Offsite and Home Visits Procedure

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Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to outline methodology by which Department of Education and Training (the Department) manages Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) risks associated with employees conducting visits offsite or away from Department workplaces.

Scope

This procedure applies to all Department employees who are required to work in client’s homes and in community settings (e.g. home visits conducted by Special Children’s Services employees). This procedure does not apply to organised Department events such as employee events, school excursions, camps or working from home.

Procedure

## 3.1 Identifying the hazards and risk assessment

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** in consultation with Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) and employees are to identify all hazards where offsite and home visits are conducted. In all instances the **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** must document the identified hazards on the *Offsite and Home Visit Risk Management Form.*

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** mustensure that any known risks associated with a client visit, the client’s family or carer and any hazards within a client’s home environment are appropriately recorded and made available to employees who are required to provide a service to the client.

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** must conduct a risk assessment for each specific hazard which may be encountered whilst conducting visits off site. All risk assessments are to be conducted in consultation with employees involved in undertaking conducting visits offsite and/or the HSR.

The risk assessment should be completed as per the requirements of the *OHS Risk Management Procedure* and documented on the *Offsite and Home Visits Risk Management Form.*

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** are responsible for ensuring that each hazard identified is treated as per the specific procedures outlined in the Department OHS Management System. For example, manual handling hazards are to be dealt with in accordance with the *Manual Handling Procedure*.

## 3.2 Controlling the risks associated with working offsite / conducting home visits

Where hazards are identified, controls must be established and implemented by the **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** in consultation with HSRs and employees. This is to be documented on the *Offsite and Home Visits Risk Management Form*.

When determining controls, the **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** must follow the hierarchy of controls outlined in the *OHS Risk Management Procedure*.

Any incidents or potential hazards while working offsite should be reported in eduSafe Plus as per the *Hazard and Incident Reporting and Investigation Procedure.*

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** are responsible for maintaining records of the risk management process and documenting hazards and associated risk controls in the *OHS Risk Register*.

## 3.3 Protective Intervention Training

Employees who are required to work in situations where occupational violence may arise without warning are required to receive occupational violence training prior to being exposed to any potential hazards. The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** are responsible for making sure that training requirements associated with working offsite are included in the induction of new employees as per the *OHS Induction and Training Procedure*.

Records of this training are to be recorded and maintained by the **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** as outlined in *OHS Induction and Training Procedure*. Please contact the OHS Advisory Service on **1300 074 715** if you require Registered Training Organisation details.

## 3.4 Safe Work Procedures

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** are responsible for developing a Safe Work Procedure (SWP) for hazards relating to conducting visits offsite (refer to the *Offsite and Home Visit SWP* example ).

Employees are required to follow the SWP or work instructions designed to minimise risk.

## 3.5 Recording employee movements

**Employees** undertaking work offsite must record their anticipated movements whilst away from their regular work location. The information may be recorded on an offsite register, diary sheet, calendar or equivalent system used in the local workplace. The system needs to record the following information:

* the address, suburb and land line number of the Home/Service being visited
* the anticipated visit schedule, including the expected time of arrival, visit duration, return and travel time.

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** are responsible for maintaining the offsite register, diary sheet, calendar or equivalent system used in the local workplace however may delegate this task to a nominated employee.

## 3.6 Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Counselling and post incident support is available through the Department’s EAP program by calling **1300 361 008** and should be offered to any employee that has been involved in any incidents of occupational violence and/or associated psychological distress.

## 3.7 Monitoring and Reviewing Controls

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** are responsible for monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of risk controls in consultation with the HSR and employees. The outcome of this review is to be documented on the *Offsite and Home Visits Risk Management Form.*

## 3.8 OHS Risk Register

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** are to make sure that the *OHS Risk Register* is kept up to date and is reviewed when hazards associated with working off site are identified, assessed, controlled and reviewed.

## 3.9 Reporting incidents, injuries and near misses

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** are to ensure that any incidents, injuries, near misses or potential hazards while working offsite should be reported in *eduSafe Plus* as per the *Hazard and Incident Reporting and Investigation Procedure.*

4. Defined Terms

All terms defined by the Department are hyperlinked to the Department’s [Defined Health, Safety Terms](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/management/Pages/definedohsterms.aspx) Website. Defined roles will appear **in bold**.

5. Related references

*Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*

*Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017*

*WorkSafe Handbook: Working Safely in Visiting Health Services 2006*

*WorkSafe Publication: Working Safely in Community Services 2006*

6. Related documentation

*Hazard and Incident Reporting and Investigation Procedure*

*Manual Handling Procedure*

*Offsite and Home Visit Risk Management Form*

*Offsite and Home Visit Safe Work Procedure*

*OHS Induction and Training Procedure*

*OHS Risk Management Procedure*

*OHS Risk Register*

7. Further assistance

Further information, advice or assistance on any matters related to offsite and home visits is available by contacting the OHS Advisory Service on ph. 1300 074 715 or email safety@education.vic.gov.au.