

QUEENSLAND AIDS COUNCIL

Workplace

Health and Safety

Policy

Workplace Health & Safety Policy & Procedure

Copies of this document may be obtained from the Council's website www.quac.org.au or from the Regions and Organisational Support Manager.

Adopted 12 December 1995
 Amended 3 October 2001
 Review Date March 2002
 Next Review Date March 2003

This policy will be reviewed annually in consultation with employees, volunteers and their elected safety representative(s). It will be kept up-to-date with new legislation and organisational changes. Any comments and concerns regarding the document can be addressed to the Occupational Health and Safety Officer at any time.

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**Queensland AIDS Council
Workplace Health and Safety
Policy Statement**

1. The Queensland AIDS Council recognises that all employees, volunteers, and visitors are included in this policy, as they are its most valuable asset and resource.
2. The Queensland AIDS Council is totally committed to providing and maintaining a healthy and safe workplace and environment for employees, volunteers, and visitors while engaged in Queensland AIDS Council activities both on and off the Council's premises.
3. The ongoing maintenance of health and safety within the workplace is the collective responsibility of employees, volunteers, and visitors who are all asked to support management's efforts by adhering to the agreed safe work practices and procedures.
4. Employees are not expected to perform duties that would be considered threatening to their health and safety. Therefore, employees are encouraged to actively participate in the development and maintenance of the Queensland AIDS Council's Occupational Health and Safety Program.

General Manager

Policy Objectives

The Queensland AIDS Council organisation will continually strive to:

1. Comply with all relevant legislation pertaining to the activities of the organisation, including the current Queensland Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995, the Queensland Workplace Regulation 1997, Industry Codes of Practice, Workplace Health and Safety Advisory Standards and Australian Standards;
2. Promote health and safety awareness amongst all persons within the Queensland AIDS Council organisation and to develop working practices that reflect this;
3. Establish and maintain better strategies of health promotion, including injury/illness prevention, treatment and rehabilitation;
4. Provide access to accurate information and provide appropriate education and training on occupational health and safety to all; and
5. Establish and maintain an active consultation network between all management, line management, employees and unions regarding any decision making to be made on Occupational Health and Safety at our workplaces.

Policy Implementation

This policy is to be implemented by the Queensland AIDS Council's through the procedures and arrangements established by this manual

This policy applies to all Council workplaces across Queensland including offices in Cairns, Brisbane, Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast and Townsville.

For the implementation of all these procedures, specific work practices and procedures have been prepared and will be implemented as soon as practicable to address specific hazards in the workplace or legislative requirements.

All individuals designated responsibility under this policy will be required to sign a letter of acceptance confirming their commitment to the designated position.

All policies and associated procedures are available to employees, volunteers, and visitors and will be kept on the Council's website at www.quac.org.au

Roles and Responsibilities

Intent

Queensland AIDS Council will designate key personnel to manage workplace health and safety issues. Their roles and responsibilities regarding workplace health and safety are outlined below.

Workplace Health and Safety Officer

The Workplace and Safety Officer will be responsible for our workers safety and duties include:

- Implementing the company Occupational Health Safety and Rehabilitation procedures with the help of the safety officer;
- Using the principles of the Hierarchy of Controls in all design, to all activities to minimise the risk to all personnel in the workplace;
- Carrying out a design review with safety team to assist in the identification of further risk reduction controls measures.
- Participating in the planning and design stages of all activities;
- Stimulating a high level of safety awareness at all times;
- Identifying safety training needs;
- Leading by example;
- Ensuring safe equipment and plant is provided and maintained;
- Insisting on correct and safe work practices at all times;
- Assisting in the identification and preparation of safe work procedures;
- Reviewing safety reports and inspections and initiating rectification where necessary;
- Notifying Workplace Health and Safety division when necessary,
- Participating in accident/incident investigations;
- Participating in safety meetings and programs;
- Monitoring compliance with safe work methods (controls);
- Distributing letters of acceptance to individuals designated responsibility under this policy and filing same upon return.

