



Occupational Health and Safety Policy

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Purpose

This policy outlines the principles underpinning Council's commitment to ensuring a safe and healthy workplace for all employees, contractors, service providers / service partners, volunteers and visitors.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees, contractors, service providers / service partners and volunteers.

Policy Context

This policy has been developed in conjunction with the Victorian Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 and the Victorian Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017.

Policy Statement

East Gippsland Shire Council is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy operation for all employees and visitors and recognises that this is an integral part of our business. East Gippsland Shire Council will work towards achieving ZERO HARM by focussing on four key areas:

1. **Leadership** – provide direction and support in the pursuit of improved workplace health and safety and environment standards
2. **Systematic approach** – provide an organised and consistent approach to all OHS matters across the organisation
3. **Active OHS Culture** – ensure continued improvement in performance occurs
4. **Workplaces and equipment** – ensure there is within the workplace a deep understanding of the nature of hazards with Council work, activities and undertakings.

East Gippsland Shire Council will achieve these goals by:

- Implementing, maintaining and reviewing our Occupational Health and Safety Management System;
- Continual and effective improvement of OHS performance, through the setting and review of objectives and targets, which relate to key aspects of the business;
- Elimination of, or reduction of risks, as far as reasonably practicable, to employees, contractors and others that may be affected by the undertakings of the East Gippsland Shire Council;
- Complying, as a minimum, with all relevant OHS laws and regulations;
- Maintaining a culture of employee consultation and team work in all aspects of health and safety;
- Developing and maintaining an effective program to ensure all employees are trained to carry out their work in a safe manner;
- Encouraging the identification and reporting of hazards;
- Requiring all employees to accept responsibility for their own actions and to behave in a manner that reflects safe work practices and to report workplace incidents and injuries; and
- Working closely with its employees, contractors, and other stakeholders, as East Gippsland Shire Council recognises the value of these partnerships in improving its OHS performance

East Gippsland Shire Council will provide adequate and appropriate resources to implement this policy and will ensure it is properly communicated and understood. OHS performance will be regularly reviewed as part of our commitment to continuous improvement.

Roles and Responsibilities

The following sets out the responsibilities and accountabilities for Occupational Health and Safety within East Gippsland Shire Council for all levels of the organisation. These positions are responsible for the implementation, communication and compliance monitoring of the policy in their work areas:

Party / Parties	Roles and Responsibilities
Audit and Risk Committee	<p>Review the effectiveness and efficiency of the systems that are in place for the review of Workplace Health and Safety policies and procedures. Provide independent advisory oversight of Workplace Health and Safety processes and incident reporting</p>
Chief Executive Officer	<p>The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the strategic management of Health and Safety across all levels of Council operations and to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an ongoing commitment to continuous improvement in health and safety across all Council operations and risk management; • Promote a high level of commitment for the implementation and maintenance of Council's OHS safety systems and programs; • Adhere to and utilise all OHS safety systems and programs; • Acquire and keep up-to-date knowledge of work health and safety matters; • Gain an understanding of the nature of hazards and risks associated throughout all operations; • Ensure that Directors have available for use, and use, appropriate resources, funding and processes to eliminate or minimise risks to health and safety from work carried out in their operations; • Ensure that Directors have appropriate processes for receiving and considering information regarding incidents, hazards and risks and responding in a timely way to that information; • Ensure that Directors have, and implement, processes for complying with any duty or obligation under relevant legislative requirements; and <p>Verify the provision and use of the resources and processes referred to the above.</p>
Directors	<p>Directors have the responsibility to ensure that Health and Safety strategies, policy and procedures are developed and implemented within their areas of accountability, and to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquire and keep up-to-date knowledge of work health and safety matters; • Adhere to and utilise all OHS safety systems and programs; • Gain an understanding of the nature of hazards and risks associated throughout all operations in their directorate; • Ensure that Managers have available for use, and use, appropriate resources, funding and processes to eliminate or minimise risks to health and safety from work carried out in their operations; • Ensure that Managers have, and implement, processes for complying with any duty or obligation under relevant legislative requirements; • Consult with affected members of staff when contemplating changes or reviewing practices in the workplace; • Review, monitor and maintain the suitability of the Health and Safety system; • Review and monitor monthly Health and Safety reports and statistics submitted by the Risk Management team and initiate appropriate corrective actions; • Determine quantifiable Health and Safety performance measures with Managers to ensure that adequate resources are allocated for the effective implementation and management of the health and safety and risk management procedures and processes; • Review Health and Safety System Audit Reports and work with management to ensure appropriate corrective actions are implemented to maintain system compliance; and <p>Promote, maintain and champion Council's ongoing strategies to improve performance in Health and Safety and Risk Management.</p>

