

Work Health Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Purpose of this policy

The department is committed to providing an inclusive workplace that is physically and mentally safe for all workers. This policy sets out how the department will fulfil this commitment.

To whom this policy applies

The policy applies to all persons who perform work for or on behalf of the department, including employees, contractors, contingent labour hire, volunteers, students, and others at the workplace.

The workplace includes any place where work is carried out for the department or any place where a worker goes while at work.

Policy statement

The department will ensure the health and safety of its workers while they are at work and ensure that others are not exposed to risks as a result of the department's operations so far as is reasonably practicable.

This will be achieved by:

- maintaining a structured health and safety management system with standards to provide a framework for effective identification and elimination of hazards or minimisation of risk so far as is reasonably practicable
- maintaining health, safety, and wellbeing objectives and targets through delivery of key projects and programs
- providing an injury management framework to support injured or ill workers with a focus on a safe, supported recovery at work/return to work
- ensuring compliance with current work health and safety legislation and other statutory requirements
- maintaining safety systems, including an incident reporting and investigation system for effective hazard identification and risk management processes
- consulting with workers, their representatives, and with other duty holders, on health and safety matters in the workplace to maintain participative, effective, and cooperative relationships
- committing to a continuous improvement of health, safety, and wellbeing performance, through regular review and evaluation of health and safety incidents, investigations, risk assessments, gap analysis, audits, and inspections

- providing adequate information, training, instruction and supervision to workers and others to ensure tasks are undertaken in a safe manner
- providing supportive health and wellbeing programs and support for employees.
- providing adequate resources to enable the fulfilment of this policy and the department's health and safety duties.

Managers are responsible for the effective communication and implementation of this policy and will be held accountable at every level for the health, safety and wellbeing outcomes within their area of responsibility.

All workers must comply with this policy by following safe systems of work, reporting health and safety issues, participating in safety initiatives and training, and by taking all reasonable care to prevent injury to themselves and others.

Others performing work at departmental workplaces must take reasonable care of their own safety and health and comply with reasonable instructions.

Further information on key accountabilities can be found in the department's WHS Accountability Statement.

Failure to comply with this policy

Failure to comply with this policy or take reasonable care may result in the department acting in accordance with the Code of Ethics and Conduct. This may include disciplinary action, which may lead to termination of employment.

The department promotes a 'fair and just culture' which acknowledges human error and the need to manage it through the provision of supportive, well-designed systems and practices.

We aim to minimise the chances of errors occurring and promote learning from past mistakes. We encourage uncensored reporting of near miss occurrences and worker participation in safety issues. Our 'fair and just culture' is transparent and establishes clear accountability for actions. It is neither 'blame-free' (awarding total immunity for actions) nor punitive (enacting a disciplinary response regardless of whether acts were intentional or not).

Review timeframe

The Work Health Safety Team will review this policy no later than 3 years from the date the document is approved. The document may be reviewed earlier in response to post-implementation feedback, changes to legislation, or as necessary.

Policy metadata

Table 1 Policy metadata

Category	Description
Status	Approved
Date of approval	29 February 2024
Approver	Secretary
Group	Corporate Services
Division	Property, Procurement Safety and Wellbeing
Policy owner	Director Health, Safety and Wellbeing
Branch	Health, Safety and Wellbeing
Document location	Department Intranet and internet
Next review date	1 March 2027
Associated procedure	Work Health and Safety Management System (WHSMS)
Any additional applicability	
Superseded document	DPE WHS Policy
Further information	whs@dpie.nsw.gov.au
Document reference	INT24/27326

Version control

Table 2 Version control

Version	Date Issued	Change
1.0	27 January 2021	New policy document, approval reference IRF20/5787
1.1	3 May 2022	Updated to reflect new branding and name change
1.2	16 February 2023	Updated to reflect new branding and name change
1.3	5 March 2024	Updated to reflect new branding and name change. Minor style edits.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Definitions

Appendix 1 – Definitions

Table 3 Definitions

Term	Definition
Corporate Policy	Is a document that sets rules on how the organization must operate and manage its resources.
Guideline	Is a document that provides operational advice on how a policy and/or its related procedures and processes may be achieved.
Head of Agency	<p>Consistent with the GSE Act 2013, a Head of Agency is defined for the purposes of this policy framework as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in the case of a department – the secretary of the department • in any other case – the Head of Agency listed in Part 2 or Part 3 of Schedule 1 of the GSE Act 2013, Such as Chief Executive, Commissioner or Chairperson. <p>In practice, this represents the key person responsible for directing the affairs of the agency.</p>
Policy Document	Are all policies, procedures, manual, guidelines, user guides and any other documents that dictate or provide guidance to the way the agency conducts its business.
Policy	Is a document that provides strategic direction by the Secretary/Head of Agency or their delegate to its intended audience. It outlines mandatory governing principles to regulate agency practice. A policy must not contradict legislation. Policies are a set of mandatory rules. They are not documents that provide specific advice or guidance around policies such as guidelines, manuals, handy hints, and standards.
Procedure	Is a document that describes the methods to be employed in implementing a policy. Procedures are consistent with and support policies.

Term	Definition
Worker	<p>A person is a worker if the person carries out work in any capacity for a person conducting a business or undertaking, including work as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an employee • a contractor or subcontractor • an employee of a contractor or subcontractor • an employee of a labour hire company who has been assigned to work in the person’s business or undertaking • an outworker • an apprentice or trainee • a student gaining work experience • a volunteer • a person of a prescribed class.
Workplace	<p>A workplace is where work is carried out for a business or undertaking and includes any place where a worker goes, or is likely to be, while at work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In this section, place includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a vehicle, vessel, aircraft, or other mobile structure ○ any waters and any installation on land, on the bed of any waters or floating on any waters.
Standards	<p>Means a measure, level of attainment or set of parameters that define operational conditions.</p>
Whole of Government policies	<p>These are policies that apply to all agencies in the NSW government.</p>