

Work, Health and Safety (WHS)

AUTHORITY: CEO, Board

RESPONSIBILITIES: All Staff, Volunteers, Community Workers, Work Experience, Student Placement

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Laverton Community Integrated Services Inc (LCIS) is committed to ensuring, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of the working environment for its staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors to its premises.

This policy applies to:

- (a) All staff members; and
- (b) Contractors, volunteers and visitors to LCIS's premises, to the extent it is relevant to them.

In this policy, 'workplace' includes working on site or off-site, attendance at a work-related conference or function, and attendance at a client or other work-related event, including retreats and social events.

LCIS supports the rights of all persons covered by the policy to work in an environment that is, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe and without risks to health.

LCIS is committed to the promotion of a joint and united approach to consultation and resolution of Work Health and Safety issues.

LCIS is committed to improving health and safety with a view to improving workplace efficiency and productivity. This will be accomplished through the ongoing development, in consultation with LCIS's Safety Representatives, of management systems and procedures designed to, so far as is reasonably practicable:

- identify, assess and control workplace hazards;
- reduce the incidence and cost of occupational injury and illness; and
- provide a rehabilitation system for those affected by occupational injury or illness.

Work Health and Safety statutory requirements, including regulations and codes of practice, are minimum standards and so the aim is for them to be improved upon, where practicable.

Legislation:

Laverton Community Integrated Services Inc. (LCIS) complies with the Occupational Health and Safety Act of 2004 and subsequent amendments, with all workers covered by its provisions. The Act is based on the following important principles of health and safety:

- Every employee or non paid participant has the right to a safe and healthy working environment
- Employers have an obligation to provide a working environment that does not threaten their employees' health, safety or welfare
- Employers should make the workplace itself safe, rather than simply protecting the workers in an unhealthy or unsafe workplace
- Employees or non paid participants should always be able to consult with employers on decisions about health and safety in the workplace

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible for LCIS' compliance with the Act, which states that it is the employer's duty to provide a safe and healthy working environment for their employees. Employees are responsible for taking all the care of which they are capable, for their own health and safety and for the health and safety of any other person.

The Act has the following objectives:

- To secure the health, safety and welfare of persons at work
- To protect persons at work against risks to health and safety
- To assist in securing safe and healthy work environments
- To eliminate, at the source, risks to the health, safety and welfare of persons at work
- To provide for the involvement of, employees and management, in the formulation and implementation of health and safety standards

Procedure:

Each year staff will nominate one of their colleagues to be the designated Occupational Health and Safety representative. In the event that a staff member does not wish to nominate, the CEO or Senior Manager on Site will assume all responsibility to ensure a safe work environment for all participants. Work Health and Safety will then be a standing agenda item for all meeting forums to allow for reporting and discussion of work health and safety issues.

Safe Environment for LCIS for Staff/ Clients/ Students/ Participants

As an employer, it is our responsibility to provide a safe work environment for all employees, free from any hazards and complying with all State and Federal laws.

Health and safety in the workplace is about preventing work-related injury and disease, and designing an environment that promotes well-being for everyone at work.

LCIS complies with relevant state legislation and address specific guidelines regarding health and safety legislation that regulates our specific sector as a Community based organisation.

Employer responsibilities with health and safety

Work health and safety procedures must be implemented wherever the work is being conducted, be that in an office, factory, construction site or home. LCIS has developed and have in place a work health and safety policy to meet the following standards

Accident Reports

Accidents and potentially dangerous incidents are to be recorded on the LCIS Accident Report forms (see attached) and lodged with the appropriate manager as soon as possible after the occurrence. If a work related injury is being reported, ensure that the appropriate Work Cover report form is completed, compliance will ensure that Work Cover requirements are met.

Staff Security

Personal alarms are provided for relevant workers/volunteers whose duties may require additional personal security (as per LCIS risk management plan). The use of the personal alarms should not be indiscriminate. However, if a staff member feels to be in genuine danger, there should be no hesitation in using their alarm. The alarms are to be checked twice a year, once in a controlled situation and once as a without warning drill.

Staff members who work after hours should park immediately in front of the building to minimise the distance from door to car. Whenever possible, staff working late should escort one another from the building to their cars.

Staff members visiting clients at home are required to notify the Operations Manager of the client's name, address and phone number, and to estimate their time of return, they must then advise once they have left the premises. If staff have any concern about personal safety, they must ask another worker to accompany them, or reschedule the client / family for an appointment (refer to LCC - Home Visit Procedures).