Party / Parties	Roles and Responsibilities
Leadership Group	Ensure all staff, contractors, volunteers and service providers / service partners are aware of their responsibilities and comply with this policy and any supporting guidelines
Managers	<p>Managers have the responsibility to ensure that Health and Safety strategies, policy and procedures are developed and implemented within their areas of operation, and to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhere to and utilise all OHS safety systems and programs; • Ensure adequate resources and funding are allocated to enable staff to achieve Council's stated goals of accident, illness and risk reduction; • Develop and maintain Business Unit specific safety procedures; • Set, monitor and review Health and Safety targets; • Consult with affected members of staff when contemplating changes or reviewing practices in the workplace; • Immediately notify the WHS Officer in the event of a serious injury, incident or near miss with a potential to cause serious injury; • Immediately complete, authorise and forward all accident/incident investigation reports to the WHS Officer and ensure appropriate corrective actions are implemented; • Review, approve and monitor expenditure/resources for the effective implementation of the Health and Safety strategy, policy and procedures; • Review the Business Unit's Health and Safety System Audit Reports and initiate corrective actions to ensure compliance; • Keep abreast of changes to legislation and communicating such changes to Directors and relevant staff members; • Ensure action is undertaken to ensure competency for staff to achieve their responsibilities for Health and Safety; • Promote, maintain and champion Council's ongoing determination to improve performance in Health and Safety management; • Actively participate in the rehabilitation and return to work (RTW) programs for injured staff; and <p>Consult with workers regarding changes to the workplace that may affect their health or safety.</p>
Manager Organisation Development	<p>In addition to third line management responsibilities, the Manager Organisation Development is the corporate representative for Health, Safety and Risk Management and has the delegated authority from the Chief Executive Officer to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhere to and utilise all OHS safety systems and programs; • Ensure that the Health and Safety Systems are developed, implemented, revised and maintained; • Continually monitor Council's Health, Safety and Risk performance, and provide statistical analysis reports at least quarterly; • Provide information and awareness training on all relevant Health and Safety systems and legislation; • Provide direction and advice to Managers and Team Leaders / Coordinators; • Evaluate Health and Safety Training initiatives presented by and to business units; • Oversee Council's Accident Compensation, Early Intervention strategy, Rehabilitation and Return to Work Programs; and <p>Oversee Council's Corporate Health and Safety audit program.</p>

**Party /
Parties**

Roles and Responsibilities

Team
Leaders /
Coordinators

Team Leader / Coordinator (or other titles) is the business unit representative for Health and Safety and has the delegated authority from the Manager to ensure that the Health and Safety systems are developed, implemented and maintained for that business unit, and to:

- Demonstrate a commitment to Health and Safety management and support in the management of the business unit;
- Adhere to and utilise all OHS safety systems and programs;
- Implement and review Health and Safety targets maintain an awareness of the changing Health and Safety requirements;
- Consult with affected members of staff when contemplating changes or reviewing practices in the workplace;
- Immediately notify the Manager and WHS Officer in the event of a serious injury, incident or near miss with a potential to cause serious injury;
- Report all accidents/incidents in accordance with procedures;
- Review Health and Safety reports;
- Identify the training needs of staff to confirm competencies to ensure Health and Safety responsibilities;
- Review the business unit's Health and Safety System Audit Reports;
- Ensure compliance with procedures; and

Actively participate in the rehabilitation and RTW programs for injured staff.

Party / Parties	Roles and Responsibilities
Supervisors	<p>Supervisors (or other titles) are directly accountable for the Health and Safety of those persons under their control and report up to fourth line management. Their responsibilities are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhere to and utilise all OHS safety systems and programs; • Ensure compliance with statutory requirements and Council's health and safety systems; • Immediately notify the Manager/Team Leader/Coordinator and WHS Officer in the event of a serious injury, incident or near miss with a potential to cause serious injury; • Consult with affected members of staff when contemplating changes or reviewing practices in the workplace; • Ensure staff are trained on, and adhere to, correct safe work procedures; • Identify and control workplace hazards, equipment and practices; • Ensure acceptable standards of housekeeping are met and maintained; • Ensure that employees are provided with and trained in the use of personal protective clothing and equipment; • Report and investigate all accidents/incidents and reported hazards in accordance with Council procedures; • Ensure that corrective action is taken and communicated to all employees; • Monitor safe work practices and ensure corrective action is taken when safety rules are breached or inadequate; • Participate in and contribute to the effectiveness of Health and Safety meetings, where applicable; • Ensure that sub-contractors/consultants adhere to their health and safety obligations; • Check equipment to ensure that the appropriate documentation, in accordance with Council procedures, is completed prior to use; • Coordinate appropriate safety induction, training and instruction for employees / contractors; • Conduct regular health and safety inspections on work areas and work activities; and • Actively participate in the rehabilitation and RTW programs for injured staff. <p>In the absence of Supervisors, Team Leaders / Coordinators or other titles will assume the responsibilities listed above.</p>
Risk Management Coordinator	Coordinate workplace health and safety processes via the Workplace Health and Safety Officer
Health and Safety Committee	Established in accordance with Section 72 of the <i>Occupational Health and Safety Act</i> 2004 to provide a conduit between staff and management regarding any workplace health and safety issues.

