



Mitcham Community House

Occupational Health and Safety Policy

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PREAMBLE

Mitcham Community House recognises it's moral and legal responsibilities and is committed to providing a healthy and safe work and service delivery environment to its members, staff, tutors, volunteers, service users and visitors.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Committee, staff, tutors and volunteers are aware of their responsibilities to provide and maintain, so far as practicable, a working and service provision environment that is safe and without risks to health.

As part of Mitcham Community House's Risk Management Plan every reasonable step will be taken to avoid the spread of illness or disease and prevention of food poisoning at Mitcham Community House. Maintaining the health and well- being of staff, tutors, volunteers, participants, children and families is the responsibility of everyone at the House.

Guidelines

Mitcham Community House is committed to enhancing occupational health and safety on a continuous improvement basis by:'

- developing risk assessment strategies to minimise risks to persons in the work and service provision environment
- ensuring that all equipment and substances are safe and without risk to health when used in accordance with standard operating procedures
- encouraging consultation as an essential part of effectively managing health and safety at work
- providing training opportunities and/or information for Committee members, staff, tutors and volunteers
- displaying relevant Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) information and WorkCover notices on what to do if injured and who the Health and Safety representative.



Mitcham Community House

Occupational Health and Safety Procedures

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The Committee will promote and maintain occupational health and safety as a primary responsibility.

The Manager will implement the Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) policy and take all practical measures to ensure that:

- Mitcham Community House workplace is safe and without risk to health
- information about OH&S is distributed throughout the organisation
- OH&S is an Agenda item at all staff and subcommittee meetings
- a register of incidents and injuries is maintained and the information used to identify risks throughout the organisation which are reported to the Committee
- appropriate training is provided on an ongoing basis
- the behaviour of all persons in the organisation is safe and without risk to health.

All staff, tutors and volunteers are required to follow Mitcham Community House's OH&S Policy and safety procedures to ensure the health and safety of service users and visitors in the organisation.

1. General Maintenance and Security of the building

- Entrances and exits are kept clear
- Maintenance requirements are monitored and Facilities Maintenance, City of Whitehorse is informed
- An annual OH&S walkthrough audit is conducted and the results are sent to the City of Whitehorse with a copy to the Committee
- Disability access is maintained to a high standard
- Administration office and Mitcham Family Violence Education and Support Service (MFVESS) office are alarmed afterhours
- Keysafe code is changed regularly
- Key register is maintained
- City of Whitehorse is responsible for ensuring that EXIT and emergency lighting, fire extinguishers and smoke detectors are in working order

2. First Aid

- Mitcham Community House is responsible for providing an up-to-date first aid kit to be located on the top of the fridge in the kitchen area and on the wall in the childcare room
- First aid officers are appointed from office staff and are required to undertake approved Level 2 training with annual updates
- All childcare staff are required to have approved Level 2 first aid training and to undertake annual updates as well as training in emergency asthma and anaphylaxis management and any other training as required by the Children's Regulations.
- All accidents (no matter how insignificant) are to be recorded in the Incidents and Injuries Register. The childcare service has its own register.

3. Emergency Management Plan

- Emergency Management Plan for the childcare service and the community house should be developed and updated as required each year.
- Evacuation plans are to be displayed in the childcare room and in all areas of the community house.
- Evacuation drill is to be undertaken annually

4. Working Environment

Administration Staff- paid staff and volunteers

- During class hours, minimum of two people in the office (2 staff members or 1 staff member and 1 volunteer) where possible
- After office hours: lock all outside doors and pull down front door blinds. Do not answer door if only one staff member in attendance
- Duress alarm located under bench in front office should be activated if phoning 000 is required but doing so would be unsafe or not possible
- Keep cash and cheques out of sight
- Regularly bank cash and cheques
- Keep front office door closed at all times
- Ample individual work space should be provided
- Power cords should not be a hazard or intrusive
- City of Whitehorse will conduct a Test and Tag audit each year
- Photocopier should be located in a well ventilated space

- Computer stations should be adjustable and ergonomic
- Care should be taken when lifting, storing or removing goods or equipment above head height.

