

## Policy Purpose

- Domestic and family violence (DFV) in the home or at the workplace is a serious and unacceptable workplace issue. Access4u is committed to providing training and awareness to all staff around issues of domestic violence, supporting staff who experience domestic violence and ensuring that they are not discriminated against. Access4u has in place the following measures:
- strict confidentiality for staff who choose to disclose that they are experiencing DFV;
- leave entitlements for staff to access services or make arrangements;
- flexible working conditions to meet staff needs;
- a safe and supportive workplace environment, including a workplace safety plan if necessary;
- return to work support for staff who have taken extended leave relating to domestic violence;
- support to access counselling or other relevant services;
- procedures for staff who perpetrate abuse or violence at/from the workplace.

## Responsibilities and delegations *This policy applies to: all staff, volunteers and contractors.*

This policy applies to	Governing Body, CEO, Managers, Staff and Volunteers
Specific responsibilities	<p><b>The Board</b> – ensure effective governance mechanisms in place.</p> <p><b>CEO / Managers</b>- ensure commitment to provide training and awareness around issues of domestic violence and ensure staff who choose to disclose are afforded support.</p> <p><b>Staff</b> – to be aware of the issues surrounding domestic violence.</p>
Policy approval	CEO

## Policy context – this policy relates to:

Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women.</i></li> <li>• <i>National Employment Standards</i></li> <li>• <i>NDIS Practice Standards</i></li> <li>• <i>NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Framework</i></li> </ul>
Legislation	<p><i>NDIS Act</i></p> <p><i>Industrial Relations Act</i></p> <p><i>Victims of Crime Act 2001</i></p>
Contractual obligations	<i>NDIS Provider Registration</i>
Organisation policies	<p><i>Human Resource Management Policies</i></p> <p><i>Customer Safety Policy</i></p> <p><i>Incident Management Policy</i></p>
Forms, record keeping, other documents	Incident Report Form

## Definitions

**Domestic and family violence** refers to violence, intimidation and coercion most commonly perpetrated by a current or previous intimate partner (including same-sex partners), but also including violence perpetrated between family members, housemates or children. Family relationships include people who are related to one another through blood, marriage or de facto partnerships, adoption and fostering relationships. They include the full range of kinship ties in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

communities, extended family relationships, and constructs of family within lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex or queer (LGBTIQ) communities. Violence includes but is not limited to physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, financial, psychological and spiritual abuse.

## Procedures

This policy will be made available to all staff and be included in the employee induction materials.

### Workplace training and education for managers and employees

This policy is only one component of the workplace strategy for a violence free workplace. All managers and point of contact personnel for domestic violence will be appropriately trained to deal with sensitive issues involved when a staff member is affected by domestic violence, particularly regarding the development of safety plans.

Education and training for all staff will be carried out, detailing the impacts of domestic violence in the workplace, how to identify signs that a colleague is experiencing domestic violence, and ways to offer support.

### Employee entitlements

- Staff experiencing domestic or family violence should contact the HR Advisor as soon as practicable. The HR Advisor is to act as the contact person to liaise between the staff member's manager, the person required to approve any miscellaneous leave, any external agencies, and security personnel if necessary.
- With the approval of the CEO, staff are entitled to access up to 10 days of non-cumulative Domestic Violence Leave (recorded as miscellaneous leave). This is to be used for purposes such as attending medical appointments, court proceedings, transferring to alternative accommodation, counselling or accessing legal advice relating to domestic violence.
- Additional paid/unpaid leave may also be applied for if necessary, subject to approval by the CEO.
- Flexible working arrangements can be arranged by request to change working hours, start and finish times, alternative work location, etc. for safety or other reasons
- Advance payments of salary can be arranged.
- Return to work support such as reduced working hours, if necessary

Evidence requirements for domestic violence related leave may include provision of police or court documents, or documentation from a health professional or counsellor. However, entitlements may be granted without documentation if not deemed appropriate or necessary by the CEO.

## Safety Planning

After conducting a risk assessment, in cases where a staff member is at risk of violence within the workplace. Access4u will develop a Workplace Domestic Violence Safety Plan with the staff member, their manager/s, security and other relevant personnel. The safety plan may include:

- Changing the staff member's work phone number, email address, and screening calls to the staff member
- Setting up mobile phones with emergency contacts
- Changing the location of work, work hours or nature of work (e.g. performing work in a more secure area)
- Organising security or a staff member to accompany the employee to and from transportation

## Perpetrators of domestic violence

It is unacceptable to use work resources and/or time to perpetrate domestic violence while at work. Any staff member who is found to be using workplace resources such as telephone, fax or email to threaten, intimidate or abuse a family or household member is in violation of the **Code Conduct**. This includes behaviour such as the use of the employee's personal mobile phone to send abusive texts while at work.

This kind of behaviour will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action, and will be reported to police if necessary. Employees and managers are responsible for reporting such behaviour if witnessed.

If a staff member is found to have been perpetrating domestic violence at or from work, a detailed risk assessment will be conducted to review their roles and responsibilities. Protective measures may be put in place such as monitoring the staff member's communications, changing their ability to access certain programs, or temporarily changing their work duties, particularly if the victim of the abuse is also a staff member of the organisation.

## Confidentiality

All employee records relating to domestic and family violence will be kept strictly confidential to ensure the staff member's privacy and if requested information relating to domestic violence will not be recorded on an employee's personal file. Disclosure of such information should only occur to relevant personnel (such as security staff) on a need-to-know basis when there is a safety risk to the employee or other employees. The decision to disclose DFV to colleagues, managers, or HR will be supported and will not be used as grounds for demotion, transfer or termination of employment.

All staff will understand and comply with Domestic Violence information sharing protocols in relation to privacy and confidentiality.

## Discrimination

Managers will ensure that staff who experience DFV will be treated fairly and sensitively by:

- Taking into account the impact of DFV, if applicable, in staff performance reviews and absences from work
- Ensuring that decisions not to re-engage or renew contracts are not affected by an employee's previous use of DFV leave
- Not otherwise unfairly discriminating against any staff in decisions relating to recruitment, promotion, training and other employee benefits that would usually be available to them.

## Counselling and Support Services

Managers should be aware of contact details for referral pathways for both women and men who experience or perpetrate domestic violence, including counselling and intervention programs.

- **1800RESPECT (1800 737 732)** – 1800RESPECT is the national sexual assault, domestic and family violence counselling service. Providing free and confidential information and support to people in Australia 24 hours a day, every day of the year.
- **Daisy** – Daisy is a free app made by 1800RESPECT to connect women to support near them. Daisy can link to service phone numbers and websites, which you can access from within the app so they don't show in browser history. There is also information on what to expect when contacting a service.
- **SA Victims of Crime on 08 82125886**