




## Work Health and Safety (WHS) Policy

 This policy sets out work health and safety requirements and the Department's commitment to the health and safety of everyone in its workplaces.

### 1. Objectives - Policy statement

- 1.1 The NSW Department of Education and Communities believes that the provision of a safe working and learning environment for everyone at its workplaces is an integral and essential part of its responsibilities as a provider of public education and other community services. The NSW Department of Education and Communities (DEC) is committed to:**
- 1.1.1 providing everyone in its workplaces with a safe and healthy working and learning environment
  - 1.1.2 promoting dignity and respect in all workplaces and taking action to prevent and respond to bullying in its workplaces
  - 1.1.3 adopting a preventative and strategic approach to health and safety and using measurable objectives and targets to monitor performance
  - 1.1.4 supporting and promoting health and wellbeing
  - 1.1.5 providing return to work programs to facilitate safe and durable return to work for employees, where possible, for both work related and non-work related health conditions
  - 1.1.6 meaningful consultation with employees, their representatives and others on work health and safety (WHS) issues
  - 1.1.7 providing appropriate information, training and instruction to facilitate safe and productive work and learning environments
  - 1.1.8 providing an effective and accessible safety management system for all employees and others to guide safe working and learning in all workplaces
  - 1.1.9 the reporting of incidents in accordance with statutory and regulatory obligations and internal policy requirements so that action can be taken to manage the incident, prevent further incidents, and provide support where required
  - 1.1.10 providing a program of continuous improvement through engaging with industry, new technology and considering changes to legislation and recognised standards.

### 2. Audience and applicability

- 2.1** All DEC employees and others undertaking work (for example contractors or volunteers), and students and visitors while in departmental workplaces or participating in authorised departmental activities.

### 3. Context

- 3.1** Through the provision of procedures, guidelines and other resources the Department is able to provide safe workplaces for employees and others undertaking work, students and visitors.
- 3.2** Everyone in the Department's workplaces has a responsibility for health and safety under the *WHS Act 2011*. While DEC has the primary duty of care, all employees have responsibilities while undertaking their duties to follow reasonable instructions and lawful directions in accordance with DEC policy and procedures. All instructions and directions should be carried out so far as they are reasonably able; this will assist in preventing harm to themselves and others.
- 3.3** This policy is consistent with, and should be read in conjunction with, all departmental policies and procedures related to work health and safety.
- 3.4** Legislative provisions: *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*, *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011*, *Workplace Injury Management and Workers' Compensation Act 1998*, *Workplace Injury Management and Workers' Compensation Regulation 2002*, and all relevant codes of practice.

### 4. Responsibilities and delegations

- 4.1** The Director-General and the Managing Director of TAFE will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of employees, others undertaking work and others in departmental workplaces, by ensuring that appropriate



systems are in place, responsibilities appropriately defined and managers and supervisors receive the training and resources they need to carry out their WHS responsibilities.

**4.2** Senior executive of the Department of Education and Communities deemed to be officers under the *WHS Act 2011*, have a positive duty of care to exercise due diligence, as defined in Section 27(5) of the Act, in ensuring that the Department complies with its duty under the legislation.

**4.3 Senior managers and workplace managers are to take action to ensure:**

4.3.1 this policy is implemented in their area of control

4.3.2 safe systems of work and WHS procedures and guidelines are implemented locally, risks are managed so far as is reasonably practicable and that they strive for continuous safety improvement

4.3.3 employees and others undertaking work are supervised and receive the instruction, information and training necessary to safely perform their duties

4.3.4 meaningful consultation takes place with employees, their representatives and others on work health and safety (WHS) issues

4.3.5 workplace incidents are reported and investigated to ascertain the circumstances leading up to the incident, and appropriate action is taken to prevent further incidents from occurring

4.3.6 effective emergency response plans and procedures are in place which include the provision of first aid and actions to support the resumption of normal operations

4.3.7 audit and other compliance requirements are complied with and appropriate document management processes are in each workplace and

4.3.8 employees with injury or illness are managed in accordance with the DEC Return to Work Program and other relevant guidelines.

Where workplace managers are unable to ensure any of these provisions they should escalate them for appropriate action and support.

**4.4 Employees and others undertaking work are to:**

4.4.1 take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and those under their supervision, and take reasonable care that their acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of others

4.4.2 comply with any reasonable instruction or lawful direction as far as they are reasonably able, including wearing personal protective equipment supplied by the employer as required

4.4.3 cooperate in following DEC health and safety guidelines and procedures

4.4.4 report incidents and hazards, and participate in training and consultation with the support of DEC and

4.4.5 meet their obligations under the return to work program and other guidelines to support their return to the workplace following injury or illness.

**4.5 All students and visitors, while visiting or conducting business on departmental workplaces or participating in authorised departmental activities are to:**

4.5.1 take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and that their acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of others

4.5.2 report health and safety issues and participate in consultation in work health and safety matters affecting them and

4.5.3 follow local procedures in relation to work health and safety.

## **5. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting requirements**

**5.1** The Director of Work Health and Safety is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the implementation and effectiveness of this policy, and for reviewing this policy as required.

## **6. Contact**

Director, Work Health and Safety, phone (02) 9707 6225.