Lone Worker in the Centre

During normal operating hours no worker is to be alone. Minimum staffing is considered to be two, one of which must be a paid staff-member, a member of the Board or a recognised Volunteer (this is a Volunteer who has been assigned this responsibility via the Board). It is recognised that some staff may be alone, when working after hours. In such a situation the front door is to be kept locked. Appointments for after hours are to be scheduled in extreme cases only, with prior approval of the Operations Manager and in accordance with our client visitation procedures. A lone worker, during normal hours of operation will ensure that the main entry door is locked.

Bullying and violence at work

LCIS is committed to reducing bullying and occupational violence so far as is practicable in the workplace.

Bullying is repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed toward a person, or a group of persons, that creates a risk to their health and safety.

Examples of bullying can include:

- verbal abuse;
- excluding, ignoring or isolating a person;
- psychological harassment;
- intimidation;
- assigning meaningless tasks unrelated to a person's job;
- giving a person impossible assignments and deadlines;
- unjustified criticism or complaints;
- deliberately withholding information vital for effective work performance; and
- constant taunting, teasing or playing practical jokes on a person who is not a willing participant.

Bullying can be verbal, or in writing (including online).

Occupational violence refers to any incident where a person is physically attacked, abused, assaulted or threatened in the workplace.

Domestic Violence

LCIS is a workplace provides safe and supportive environments for the employees, particularly those employees who are experiencing violence.

Further to this we actively encourage any staff, board member, volunteer, student or participant in any form to actively seek professional help. Our Crisis Intervention staff are trained in responding to the needs of those who are experiencing or at risk of Domestic Violence.

LCIS does not condone the discrimination related to the experience of domestic and family violence and understands this can take the form of:

- being denied leave or flexible work arrangements that would assist victims and survivors to attend to violence-related matters, such as attending court or moving into a shelter
- having employment terminated for reasons relating to the violence they are experiencing, including a drop in performance or attendance caused by the domestic and family violence, or being transferred or demoted for reasons related to the violence

Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) provides eligible employees who are experiencing domestic and family violence, or eligible employees who are providing care or support for a family or household member experiencing domestic and family violence, the right to request flexible working arrangements.

Illicit Drugs & Alcohol in the Work Place

The use of alcohol and other substances during work hours is prohibited to:

- Prevent work place incidents involving the abuse of alcohol and drugs;
- Provide an environment free from the use of illegal drugs and the abuse of alcohol;

Employees and non-paid participants can seek assistance for:

- Access to information on the effects of alcohol to health and safety;
- Must maintain client and staff confidentiality regarding alcohol-related issues, subject to the provisions of the law;

Staff or Volunteers experiencing alcohol-related issues are encouraged to discuss the matter with their supervisor, Manager or any other senioe person they feel comfortable with.

In circumstances where a worker/volunteer is taking medically prescribed drugs to manage a specific condition that may interfere with their work performance, they are required to notify their manager/supervisor. The manager/supervisor, in consultation with the worker (and the treating doctor if relevant), may (if practicable) make

adjustments to the work requirements of the employee concerned. If this is not possible and the situation is temporary, the worker will either be required to resume or commence sick leave until they are able to resume normal work duties.

Illegal activities associated with the sale, purchase and/or transfer of drugs will be reported to the relevant authority and attract immediate dismissal.

Anytime an employee/volunteer is found to have any detectable amount of illegal drugs or alcohol in their system while on LCIS premises, client premises and/or whilst conducting LCIS business will be deemed serious misconduct and may result in disciplinary procedures being followed; staff and clients will be asked to leave the premises if deemed to be under the influence of drugs, alcohol or other substances.

Dealing with Dangerous Situations

Whilst the service is open to all members of the public, clients and workers alike are entitled to be safe on the premises at all times. This means people exhibiting inappropriate behaviour may be refused access to our services. Workers exposed to danger or other traumatic experiences are entitled to support and assistance with debriefing. If trauma is significant, it may be necessary to engage professional trauma management personnel. If you feel threatened in any way remove yourself from the area and seek the assistance of a colleague. If violence is possible please dial 000 and ask for a Police response.

Smoking

Smoking is permitted in designated areas only on regulated break times only. Staff are encouraged to contact the QUIT line or their GP for advice/support on stopping smoking.

Infectious Disease

LCIS requests that any staff, volunteers and contractors who are unwell with any kind of infectious disease do not present at work until they are no longer contagious. This includes (but is not limited to)

- Flu
- Common cold
- Gastro, stomach virus
- Chicken pox or shingles
- Scabies, body lice or nits
- Strep throat

Staff are to remain offsite until they have medical clearance to return to work. Working from home arrangements can be made with a written work plan created by employee and immediate manager.