Family Violence Program Staff

- Alarmed office with peep hole
- No identifying signs on the Mitcham Community Family Violence Education and Support Service office door
- Family Violence Program staff have a personal alarm in the office which is linked to the House alarm monitoring service
- Employing a second family violence program worker allows attention to be given to a woman in crisis, provides assistance with difficult behaviour and helps prevent burn out as well. This help ensures best practice.
- All MFVESS staff undertake supervision:
- Coordinator and Co-Facilitator to undertake external clinical supervision 8 times per year
- Coordinator and Co-Facilitator to undertake external case review and reflective practice quarterly
- Coordinator and Co-Facilitator to meet weekly for peer debriefing and bimonthly peer supervision during the term program

Childcare Staff

- 2 staff at all times on duty in the childcare service with a volunteer to relieve staff member for required breaks
- Phone to have an intercom connection to the main office phone
- Debriefing to be available after a critical incident
- Provide all staff and volunteers with a copy of **WorkSafe, Children's services-occupational health and safety compliance kit**, which covers:
 - Lifting children in/out of cots and highchairs or on/off change tables
 - Working at low levels
 - Moving equipment
 - Storing supplies and equipment
 - Using office areas
 - Maintaining indoor and outdoor areas

All staff- paid and volunteers

- A focus on job satisfaction for individuals
- Realistic workload with lunch breaks
- Consideration for other members of staff, including knowing the whereabouts of other staff
- Regular program area staff or subcommittee meetings with one whole of staff meeting per semester

- A workplace which is free from discrimination, harassment, bullying and/or victimisation
- Debriefing after crisis situations
- Development of an Employee Assistance Program

Tables and Chairs in Classrooms

- Ensure that chairs are stacked safely according to the information on the wall in the classrooms
- Tables are to be put up and down by at least 2 people and stacked against the wall and secured with the safety strap
- Instructions for the use of the safety strap are to be clearly displayed on the wall where the tables are located
- Tables and chairs are not to be removed from the room in which they are located unless directed by the office staff
- Staff (paid or voluntary) must use the chair trolley (located in the store room) in situations where chairs have to be moved from one room to another and no more than 7 chairs at a time should be loaded on to the trolley
- If tables have to be moved from one room to another, there should be at least 2 people involved in moving each table.

Afterhours Tutors/ Hirers- refer to ***Tutor Handbook*** , ***Pre-schooler Parties Rental Information*** and ***Rental Information***

5. Childcare Service- additional OH&S procedures

Childcare staff should ensure that:

- Indoor and outdoor areas are inspected for hazards prior to the start of childcare each day using the **Safety Checklist**
- Equipment and toys are regularly checked for splinters or sharp edges
- Chemicals are kept in locked cupboards
- Children are supervised at all times
- Copies of intervention orders are kept and complied with as applicable
- Entrance door into the childcare room is kept closed at all times to prevent access by unwanted persons
- Playground gates are kept locked and keys to are accessible to staff and volunteers in case of an emergency with copies available in the front office

6. Mitcham Family Violence Education and Support Service- also known as the Family Violence Program- OH&S procedures for clients

Processes specifically to ensure the occupational health and safety of the Mitcham Family Violence Education and Support Service clients:

- Clients of Mitcham Community Family Violence Education and Support Service, meet in a room in the community house which is not identifiable to anyone coming into the

House. Office staff can easily see anyone coming into the House and have an alarm in the office which can be triggered should it be necessary

- Mitcham Community House Family Violence Education and Support Service has a silent phone number and is promoted in the community house semester program in a non-identifying manner as a women's support group.
- Women attending the program have to sign a confidentiality statement on the intake form. At the intake interview the Group Agreement Policy is explained, which sets out the conditions for participating in the program to ensure the safety and well-being of all group members,
- Only the family violence program staff answer the family violence program phone. If a woman rings on the community house phone, calls are referred to the family violence program staff or in their absence to office staff, who have been trained by the Family Violence Program Coordinator
- To prevent a violent partner tracing the location of the Mitcham Community House Family Violence Education and Support Service, the message on the answering service does not identify the program, and staff do not leave messages on women's phones unless instructed that it is safe to do so.
- Triple 000 or Eastern Domestic Violence Service is called for a woman in crisis while attending the group
- Copies of intervention orders are lodged with the MFVESH Coordinator
- Copies of custody and access orders are lodged with the MFVESH Coordinator and childcare staff
- Client information is kept in a locked filing cabinet in the family violence program office which is locked and alarmed afterhours.

7. Avoiding the Spread of Illness or Infectious Disease

If Someone is Unwell

The Committee of Management and the House Manager reserve the right to send staff, volunteers, tutors, children, families and class participants home if they deem them to be unwell and where this may compromise the health of others

Personal Hygiene

A number of infectious diseases can be spread from one person to another by contaminated hands, particularly gastrointestinal infections, influenza and hepatitis A. Washing your hands properly can help prevent the spread of the organisms that cause these diseases.