Regional Coordinator

Regional Coordinators and the Townsville Team Leader are responsible for safety and duties include:

- Implementing the company Occupational Health Safety and Rehabilitation procedures;
- Observing all OH&S requirements and Statutory rules and regulations;
- Ensuring that all works are conducted in a manner safe and without risk to
- Employees health and safety;
- Planning to do all work safely;
- Providing advise and assistance on OH&S to all employees;
- Participating in the planning and design stages of all activities;
- Ensuring current OH&S and other relevant legislative requirements are met in the workplace;
- Identifying OH&S training, programs in advance and allow training for employees
- Actioning safety reports and carrying out workplace inspections;
- Preparing and participating in safety meetings and safety programs;
- Facilitating the preparation of Work Method Statements and job safety analysis.
- Insisting and ensuring on safe work practices at all times;
- Investigating hazard reports and ensuring that corrective actions are undertaken;
- Conducting workplace inductions, team safety talks and daily team briefings;
- Participating in accident/incident investigations;
- Leading by example and promoting OH&S at every opportunity;
- Supervising and ensuring compliance with safe work procedures;
- Providing suitable employment to assist rehabilitation initiatives;
- Stimulating a high level of safety awareness at all times.

Fire Wardens

- montly check that fire exits and escape routes are clear for use;
- annually check that fire equipment is in place and anti-tamper seals in tact;
- ensure that all staff are aware of the evacuation procedure;
- in the case of fire:
 1. Remove People from immediate danger to a place of safety;
 2. Secure the sign-in-book from reception
 3. Alert Fire Brigade and staff/residents/members of the public;
 4. Confine fire and smoke, close windows and doors (if safe);
 5. Extinguish and control the fire (if safe to do so).

Policies and Procedures

Title - Lighting

Intent

Adequate lighting will be provided for the general office environment together with appropriate lighting for specific tasks and Visual Display Units (VDU's).

Procedures

Individuals with concerns regarding the adequacy of lighting in the work environment must notify the Workplace Health and Safety Officer

All staff with concerns in this area must use the Hazard Report Form to ensure the hazard has been identified in accordance with this policy.

The Workplace Health and Safety officer will address all Hazard Report Forms personally and evaluate the situation. Corrective action or, consultation with external professionals for the assessment of the lighting with Queensland AIDS Council is required.

Electrical Contractors: Brisbane office – Energex
 Cairns office – Ergon Energy
 Gold Coast Office – Energex
 Sunshine Coast – Energex
 Townsville – Ergon Energy

Title – Thermal Environment

Intent

The thermal environment will be regulated with appropriate temperature control together with an adequate ventilation system so as to provide a comfortable office environment conducive to maximal productivity.

Procedures

Individuals with concerns regarding the thermal environment of the workplace must notify the Workplace Health and Safety Officer who shall co-ordinate and take the necessary corrective action.

All staff with concerns in this area must use the Hazard Report Form to ensure the hazard has been identified in accordance with this policy.

The Workplace Health and Safety officer will address all Hazard Report Forms personally and evaluate the situation.

Title – Workstation Layout and Design

Intent

The design and layout of workstations will be to maximise a worker's efficiency and effectiveness while minimising any discomfort. This will subsequently reduce any potential for the development or aggravation of musculoskeletal disorders and other complaints.

Procedures

Training in the correct use of ergonomic furniture shall be provided to maximise the benefits of utilising such equipment.

Advice may be sought from the Workplace Health and Safety Officer with regard to individual workstation set-up so as to minimise musculoskeletal complaints typically attributable to poor workstation design, and to provide an environment conducive to efficient work.

All staff with concerns in this area must use the Hazard Report Form to ensure the hazard has been identified in accordance with this policy.

The Workplace Health and Safety officer will address all Hazard Report Forms personally and evaluate the situation with a written report to management.

Title – Manual Tasks

Intent

Manual tasks involve the use of personal force to lift, push, pull, carry or restrain any object, animate or inanimate. Reference is made to the Manual Task Advisory Standard.