Party / Parties	Roles and Responsibilities
Health and Safety Representatives	<p>In addition to their statutory powers, Health and Safety Representatives will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhere to and utilise all OHS systems and programs; • Assist the ongoing development of Council's Safety Management System; • Participate in proposed changes within the workplace which affect employees in their Designated Work Group; • Conduct the Workplace Health and Safety Inspections; • Participate in Health and Safety Committee meetings where required; • Assist the WHS Officer, Risk Management Coordinator and Manager Organisation Development in the monitoring of Council's Safety System; and <p>Participate in Workplace Investigations as necessary.</p>
Workplace Health and Safety Officer	<p>The WHS Officer has the delegated authority from the Chief Executive Officer and is responsible to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise all levels of management on all aspects of Health and Safety management; • Adhere to and utilise all OHS safety systems and programs; • Immediately notify the WorkSafe Authority in the event of a serious injury or incident as prescribed under the OHS Act, and complete a mandatory incident report form within the statutory timeframes; • Consult with affected members of staff when contemplating changes or reviewing practices in the workplace; • Provide assistance to all levels of management in determining Health and Safety requirements for the business unit; • Conduct Health and Safety Audits of all business units in accordance with agreed schedule; • Evaluate and recommend suitable Health and Safety training for staff as required; • Review all accident/incident and investigation reports and ensure that corrective actions are recorded and monitored in the corporate hazard register Elumina; • Administer and monitor the corporate OHS hazard register and email notification system Elumina and provide statistical analysis to Managers and Executive Group on the status of corrective actions; • Co-ordinate noise surveys and audiometric testing of employees in accordance with Council procedures and relevant legislation; • Assist the Team Leaders / Coordinators in the identification of hazards and risk assessment and control strategies; • Complete Health and Safety reports for the Team Leaders / Coordinators at least quarterly in a timely manner; • Keep abreast of changes to legislation and communicating such changes to Directors, Managers and Team Leaders / Coordinators and relevant staff; • Conduct regular inspections of business units to ensure Health and Safety standards and corrective actions are implemented; • Assist in the organisation and conduct of Health and Safety Committee meetings and maintaining records of meetings including any recommendations made; • Maintain up-to-date records for verification of the management of the Health and Safety Management System; and <p>Evaluate contractor OHS management systems during the tender process and provide feedback to Contract Owners.</p>

Party / Parties	Roles and Responsibilities
Return to Work Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhere to and utilise all OHS systems and programs; • Co-ordinate rehabilitation and ensure that the necessary support is given to the injured worker and his/her family to enable an early return to work; • Consult with affected members of staff when contemplating changes or reviewing practices in the workplace; • Coordinate the rehabilitation and return to work programs for all injured staff, in conjunction with Team Leaders / Coordinators; • Coordinate Worker's Compensation claims and claims reviews; and <p>Design return to work plans, where applicable, in consultation with interested parties.</p>
Employees	<p>All employees have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhere to and utilise all OHS systems and programs; • Report to the Supervisor or Health and Safety Representative immediately, any unsafe conditions or activities, dangerous occurrences, incidents or injuries in the work place; • Assist new employees in the use of proper work procedures and practices; • Immediately notify the Manager / Team Leader / Co-ordinator / supervisor in the event of a serious injury, incident or near miss with a potential to cause serious injury; • Work in a manner that will not endanger themselves or any other person • Use personal protective clothing or equipment as provided • Report any defective/damaged personal protective clothing, equipment or gear; • Comply with instructions given by a supervisor or WHS Officer pertaining to the use of personal protective clothing, equipment or gear or any matter in relation to Health and Safety; • Not to interfere with anything that has been provided in the interest of Health and Safety in the business unit; • Not engage in any occupations that require a certificate unless the relevant certificate or permit is held; • Not attempt any task unless they are capable and competent to carry out the task; and <p>Actively participate in Council's rehabilitation and return to work programs if you are injured.</p>
Contractors	<p>Contractors engaged by Council while at Council workplaces or engaged in Council business will ensure that their own, their workmates and other Council employee's health and safety at work is a key consideration in all tasks and duties they undertake by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always working safely to protect themselves and those working with them; • Undertaking a site induction process to ensure that they are familiar with the site and the relevant OHS policies and procedures; • Complying fully with all Council OHS policies and procedures while on Council workplaces or engaged in Council business; • Following work instructions and standard operating procedures and promptly recording and reporting any deficiencies noted during their implementation; • Co-operate with site and building management in achieving a safe and healthy workplace; • Promptly reporting all hazards, incidents and potential incidents to their supervisor; • Asking questions where a task or duty is not fully understood prior to commencement; and <p>Participating diligently in all training, consultation and other initiatives to reduce or eliminate risk.</p>

