##

**Safe Community Policy**

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	1. **Purpose**

Our Policy:

1. guides our work in establishing and maintaining safe environments for all people, including children and young people;
2. promotes and provides for the provision of services that foster the health and safety of all who access our organisation and/or programs;
3. ensures that all workers (paid and volunteer) associated with our organisation fulfil their organisational and duty of care responsibilities; and
4. ensures compliance with legislation, and also with the intention of the legislation, as it relates to protecting people, particularly the vulnerable (including children).
	1. **Scope**

This Policy applies to all those associated with our organisation including:

1. all workers, including paid employees, volunteers and members of boards;
2. as specified herein, guests or hirers of the organisation and its facilities;
3. as specified herein, contractors, subcontractors, delivery persons or others engaged to provide services; and
4. as specified herein, those who access our site and/or programs.
	1. **Policy statements**

As an organisation we are committed to emotional/ physical safety and well-being:

1. we acknowledge that all people at our organisation have a right to feel and be safe, and to experience life- giving, harm-free interactions at our organisation and in our programs
2. we acknowledge the need for sensitivity and consideration of all people of aboriginal, culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as any person with a disability
3. we commit to the welfare of all people through the implementation and ongoing improvement of our Safe Community Framework which includes:
4. safe and friendly environments where people are listened to, feel safe, accept challenges, develop and grow in connection with self and others
5. safe and adequate recruitment, training, supervision, support and resourcing of our workers
6. appropriate and expedient responses to all incidents, accidents, child protection and/or safe community (misconduct and abuse) concerns
7. in relation to children (0-18 years), we acknowledge the primary role of parents and caregivers as well as the role of children in child protection. We will actively engage with children and caregivers, inviting open communication and feedback as part of our procedures and interactions
8. in relation to children, we acknowledge the shared responsibility of the whole community for child safety and welfare, including caregivers and our workers. We will actively promote the role of parents, caregivers and the wider community in the shared responsibility of child safety
9. it is a serious breach of this policy for any worker in our organisation to contravene this policy, any related procedure, or any regulation in law, in relation to the safety and protection of children and the vulnerable.
	1. **Responsibilities**

All people in our organisation are to:

1. be respectful of all people’s boundaries, especially of children and the vulnerable, respecting the rights of all people at our organisation to safe and friendly interactions,
2. foster and encourage the participation and empowerment of all people in staying safe,
3. take all reasonable care for their own health and safety,
4. take reasonable care that their actions do not adversely affect others health and safety,
5. comply with all reasonable instructions from the organisation's leadership,
6. comply with policies, procedures and directives from the organisation's leadership as communicated, including the code of conduct relevant to role/position,
7. report all child protection and other safe community (misconduct and abuse) concerns, allegations or incidents immediately to the Safe Community Officer/s, and
8. report all incidents or hazards to the Health & Safety Officer (or to a Team Leader) as soon as practicable.

**1.4a Specific responsibilities**

(Customise dependent upon roles, one person may fulfil a number of functions.)

In addition to the general responsibilities under this policy the following office holders and those associated with our organisation have the following specific responsibilities:

**Governance Board / Director (responsible for local organisation operation)**

1. primary duty of care, to ensure so far as is practicable the health and safety of all persons involved in the organisation,
2. endorse the Safe Community Framework (Framework),
3. assign responsibilities for the management of the Framework,
4. monitor and review the implementation of the Framework,
5. ensure disclosures of harm are reported to all relevant regulatory bodies and
6. fulfil relevant legislative ‘head of entity roles’ (and equivalent in State based reportable conduct schemes) in child protection related investigations.

**Management Group (responsible for the day to day local program facilitation)**

1. maintain a positive, safe and friendly culture,
2. overall responsibility for implementation of the Framework, and
3. regular reporting to the Governance Board in relation to implementation of the Framework.

 **Coordinators/Program Leaders**

1. implementation of this policy and related procedures as applicable to their program/events,
2. monitor workers who they oversee to ensure workers are acting safely and according to policy and procedure,
3. provide reasonable instruction to workers regarding the provision of safe environments,
4. report to Safe Community Officer any suspicions, allegations, incidents or potential breaches of the relevant code of conduct, and
5. identify and report all risks and hazards to Health & Safety Officer/Team for treatment.

**Safe Community Officer/Team**

1. implementation of the procedures in relation to responding to Safe Community concerns, including child protection,
2. tasks as directed by the Governance Board,
3. receive reports of incidents and/or concerns of risk of harm in relation to children or workers,
4. maintain secure records in relation to the Framework, and
5. regular reporting to the Management Group and/or Governance Board

**Health & Safety Officer / Team**

1. write and implement WHS policies, including privacy policy and evacuation procedures,
2. keep WHS on the agenda at meetings of the Management Group and Governance Board,
3. receive notifications of hazards/incidents such as serious events and dangerous incidents from workers and visitors,
4. notify incidents such as serious events and dangerous incidents within a prescribed period to the appropriate office holder/s e.g. board,
5. address health and safety concerns within reasonable time frame, and
6. undertake a site safety audit at regular intervals (minimum 2 times per year).

**Workers (paid and volunteer)**

1. uphold all organisation policy and procedures,
2. report to Safe Community Officer any suspicions, allegations, incident or potential breaches of the relevant code of conduct, and
3. identify and report all risks and hazards to relevant officer holder for treatment.

**Caregivers of children and vulnerable adults**

1. provide all information as necessary to ensure the safety of the person in their care,
2. provide feedback to management group.

**All people at the organisation (children and adults)**

1. participate in safe and respectful ways,
2. have a say (e.g. talk to any of their leaders when feeling unsafe),
3. report any unsafe behaviour of others, and
4. abide by all reasonable instructions given by the organisation's leaders.

**1.5 Safe Community procedures**

As part of our Policy we will implement the following procedures for the establishment and provision of safe environments and interactions at our organisation:

1. Framework implementation procedure
2. Participation and inclusion of children and caregivers
3. Record keeping
4. Recruitment procedures
5. Training and resourcing of workers
6. Supervision of workers
7. Safe environments
8. Responding to child protection concerns
9. Responding to Safe Community concerns about adults
10. Responding to incidents
11. Resolving misunderstandings and conflicts
12. Workplace investigation (Disciplinary)

These Procedures are found in our **Safe Community Framework Documentation.**

* 1. **Definitions & terminology (found in Framework Appendix)**
	2. **Policy approval & review**

This Policy was revised and updated to reflect current legislative requirements (see Safe Community Framework Appendix).

It was approved by the organisation's governing body and adopted for use by our organisation on <date>.

The Policy and procedures will be reviewed at least every 2 years, or as often as necessary, in order to remain compliant with new legislation.

Any proposed changes will be submitted to the governing body of our organisation for approval at a properly convened meeting before being adopted and implemented.

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Safe Community Resources can also provide customisation services to your organisation in the area of implementation of the **Safe Community Framework** for your organisation.

**Disclaimer**: This publication is not legal advice. The ideas and procedures herein are based on nationally recognised good practice advice and have been written with due regard to Australian legislation March 2020.
Legal advice may need to be sought when responding to individual incidents.