require social support groups be made available to only full-time employees, rather than all occupants. – allow virtual programming to meet the strategy requirements at all times, not only during active contagious disease outbreaks.

2. Encourage Behavioral Change

ID		Strategy	Version 2021-2022 Content Updates
MR	3.1	Establish a Contagious Disease Outbreak Preparedness Protocol	No change
DS	3.1.1	Establish a Business Continuity Protocol	Updated the strategy requirements to require the business continuity protocol be applicable to full-time employees, rather than all occupants.
DS	3.1.2	Establish a Mental Health First Aid Responder Training Protocol	Updated the strategy requirements to require the training be applicable to full-time employees, rather than all occupants.
DS	3.1.3	Establish A Viral Response Design Protocol	Updated the strategy requirements to clarify that the protocol only needs to be implemented during an active contagious disease outbreak. the training be applicable to full-time employees, rather than all occupants.
	3.2	Establish an Enhanced Stakeholder Collaboration Protocol	No change
MR	3.3	Establish a Communication Protocol	No change
	3.4	Establish a Paid Sick Leave Policy	1. Added an Alternative Compliance pathway which provides partial credit for projects that establish and implement a paid time off policy. 2. Enhanced strategy requirements to require the policies only apply to full-time employees, rather than all occupants. 3. Removed from the list of minimum requirements.
	3.5	Establish a Family Support Policy	No change