Party / Parties	Roles and Responsibilities
Volunteers	<p>All Council workplace volunteers will contribute to their own health and safety, and that of Council employees/contractors by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaking and fully complying with Council OHS requirements; • Observing their surroundings and taking reasonable care regarding identified hazards; and <p>Promptly reporting any observed hazards, incidents or potential incidents as per Council procedures.</p>

References and Supporting Documents

Applicable Legislation:

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)

Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (Vic)

Australian Standard AS/NZS 4801:2001 – Occupational Health and Safety management systems Occupational Health and Safety Guidelines and Compliance codes

Applicable Policy and Procedure:

- OHS-PRO-001 Consultation Communication Issue Resolution Procedure
- OHS-PRO-002 Development, Authorisation & Publication Procedure
- OHS-PRO-003 Document Control Procedure
- OHS-PRO-004 Legislative Compliance Procedure
- OHS-PRO-005 Responsibility Procedure
- OHS-PRO-008 Contractor Management Procedure
- OHS-PRO-009 OHS Planning Procedure
- OHS-PRO-010 OHS Risk Management Procedure
- OHS-PRO-011 OHS Training Procedure
- Procurement Policy
- Isolated Work and Working Alone procedure
- Extreme Temperature Policy
- Smoking and Electronic Cigarette Use Policy

Supporting Documents:

- Council Plan
- Driving and Vehicle Safety Guidelines
- Staff Code of Conduct
- OHS-PL-001 OHS Management Plan
- National self-insurer OHS management system audit tool (NAT audit tool) version 3.0

Privacy and Human Rights Consideration

All personal information collected by Council in connection with workplace health and safety will be handled in accordance with all applicable privacy legislation and will be used only for the purpose of investigating any accidents or injuries.

The Workplace Health and Safety Policy has been assessed as compliant with the obligations and objectives of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.

Please refer to www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au for assistance with this section.

Definitions

Term	Meaning
Officer	Member of East Gippsland Shire Council staff responsible for answering or responding to a request for information.
Community	People who live in East Gippsland; People and organisations who are ratepayers in East Gippsland; and People and organisations who conduct activities in East Gippsland.
Contractor	Person or company engaged to undertake works for Council, including service providers / service partners
Council	East Gippsland Shire Council
Council officer	A current member of East Gippsland Shire Council staff with the authority to engage in activities on behalf of Council.
Responsible Officer	An officer of East Gippsland Shire Council who has responsibility for the general area/subject matter to which a record pertains.
Service providers / service partners	Person or company engaged to provide services for Council
Shire	The geographic area of East Gippsland Shire Council.
Staff	All staff engaged by East Gippsland Shire Council, including all full-time, part-time and casual employees, labour hire agency staff, contractors and volunteers.
Visitors	Persons who may be affected by works conducted by East Gippsland Shire Council
Volunteer	Formally recognised, unpaid member of the public who assists with the provision of Council services e.g. Visitor Information Centre, Library.

Revision History and Review

Version Control	Approved Amended Rescinded	Date Effective	Approved By	ECM Document Reference	Summary of Changes
Original	Approved	22/02/2012	Workplace Health and Safety Committee	4716436	
2	Approved	02/07/2013	Council	5265723	
3	Approved	19/06/2014	Workplace Health and Safety Committee	6215619	
4	Approved	01/09/2015	Council	6422318	
5	Approved	07/02/2017	Council	7050683	
6	Approved	07/08/2018	Council	7726138	New Council template and change from WHS Policy to OHS Policy in accordant with the NAT Audit tool 3.0. Also, Council have approved moving from a 1 year to a 3 year review period, and for the policy to be approved by Management instead of Council moving forward.