Breach of this Policy

Any breach of this policy may result in counselling and/or disciplinary action, which, in the case of employees, may lead to dismissal, or, in the case of volunteers, may lead to the cessation of their engagement.

Any breach of this policy by a contractor may result in cancellation by LCIS of the services provided by that contractor

Appropriate Facilities

LCIS provides appropriate facilities for the delivery of services. Where necessary, facilities have been leased from Council, or are being managed on their behalf, to accommodate programs. Where new needs are identified or issues raised, a Hazard Identification form should be completed. It is to be noted that the management of the Laverton Community Hub falls to the Hobsons Bay City Council (HBCC) and as such the building maintenance, hazards, safety representatives are their responsibility, LCIS complies with all reasonable requests from HBCC regarding WHS incidents, reporting or any other relevant matter.

Appropriate Equipment

LCIS provides staff with the best equipment within budget constraints and aims to provide adequate computer, fax and copying equipment to ensure that all staff has access as needed. Training on all equipment items is provided for staff

and relevant volunteers. Administration staff has regular opportunities to improve their skills, and training on new software is provided as needed or requested.

Emergency Procedures

All buildings are regularly checked for safety compliance by the local Laverton Metropolitan Fire Brigade unit [MFB – FES]. Fire extinguishers, hoses and blankets are tested and restored to working order. All extinguishers are specifically suited to their locations. Staff will receive training in fire drills and the use of extinguishers from the MFB and this training will be reviewed annually.

Smoke detectors have been placed in strategic positions throughout the buildings. The buildings have illuminated exit signs throughout. Leased properties are regularly maintained. Smoke detector batteries are changed annually.

First aid kits are located in all buildings used for the delivery of services and are regularly checked and re-stocked as necessary. Trained First Aid personnel are available at the Community, Education and Children's Centre.

LCIS is committed to the provision of a safe work environment at all times. The CEO/ Health and Safety Officer, is responsible for ensuring that all emergency procedures are adhered to. The Education Centre Manager will take responsibility for contacting emergency services in the Education Centre, the CEO or designated Senior Staff Member for the Community Centre and the Children's Centre Manager for the Children's Centre.

Notification of Emergency Equipment, Location and Use

Notices indicating locations of fire extinguishers, hose reels, fire blankets, exit doors and first aid kits are displayed in Reception, the classrooms, as well as in each office. These notices include details about fire extinguishers appropriate to different kinds of fires.

Fire Drills

The Health and Safety Representative or designated staff member will organise two fire emergency evacuation drills per year. One will be planned and the other will be random. Evacuation plans are displayed within all buildings used by LCIS.

Staff Responsibilities - Equipment and Procedures

All staff, students, volunteers, participants and co-located workers must be familiar with emergency equipment and procedures within all buildings utilised to deliver services. Each person is required:

- To know the locations of fire alarms, hose reels, extinguishers and exit doors,
- To know how and when to use fire extinguishers and blankets.
- To know and follow the instructions contained within this policy, and to participate in fire and emergency evacuation drills when they occur.

In Case of Fire

Upon discovery of a fire, the finder shall:

- Call 000 immediately
- Rescue anyone in immediate danger and isolate the fire by closing doors.
- Contact the Receptionist to report the fire.
- Summon the CEO, Managers, Senior Staff Member or Health and Safety Representative.
- Prepare to extinguish the fire or evacuate the building.

If notified of a fire, the most Senior staff member on duty shall:

- Ensure that all rooms are checked and occupants are evacuated from the danger area to safety - confirm fire has been called on 000.
- Report to the CEO/Chair on the status of the evacuation, in terms of both numbers and location.
- Remove the volunteer sign in book to ensure that all volunteers are present, this is done by checking the names of those present off against the book.
- Confirm with any facilitator present that all participants/students are present and mark this off on the register/roll
- Direct available staff members not involved with evacuation to attack the fire with the **CORRECT** fire extinguisher - **ONLY IF SAFE TO DO SO**.

Assembly points for evacuated personnel, **depending on safety**, will be the Laverton Hub rear car park, adjacent to the Children's Centre.

In case of a fire at the Community Children's Centre, the assembly point will be the same car park as above and / or the Donald Street car park.

In case of a fire at the Community Centre, the assembly point will be the Children's Centre car park or the Corner of Crown St & Railway Ave.

At Trafalgar Ave Community Centre the assembly point is the car park.

Points to remember in case of fire:

- Smoke is as fatal as flame.
- Keep low in smoke.
- Listen carefully for announcements.

In Case of a Bomb Threat:

- Keep the phone line open
- Note any special features of the caller or the background noises
- Attract attention of another staff member to call Police
- Call Police immediately on 000 and follow evacuation procedures outlined above.