Queensland AIDS Council Safety Officer will advise on these matters.

Unless these activities are performed correctly, the potential for serious musculoskeletal injuries increases markedly. Manual tasks will be managed effectively within the Queensland AIDS Council through the utilisation of risk assessment, task restructuring, induction and ongoing training.

Procedures

Manual task injuries can be reduced as far as practicable through the following procedures.

1. Identification of risk factors in the workplace likely to cause manual handling injuries;
2. Assessment the risk factors; and
3. Implement control measures to eliminate or reduce risks. This may involve job redesign, task restructuring, mechanical handling equipment, training and other administrative controls.
4. Monitor and review the control measures.
5. All staff with concerns in this area must use the Hazard Report Form to ensure the hazard has been identified in accordance with this policy. The Workplace Health and Safety officer will address all Hazard Report Forms personally and evaluate the situation with a written report to management.

People Lifting

Back Injuries, sprains and strains are the major cause of lost time injuries.

There are some simple steps that you can follow to eliminate the risk of a manual handling injury.

- Step 1** Always plan your lift. Select your pathway and check it for trip hazards. Inspect the destination and determine where the load will be placed.
- Step 2** Examine the object. Determine its weight. Look for any sharp edges or spikes. Will the load be balanced when lifted? Will the load block my vision?
- Step 3** Position your feet around the load to get as close as possible. Keep your back straight and bend your legs, Get a good grip using your palms and fingers.
- Step 4** Using your legs lift the object up. Lift smoothly and keep your back straight. Do not twist while lifting.
- Step 5** Carry the load to its destination. Bending your legs and keeping your back straight, place the load at its destination. Make sure the load is not placed in a walkway and represents a trip hazard.
- Step 6** When carrying objects they must be carried close to your body.

Where the load is awkwardly shaped, too heavy or unbalanced, use a mechanical aid eg. a trolley or a forklift, or alternatively ask for some one else to help you.

Title – Manual Lifting of People

Intent

Where possible the manual handling of persons shall be avoided. Should it be required, ideally mechanical or team lifting shall be employed.

Procedures

Injuries due to the manual lifting of people can be reduced as far as practicable through:

1. Identify potentially hazardous situations
2. Undertaking assessment of particular risk factors
3. Put into practice methods of control, whether they be team lifting or adopting correct techniques of lifting.
4. Queensland AIDS Council Safety Officer will advise on these matters.

MANUAL HANDLING

Back Injuries, sprains and strains are the major cause of lost time injuries.

There are some simple steps that you can follow to eliminate the risk of a manual handling injury.

- Step 1** Always plan your lift. Select your pathway and check it for trip hazards. Inspect the destination and determine where the load will be placed.
- Step 2** Examine the object. Determine its weight. Look for any sharp edges or spikes. Will the load be balanced when lifted? Will the load block my vision?
- Step 3** Position your feet around the load to get as close as possible. Keep your back straight and bend your legs, Get a good grip using your palms and fingers.
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- Step 5** Carry the load to its destination. Bending your legs and keeping your back straight, place the load at its destination. Make sure the load is not placed in a walkway and represents a trip hazard.
- Step 6** When carrying objects they must be carried close to your body.

Title – Accident Reporting, Recording and Investigation

Intent

To aid in the prompt determination of accident/incident causal factors and subsequently enable corrective action of the situation and to prevent further occurrences. All injuries/incidents resulting in the workplace or, out of or in the course of work related activities, must be reported and recorded according to legislative requirements.

Accident Reporting, Recording and Investigation

All injuries of any nature (within reason) shall be recorded on the Incident Record/Report form. This is for the benefit of the Queensland AIDS Council and the individual should any further dispute occur.

Any serious bodily injury shall be recorded on the Incident Record/Report form. (This is an accident where the injured is admitted to hospital for one night or more), Also, any such accidents shall also be reported to the Inspector within 24 hours.

