Work-Related Violence Procedure - Corporate

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*This procedure and the accompanying policy are currently under review*

Purpose

The Department of Education and Training (the Department) duty to maintain a safe working environment in Department workplaces is owed to all employees, including workplace managers. The Victorian Government is committed to preventing and responding to work-related violence (WRV) across the public sector.

In Department workplaces, there are a wide range of potential scenarios involving behaviours that are violent, aggressive or otherwise pose a safety risk. These behaviours can have serious consequences for the health, safety and wellbeing of Department employees.

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) requirements for corporate employees in Department workplaces, for the identification, management, reporting and monitoring of work-related violence related risks, hazards and incidents.

Scope

This procedure applies to corporate employees in all Department workplaces, including central and regional offices.

School-based staff must follow the [Work-Related Violence in Schools](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/work-related-violence-schools/policy) policy and procedure.

3. Procedure

## 3.1 Identify hazards

The workplace manager or the management OHS nominee, in consultation with health and safety representatives (HSR) and employees must enter “work-related violence(WRV) ” in the ‘Hazard Description’ column of the [Corporate/Regional Offices OHS Risk Register](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/Documents/OHS/Corporateohsriskregister.xlsx).

The workplace manager or the management OHS nominee, in consultation with health and safety representatives (HSR) and employees must complete a risk assessment if the risk level in the OHS Risk Register is rated ‘High’ or ‘Extreme’, and document the risk assessment using the [Risk Assessment Template](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/Documents/OHS/riskassessmenttemplate.docx) or equivalent

The workplace manager or the management OHS nominee can seek assistance from the OHS Advisory service, in identifying WRV hazards. The Employee Health, Safety and Wellbeing Division can provide additional support in identifying hazards where there are complex, significant and ongoing risks to employee safety from violent or aggressive behaviour.

3.2 Identify the contributing workplace factors

The workplace manager or the management OHS nominee, in consultation with the HSR and employees, are to identify and record the contributing workplace factor(s) that alone, or in combination, may contribute to the WRV risk in the workplace.

Consider the following questions / statements to assist with identifying workplace hazards and contributing factors:

1. Effective systems
   * Workplace design:
     + Consider how physical environments can be designed or adapted to reduce the risk of WRV.
     + Are there appropriate entry and exit points for buildings/rooms?
     + Is there appropriate security infrastructure in place?
     + Are there objects or parts of infrastructure that could be used as a weapon and need to be removed?
   * Resourcing and workflow management:
     + Are there appropriate staffing numbers/supervision arrangements in place, for example for call centre operations during peak demand period, or for onsite visits?
   * Incident management systems and planning:
     + Does the workplace have an emergency and critical incident management plan?
2. Capability and culture
   * Organisational culture and workplace climate:
     + Is there a strong culture of inclusion, respect and safety for staff?
   * Education and training:
     + Do staff have the right training to understand, prevent and manage WRV related risks?
   * Consultation and information sharing:
     + Are staff proactively engaged in risk management planning, through HSR or through other consultative forums such as health and safety committees?
     + Have WRV risks been communicated to staff?
3. Supporting our people
   * Incident response:
     + Are appropriate procedures in place to respond to and report incidents? This includes:
       - Contacting police in an emergency.
       - Identifying and treating injuries – see [First Aid and Infection Control](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/safetyhw/Pages/firstaidohsms.aspx)
       - Reporting, investigation and WorkSafe notification requirements - see [Reporting and Management of Incidents and Hazards](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/safetyhw/Pages/reportinjuryhazard.aspx).
     + Do staff have sufficient time to complete eduSafe Plus reporting and access supports?
   * Department support:
     + Can staff readily access support and advice from their manager and the Department?
     + Are there targeted supports in place for staff who are affected by WRV?

## 4.0 Risk controls

4.1 Development and selection of risk controls

Appropriate risk controls are critical to ensure staff are provided with the highest level of prevention of and protection from work-related violence. The workplace manager or the management OHS nominee in consultation with the HSR and employees, must eliminate or (if this is not possible) reduce the level of WRV risk so far as is reasonably practicable, by considering the workplace factors in Section 3.2 of this Procedure.

General principles for the development and selection of risk controls include:

* Activities to control the risk should be work-group specific. Where Department resources or programs are drawn upon, they should be adapted to specific context of the workplace.
* Activities to control the risk should be targeted to at both workplace environment (physical and online) and community factors identified via risk assessment.
* Risk-control plans should focus on prevention of incidents, but also cover prevention or reduction of health, safety and wellbeing impacts where incidents do occur.
* Risk-control plans should focus on organisational-level interventions but also include individual-level interventions.
* Employee induction, instruction and training should form part of a holistic approach to addressing occupational violence and aggression.

4.2 Record current risk controls

The workplace manager or the management OHS nominee in consultation with the HSR and employees must record the current risk controls in the [Corporate/Regional Offices OHS Risk Register](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/Documents/OHS/Corporateohsriskregister.xlsx).

Where a risk assessment is to be completed, current risk controls should also be recorded in the [Risk Assessment Template](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/Documents/OHS/riskassessmenttemplate.docx) or equivalent.

4.3 Information, instruction and training

The workplace manager or the management OHS nominee must ensure all employees are informed about the risk controls in place to manage work-related violence in the workplace. This can be achieved by:

* ensuring all employees complete an OHS induction prior to commencing work
* promoting and encouraging employees to report hazards (e.g., psychosocial hazards), near misses and incidents on eduSafe Plus.

and by providing employees with:

* a copy of the [Corporate/Regional Offices OHS Risk Register](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/Documents/OHS/Corporateohsriskregister.xlsx)
* and completed risk assessments and the opportunity to raise questions and participate in consultative processes
* information about likely WRV hazards they may encounter in their work
* information from the Department about existing resources and strategies to reduce the risk of WRV related injuries
* information about the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and how to access it.

4.4 Monitor, review and revise controls

Due to the complexity of workplace factors that can cause WRV related injury, it is important that WRV risks are managed on an ongoing basis, regularly reviewed, and revised when necessary. The workplace manager and/or the management OHS nominee are required to monitor and review the effectiveness of implemented risk controls on a regular basis (e.g., quarterly) in consultation with HSR and relevant employees.

Review of controls must be ongoing. However, additional reviews and revisions are required when:

* an incident or near miss is reported that indicates the risks and controls need updating
* a new potential risk is identified (e.g., through a report on eduSafe Plus).

## 5 Legislation, Compliance Codes, Standards and Guidance

*Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*

*Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017*

7 Related documentation

[*Corporate/Regional Offices OHS Risk Register*](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/Documents/OHS/Corporateohsriskregister.xlsx)

[*OHS Risk Management Procedure*](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/Documents/OHS/ohsriskmgtprocedure.docx)

[*Risk Assessment Template*](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/Documents/OHS/riskassessmenttemplate.docx)

8 Further assistance

Further information, advice or assistance on identifying WRV hazards is available by contacting the:

* OHS Advisory Service on ph: 1300 074 715 or email [safety@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:safety@education.vic.gov.au)