

DOGS VICTORIA OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY (OH&S) POLICY

Occupational Health and Safety Roles, Responsibilities and Statutory Obligations

The Act

The Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (the Act) is the cornerstone of legislative and administrative measures to improve occupational health and safety in Victoria.

The Act sets out the key principles, duties and rights in relation to occupational health and safety. The general nature of the duties imposed by the Act means that they cover a very wide variety of circumstances, do not readily date and provide considerable flexibility for a duty holder to determine what needs to be done to comply.

The Regulations

The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007 are made under the Act. They specify the ways duties imposed by the Act must be performed or prescribe procedural or administrative matters to support the Act, such as requiring licenses for specific activities, keeping records or notifying certain matters.

Purpose

To explain Dogs Victoria's commitment to occupational health and safety and the roles and responsibilities of the OH&S Committee in ensuring workplace safety is maintained and risks are minimised.

Rationale

Dogs Victoria is committed to ensuring that a high standard of health and safety is provided and maintained and that all statutory obligations are met. This commitment –

- Encompasses the health and safety of all employees, volunteers and clients including independent contractors and their employees under the Occupational Health and safety Act 2004 as amended, while they are on service premises or undertaking prescribed activities away from the service, and
- Recognise the value of the employees



1. Principles

The conduct of every person on Dogs Victoria premises is expected to be such that he/she does not contribute to the occurrence of accidents or the creation of hazards which may endanger themselves or others.

Dogs Victoria has a statutory duty to provide and maintain, so far as is practicable, a working environment that is safe and without risk to health. This includes –

- a. Providing and maintaining safe plant, equipment and systems of work
- b. Making and monitoring arrangements for the safe use, handling, storage and transport of the plant and substances
- c. Maintaining the workplace in a safe and healthy condition (such as ensuring fire exits are not blocked, emergency equipment is serviceable, and the worksite is generally tidy)
- d. Providing information, training and supervision for all employees enabling them to work in a safe and healthy manner
- e. Assist in the return to work of employees injured or ill because of their work

You must also

- a. Adequately monitor your worker's health (such as providing hearing tests for workers exposed to high noise levels, providing blood tests for workers exposed to lead and monitoring fatigue levels of transport and other workers)
- b. Keep information and records relevant to your workers' health and safety (such as records of biological monitoring asbestos assessments, first aid records and relevant medical information)
- c. Employee or engage people with the necessary qualifications or expertise to advise you on health and safety issues affecting your workers
- d. Consult with employees on matters that may directly affect their health, safety or welfare. Where the employees are represented by a health and safety representative (HSR) the HSR must also be involved in the consultation



- e. Nominate a representative to deal with workers and their health and safety representatives in resolving health and safety issues at the workplace
 - f. Provide your workers with information in the appropriate languages about your workplace health and safety arrangements, including the names of those to whom the workers can make an inquiry or complaint
- 1.1 Previous Injuries
- When hiring new employees, you should inform them in writing, of the nature of the work and ask if they have any pre-existing injury or illness that may be affected by the work
 - You should also inform them in writing, that failing to notify or hiding a pre-existing injury or illness, which might be affected by the nature of the proposed employment, could result in that injury or illness being ineligible for future compensation claims

2. Roles and Responsibilities

Certain roles and responsibilities are specifically delineated in legislation. Others flow from legislation in terms of "duty of care". It must be recognised that where health and safety issues are knowingly ignored by any person, personal liability may become an issue

- 2.1 Managers – In their managerial role, are accountable for ensuring the implementation of health and safety standards appropriate to their areas of responsibility. These include –
- 2.1.1 ensuring that health and safety improvements and equipment costs are addressed in planning and budget deliberations
 - 2.1.2 implementing and maintaining effective occupational health and safety procedures and standards, in consultation with health and safety representatives, within their work areas to prevent injuries and illness through employee training and the promotion of safe work practices
 - 2.1.3 ensuring that all procedures are documented, understood and observed by employees



- 2.1.4 ensuring that all new equipment is subject to programmed maintenance and appropriate service regimes to maintain operational safety
- 2.1.5 assisting in establishing a rehabilitation programme for injured staff who are able to return to work
- 2.2 Employees – Under the Victorian Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004, as amended, all employees have a “duty of care”. Whilst at work, they must –
 - 2.2.1 take reasonable care for his or her own safety and for the health and safety of anyone else who may be affected by his/her acts or omissions at the workplace
 - 2.2.2 co-operate with his/her employer with respect to any action taken by the employer to comply with the requirements imposed by or under the legislation
 - 2.2.3 in accordance with agreed procedures, report potential and actual hazards to their supervisor and health and safety representative

3. Representation

- 3.1 Occupational Health and Safety Committee – has the primary role of –
 - 3.1.1 facilitating co-operation between an employer and the employees of the employer in instigating developing and carrying out measures designed to ensure health and safety at work of the employees
 - 3.1.2 formulating, reviewing and disseminating to the standard rules and procedures relating to health and safety which are to be carried out and complied with at the workplace
 - 3.1.3 ensuring that planned inspections of the work area are undertaken on a regular basis with the relevant health and safety representative to assess if the following accord with Service operating standards –
 - Work Practices
 - Equipment Safety
 - Housekeeping
 - Protective Clothing



3.2 With respect to the OH&S Committee, it should –

- Meet not less than every three months
- Be comprised of not less than three employees, including management
- Review any new equipment or the introduction of new systems of work
- Examine and implement legislation and codes of practices relevant to the service and its employees
- Support health and safety representatives in their role and provide aid and information as appropriate
- Management will provide a summary of all accidents / incidents which have occurred since the previous meeting. Such a summary will not identify individuals involved, however if the Committee deems it necessary, they can request to view the actual report to evaluate whether there is any discernible pattern of events across the service, or particular site, which may require individual and/or group awareness education or other initiative or interventions. It may also seek to reassess the outcome of initial investigations.