The Supervisor and Management shall undertake thorough investigation of all serious bodily injuries and in the case of any fatal accident, the site shall not be disturbed until after the inspection by the Supervisor, together with Management and the Division of Workplace Inspectors, EXCEPT, where it is necessary for the purpose of saving life, or attending to the injured.

Procedures

1. All injuries MUST be reported to the Safety Officer and/or the employer regardless of how minor, and even if they do not result in injury or damage.
2. In accordance with legislation a record must be kept detailing particulars of any injury, illness or near miss occurrence that happens whilst performing council related activities on or off Queensland AIDS Council premises.
3. An Incident Record/Report (Form 3) is to be filled out by the injured person and their supervisor/employer.
4. The following are notifiable injuries and the employer must advise the Division of Workplace Health and Safety Office immediately, they are;
 - (i) Serious Bodily Injury – Where a worker has been admitted to hospital for one night or more.
 - (ii) Work Caused illnesses
 - (iii) Dangerous Events- Imminent risk of explosion, fire or serious bodily injury.
5. An Application for Compensation form and the Employers Report form are to be completed as appropriate.

Note: Copies of the above forms can be found on the Council's website www.quac.org.au and the Workplace Health and Safety website.

Title – Emergency and Fire Evacuation

Intent

To ensure safe and speedy evacuation of staff, volunteers and visitors from Queensland AIDS Council premises in the event of a fire or other emergency.

Procedures

1. Evacuation procedures must be documented. An Emergency Evacuation Plan must be displayed in all prominent places on Queensland AIDS Council premises. This is to ensure that all staff and visitors to the premises have access to the escape plan. The escape assembly area must be shown on this escape plan.
2. All employees and volunteers should be familiar with procedures, the position of fire exits and fire extinguishers.
3. Regular fire drills must be practised.
4. Fire extinguishers must be fully charged and kept in designated areas.
5. Fire extinguishers must be easily accessible and not obstructed with items.
6. Fire extinguishers must be serviced, maintained and labelled as required by legislation.
7. Staff must be familiar with how to operate fire extinguishers, including the appropriate use for different types of fires.
8. Queensland AIDS Council premises must possess on site the appropriate extinguishers for the types of fires that have the potential to occur. Queensland Aid Council has followed the advice of the fire and rescue on this matter.
9. The Emergency Evacuation Plan for each workplace will be displayed within each workplace and copies can be found on the Council's website www.quac.org.au

Title – First Aid

Intent

Adequate First Aid facilities will be provided in the workplace and Council vehicles together with personnel whom are suitably qualified to administer first aid in the event of an emergency. Routine replenishment shall be made of kit contents and the kit itself is to be situated centrally with appropriate signage indicating its location.

Procedures

Trained staff with a current first aid certificate provide First Aid to Queensland AIDS Council employees, volunteers, and visitors.

1. Adequate first aid supplies must be readily available, inspected and replenished.
2. Posters detailing First Aid methods such as resuscitation require being displayed prominently in well-lit areas.
3. All accidents are to be reported and recorded on the prescribed forms - see Accident Reporting, Recording and
4. Investigation procedure.
5. Emergency numbers must be prominently displayed as follows;

Ambulance 000

Fire Brigade 000

Police 000

State Emergency Service - Poisons Information Centre 13 11 26

Title – Safe Working Sites, Conditions and Equipment

Intent

As far as practicable conditions in all Queensland AIDS Council workplaces will be maintained so as to provide an environment conducive not only to health and safety, but also efficient and productive work performance. Equipment shall be provided where necessary and subsequently operated and maintained according to manufacturer's specifications.

Procedures

1. Office and all work areas are to be kept tidy to avoid accidents, for example boxes and phone cords should not be exposed where they can constitute a tripping hazard.
2. Spills are required to be promptly cleaned up, the responsibility resting with the person in question, except where this is not possible.
3. Areas within the workplace require adequate lighting, particularly the entry stairwell.
4. All equipment used for Queensland AIDS Council related activities is to be used properly and serviced or replaced routinely or when necessary.
5. All drugs will be supervised for its dispensary and use.
6. The availability of adequate first aid facilities together with complete trained staff awareness of fire protection procedures is essential.
7. All Hazard/Health and Safety Issues are to be reported on the Hazard Report Form and copies are to be sent to the employer, Workplace Health and Safety Officer. Copies of the Hazard Report Form can be found on the Council's website and on the Workplace Health and Safety website.
8. All visitors are required to report to the reception area on arrival.