All staff, volunteers, tutors, children, families, clients and class participants will be encouraged to:

- wash their hands using soap and warm water and dry their hands using the paper towel provided, which should be disposed of straight away in the bin provided.
 - After going to the toilet or changing nappies

- Before preparing food
 - Between handling raw and cooked or ready-to-eat food
 - Before eating
 - After sneezing or coughing and using a tissue which should be disposed of in the rubbish bin
 - After handling animals
 - After handling rubbish or working in the outside areas
 - After attending to sick children
- Childcare staff will model effective handwashing techniques to the children in their care.
 - Put a tissue over the nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing and disposing of the tissue straight away and then washing hands.
 - Notices regarding hand washing and coughing/sneezing will be displayed in the toilets, the kitchen and the childcare bathroom
 - Tissues will be available from the office and in the childcare room.

Childcare-Immunisation, Infectious Diseases and Exclusion

Evidence of immunisation must be produced on enrolment of a child in Childcare. This evidence can be a certificate or a copy of the immunisation records from the Child Health Record Book. It is not sufficient just to state on the enrolment form that the child has been immunised.

Enrolment of a child can only be confirmed if the parent/carer has provided documentation that show the child:

- is fully vaccinated for their age; or
- is on a recognised catch-up schedule if their child has fallen behind with their vaccinations; or
- has a medical reason not to be vaccinated.

Conscientious objection to vaccination is not an exemption.

Where a child has not been immunised and the staff believe that the child is at risk, then the parent/guardian/authorised person will be asked to collect the child and that child will not be able to return for the amount of time stated in Schedule 6 of the Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001

If it has come to the attention of the Mitcham Community House Childcare Service that there has been a case of an infectious disease (as listed in Schedule 6 of the Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001 and which is displayed on the wall of the children's service) the childcare staff will display a notice in the childcare room to advise all other parents of the details.

Childcare staff will provide written notices to all families that use the childcare, informing them of the nature of the infectious disease and the procedures to control the infection.

The infectious child will not be able to return to childcare for the amount of time stated in Schedule 6. A medical certificate is required before a child returns to care.

Childcare-Infection Control

Staff will be trained in effective infection control methods and reasons for these behaviours.

Staff will follow universal precautions in regard to **the management of blood / bodily fluids**:

- Staff will use disposable gloves. All spills of blood/ bodily fluids will be mopped up with paper towels dipped in a bleach solution. The paper towels and gloves will be placed in a sealed bag and disposed of in a bin with a lid.
- Hands will be washed in a hot soapy solution after cleaning up the spill.
- Equipment exposed to blood or bodily fluids will be cleaned with hot soapy water as soon as possible.

Open wounds- these will be covered with an appropriate dressing.

Nappy Changing:

- Staff will wear disposable gloves
- Nappies/wipes/disposable bags are to be provided by parents/guardians
- Soiled nappies will be sent home
- Nappy rash cream will be applied if supplied and requested
- Change table will be disinfected after each use.

Childcare Room

- Tables, benches, toilets and handwashing areas are sanitized at the end of the day
- Toys and equipment are cleaned as required
- Cleaner is employed to clean the floors, benches and bathroom regularly each week.
- Staff and children will wash and dry their hands before and after meal times, after using the toilet, blowing their nose, handling animals and other unhygienic practices.
- Children will be provided with paper towels to dry their hands and these will be disposed of in a bin with a lid.
- Used tissues will be disposed of immediately into a bin with a lid.

8. Food Handling for Community Luncheons and Events

- A **Food Safety Supervisor** must be appointed to undertake approved training in the following areas:
 - record keeping
 - practices to keep food safe
 - support programs

as covered in the ***Victorian Department of Health and Human Services Food Safety Program Template***

- The **Food Safety Supervisor** is responsible for;

- supervising all staff and volunteers who are involved in the preparation and serving of food.
- keeping the Food Safety Program and all records up to date.
- The **kitchen must be registered** with the City of Whitehorse and this registration is updated annually by payment of the appropriate fee.
- **Notices** should be placed in the kitchen area to highlight safe food handling practices and the importance of personal hygiene. These notices should include:
 - Appropriate Temperature- Danger Zone
 - Handwashing- How to Wash Your Hands
 - Personal Hygiene

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Emergency Management Plan

Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying and Victimisation Policy

MFVESS Policies

Continuous Improvement Policy

Code of Conduct Policy

Tutor and Staff Handbooks

Pre-schooler Parties Rental Information

Rental Information

WorksSafe, Children's services-occupational health and safety compliance kit

Victorian Department of Health and Human Services Food Safety Program Template

Fair Work- Employer Guide to Family and Domestic Violence

AUTHORISATION

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| Signature of Manager | |
| Date of approval by the Manager | |