

HR: ABLE AUSTRALIA - WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

STATEMENT

Able Australia commits to provide a safe and healthy environment for workers and clients. This is achieved by fully integrated health and safety systems into all its operations and activities, demonstrating continual improvement and ensuring leadership in safety.

Able Australia acknowledges the responsibility for the overall health and safety under the relevant legislation, acts and good practice, but also recognizes the ultimate success of the organization’s workplace health and safety program depends on the engagement and support of all management, staff, clients, volunteers and contractors. Able Australia encourages and facilitates participation through active identification, assessment, consultation and control of risks and hazards. Able Australia is committed to encouraging consultation and cooperation between management, workers, clients and their families/guardians to maximize safety.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Able Australia employees, board members, contractors, consultants, volunteers, and agency staff (collectively known as “workers” in this policy).

It also applies to the provision of services to Able Australia’s clients/residents and customers. At Able Australia we expect our workers behave in a manner which is consistent with this policy. At no time in providing our services should anyone be subjected to unacceptable behaviour by workers, and we will take appropriate action if any of our clients or customers breach the standards of behaviour set out in this policy.

DEFINITION

“Workers” as used under the National model Work Health & Safety Legislation, includes employees, board members, contractors, consultants, volunteers, agency staff, visitors and students.

POLICY DETAILS Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) laws

New work health and safety (WHS) laws commenced on 1 January 2012 in many states and territories to harmonize occupational health and safety (OH&S) laws across Australia.

WHS legislation includes a model WHS Act, regulations, Codes of Practice and a national compliance and enforcement policy. The model WHS Act is not significantly different from current occupational health & safety (OH&S) laws, but will make it easier for businesses and workers to comply with their requirements across different states and territories.

Each state and territory is responsible for regulating and enforcing WHS laws. Safe Work Australia is the national body in charge of developing work health and safety and workers' compensation policy. The following states and territories now use harmonized WHS legislation instead of previous OH&S laws: □

Australian Capital Territory

- Tasmania

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- The Commonwealth of Australia
- New South Wales
- Northern Territory
- Queensland
- South Australia

Victoria and West Australia do not come under the WHS legislation and continue under their respective OHS Acts.

Specific responsibilities

a) Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) has overall responsibility and accountability for the organization’s workplace health and safety. It is the responsibility of the CEO to ensure that Able Australia develops implements and constantly reviews, in consultation with workers, the organization’s WH&S program, and to support managers/team leaders and hold them accountable for their specific responsibilities.

b) General & State Managers

General and State Managers have a particular responsibility including the need to look to the welfare of, and provide a safe and healthy environment for all workers. In particular it is their role to:

- Consult with workers to develop and implement proper WH&S procedures.
- Familiarize themselves with the OH&S Act and in particular with those sections relating to employer responsibilities and the powers and rights of health and safety representatives,
- Deal with health and safety issues raised by health and safety representatives in accordance with the procedures set out in the OH&S Issue Resolution Procedure,
- Consult with the relevant health and safety representatives, where practicable, on all changes that may affect the workplace health and safety of all workers,
- Ensure that workplace health and safety appears on the agenda at staff meetings,
- Ensure that all workers, receive a safety induction that includes information pertaining to emergency response procedures,
- Ensure that the health and safety implications of new equipment and new materials are fully assessed prior to purchase,
- Ensure that adequate financial provisions are made for workplace health and safety equipment and materials, and maintenance to workplace health and safety standards,
- Ensure that hazard identification and risk assessment procedures are developed, documented and maintained for use, handling, storage, transport and disposal of equipment, materials and substances and that appropriate risk controls are implemented and maintained,
- Ensure that facilities and equipment provided are safe and suitable for the types of work to be carried out, and that healthy and safe work methods are developed and adopted.

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c) Area Managers/Team Leaders

Area Managers and Team Leaders have a responsibility to the General and State Manager for ensuring that the work for which they are responsible is carried out in ways that safeguard the workplace health and safety of all workers that they are supervising. Area Managers and Team Leaders should:

- Actively practice and develop in their worker proper attitudes towards workplace health and safety matters;
- Control the risks associated with the work that they supervise using documented risk management process;
- Ensure that safe work practices are developed and maintained at all times;
- Arrange for their workers to be instructed in safe and healthy work procedures, and ensure that they are fully informed about particular hazards, and how to avoid, eliminate or minimize them;
- Ensure that good housekeeping standards are developed and maintained in the areas under their control;
- Ensure that workers under their control use safety equipment provided when required and in a correct manner;
- Gain knowledge of employer responsibilities and the powers and rights of health and safety representatives under the Occupational Health and Safety Act; and Include safety compliance as part of staff performance appraisals.

d) Workers

Each worker has both a moral and a legal responsibility for ensuring that his or her own work environment is conducive to good workplace health and safety by:

- Reporting any hazards or incidents to their direct report;
- Taking action to avoid, eliminate or minimize hazards;
- Complying with all workplace health and safety instructions, policies and procedures including in-house safety manuals;
- Making proper use of all safety devices and personal protective equipment;
- Complying with the instructions given by emergency response personnel such as emergency wardens and first aiders;
- Not wilfully or negligently placing at risk the health and safety of any person at the workplace;
- Seeking information or advice where necessary before carrying out new or unfamiliar work;
- Being familiar with emergency and evacuation procedures including the location of emergency equipment.

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e) Contractors

All contractors engaged to perform work on the premises or locations are required, as part of their contract, to comply with the workplace health and safety policies and procedures of the organization and to observe directions on health and safety from designated officers of the organization. Failure to comply or observe a direction will be considered a breach of the contract and sufficient grounds for termination of the contract.

f) Health & Safety Representatives / Deputy Health & Safety Representatives

Health & Safety Representatives (HSR) have a role to play in dealing with WH&S issues. HSR’s must be permitted to exercise their rights under the Occupational Health & Safety Act. These include:

- The right to direct that work shall cease where the representative considers that there is an immediate threat to the health and safety of a person;
- The right to paid leave to attend an approved health and safety representative training course;
- The right to inspect any part of the workplace at which a member of the designated work groups, at any given time giving reasonable notice to the relevant area head, and immediately in the event of an incident or hazardous situation;
- The right to be consulted, if practicable, on any proposed changes in the workplace that may affect the health and safety of workers;
- The right to be given access to any information, except that which is medically confidential, about the health and safety of all workers in the designated work group and the actual or potential hazards in the workplace;
- The right to have access to the facilities and assistance necessary to enable them to perform their role;

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

- Work Health and Safety Act NSW 2011
- Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA)
- Work Health and Safety Act TAS 2012
- Occupational Health and Safety Act Vic 2004
- Occupational Health and Safety Act WA 2004
- Workplace Health and Safety Act Qld 2011
- Workplace Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011
- Able Australia Staff Code of Ethics and Conduct
- Able Australia Equal Opportunity Policy
- Able Australia Anti-Bullying Policy
- Able Australia Anti-Discrimination Policy including (discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment & victimization)
- The Fair Work Act 2009 and National Employment Standards (NES)

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CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Improvements to this policy can be made by completing an Improvement Opportunity Form, attaching any suggested amendments and forwarding to the Quality & Compliance Advisor for review.

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