Title – Provision of Education and Training

Intent

Adequate and appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision will be afforded to all Queensland AIDS Council employees in the form of induction and ongoing training packages.

Procedures

The objectives of the Queensland AIDS Council's Workplace Health and Safety program are:

1. To assist employees to develop safe attitudes and behaviours towards themselves, co-workers and others at the Queensland AIDS Council.
2. To inform employees of particular hazards within the workplace and the appropriate hazard management procedures to be followed;
3. To instruct employees on the correct use of personal protective equipment and work practices to be followed; and
4. To instruct and inform all employees of all workplace health and safety policies and procedures.

Title – Personal Protective Equipment and Clothing

Intent

Where it is not practicable to control hazards and subsequent risks through the utilisation of other means, appropriate Personal Protective Equipment and Clothing shall be provided for all employee's use. Reference is made to the Personal Protective Equipment Advisory Standard

Procedures

When there is a need for protective equipment or clothing to be used, employees shall be instructed the following by their supervisor:

1. How, when, where and why the equipment or clothing is to be used or worn;
2. How to maintain and care for the equipment; and
3. The procedure for the replacement of parts of the item of equipment or clothing.
4. Managers/Supervisors are responsible for the furnishing, maintenance, laundering and disposal of protective equipment and clothing.

Title – Risk Management

Intent

The Queensland AIDS Council is committed to ensuring employee Workplace Health and Safety standards meet or exceed the legislative requirements.

This policy document will be reviewed annually in consultation with employees, volunteers and their safety representative(s) and be kept up to date with new legislation and organisational changes. Any comments and concerns regarding the document can be addressed to the Workplace Health and Safety representative at any time.

Procedures

Formal risk assessment of each workplace will be undertaken annually by either a qualified independent consultant or by using the risk assessment tools listed on the Workplace Health and Safety website provided by the Queensland Department of Industrial Relations.

Title – Infection Control Procedures

Intent

Queensland AIDS Council is committed to providing an environment, which is safe, and without risk to the health of all persons using the premises and to minimise the potential risk for occupational transmission of blood borne viral and bacterial infections.

Procedures

1. Provision and maintenance of adequate, safe and effective facilities and premises.
2. Adoption of safe systems of work that must include the use of standard procedures, personal protective equipment or other specially designed equipment when necessary.
3. Provision of information, instruction, training and supervision to ensure the adoption of safe systems of work on a universal basis. This should include information on risk factors associated with transmission, situations that pose the risk of exposure and actions to be taken should accidental exposure occur. **Note:** With exposure to HIV - Medical referrals for post-exposure prophylaxis is recommended.
4. A system for accident reporting and follow-up, with access to counselling services for those employees who may become anxious about their health.
5. Regular appraisal of the work environment and work practices.

Title - Confidentiality

Intent

The provisions of the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1998 bind Queensland AIDS Council.

This guide in the use of information of a personal nature, such as HIV status, sexual orientation, state of health, tests and treatments, living arrangements, etc, pertaining to employees, clients, volunteers and others.

Confidentiality is of paramount importance as discrimination, vilification and personal harm may result from the disclosure of such information. This can affect workers and volunteers in the field, as well as clients. It should be noted, however, that under exceptional circumstances, such as medical emergencies, confidential information may be disclosed without the consent of the person in question. The following is a summary of Queensland AIDS Council Confidentiality Policy.

Procedure

1. All paid staff and volunteers are required to sign a Deed of Agreement before commencing work, stipulating that information relating to a particular individual will only be disclosed once permission is explicitly given. Such information may be disclosed to others involved in the care of the individual to facilitate the provision of service such as counselling, referrals, employment and treatment options, etc, after fully informed permission has been gained from the individual concerned.
2. Breaches of confidentiality will be reported to the General Manager who may suspend a member of staff under the Poor Performance and Discipline Policy, investigate and deal with the matter and provide a just and appropriate solution and prepare a report of the proceedings to the Board of Management.
3. Staff, paid and unpaid, must be aware that a breach in confidentiality may result in dismissal and/or legal action.

Title – Workers Compensation

Intent

All paid employees of the Queensland AIDS Council are bound by the Workers' Compensation legislation should they sustain an injury or illness out of or in the course of their AIDS Council related activities, performed on or off the Queensland AIDS Council premises.

Procedure

The injured person and their supervisor/employer are to complete an Incident Record/Report (Form 3). If appropriate an Application for Compensation Form and a Employers Report Form should also be completed.

The above forms can be found on the Council's website www.quac.org.au and on the WorkCover Queensland website.

Title - Insurance

Intent

Volunteers within the Queensland AIDS Council are not bound by Workers' Compensation legislation. With respect to volunteer injury or illness that occurs out of or in the course of their AIDS Council related activities, they are accounted for by the AMP General Insurance Policy - Accident and Illness, policy No. 4A016149A. Incidents occurring in public spaces are accounted for by the AMP Public Liability Policy, policy No. 4YO028575.

Procedure

1. All injuries, illnesses and near miss occurrences **MUST** be reported to the Workplace Health and Safety representative or employer regardless of how minor, and even if they do not result in injury or damage.
2. In accordance with legislation a record must be kept detailing particulars of any injury, illness or near miss occurrence that happens whilst performing Queensland AIDS Council related activities on or off Queensland AIDS Council premises.
3. A Form 3 (incident Record 1 Report) is to be filled out by the specific person and their supervisor/employer, together with the appropriate worker's Application for Compensation form and the Employer's Report form.

Title – Electrical Equipment

Intent

Electricity is a potential hazard in any situation when not handled with care. The Queensland AIDS Council has adopted the following methods to reduce any occurrence of potential electrical hazards arising.

Procedures

1. Safety checks of all electrical equipment by a qualified electrician or a competent person are required test and tag all specified electrical equipment every 12 months.
2. Any faulty equipment must be immediately reported, tagged and removed from the workplace or process so it can be either fixed or replaced.
3. Electrical equipment is not to be used around water or with wet hands as water is a conductor of electricity.
4. All electrical equipment should be earthed unless it is double insulated.
5. Extension cords are not to be placed across areas where any person is likely to be walking.
6. Items 1 through 5 above are only applicable in offices which do not have safety switches installed.
7. For offices with safety switches installed, an annual test of the safety switches will need to be completed.

Title – Managing Aggressive or Challenging Behaviours

Intent

To ensure the personal safety for the Queensland AIDS Council staff and visitors is not compromised. Training shall be provided for staff in how best to manage difficult or violent persons who may access Queensland AIDS Council premises. This training should be extended to include volunteers especially those working on reception desks and those who are registered Needle Support Program (NSP) workers.

Procedures

If any violence should occur:

1. **Rights of defence:** Workers subjected to unacceptable behaviour have the right to withdraw to safety. If escape is impossible, reasonable force may be used to defend themselves or another person from assault and injury.
2. **Debriefing:** Managers and supervisors responsible for the employee's involved in any incident are to ensure adequate debriefing, colleague support, and, if need be, counselling to address negative psychological consequences.
3. **Reporting incidents:** See - Accident Reporting, Recording and Investigation procedure.

Title – Personal Hygiene

Intent

To ensure that the personal safety of Queensland AIDS Council staff and visitors is not compromised, staff and visitors are required to ensure the highest level of personal hygiene at all times.

Procedures

1. All staff attending to first aid duties are to wash their hands and glove up at all times.
2. Wash their hands before any food preparation.
3. Before eating any food.
4. Before handling any drug preparation.
5. All sharps are to contain in a biohazard container.