
DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

APPROVALS

POLICY NUMBER	CORP-POL-104	DOC.ID	4589070
CATEGORY	Administrative		
POLICY OWNER	Manager People and Performance		
APPROVAL DATE	25 January 2022	RESOLUTION NUMBER	7673

OBJECTIVE

Isaac Regional Council (IRC) is committed to supporting employees who experience or are impacted by domestic and family violence. The purpose of this policy is to provide a confidential set of support services and access to information in the workplace for an employee experiencing domestic and family violence and outline entitlements with respect to domestic and family violence leave. This Policy will also extend to ensuring the immediate family of employees have access to, and aware of, information and support services with respect to domestic and family violence. In addition, this policy ensures employees are prohibited from using workplace resources such as work time, phone, email, computer, fax, vehicles or other means to threaten, harass, intimidate or otherwise harm another person.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees of IRC and members of their immediate family, who are being subject to, or subjecting others, to any form of Domestic and Family Violence

DEFINITIONS

TERM / ACRONYM

MEANING

Employee	Any member of IRC staff, Councillors, Volunteers, Work Experience, Contractors who are employed, including all full time, part time, casual and temporary employees.
Immediate family	Dependent children, partners, parents or siblings of an employee who reside at the same address as the employee.
Domestic and Family Violence	Physical, sexual, financial, verbal, emotional, psychologically, threatening, or coercive abuse by a family member. This includes any behaviour or pattern of behaviour used by one person to establish and maintain power and control over a person with whom they are in a relevant relationship (A person with whom the individual shared a current or former intimate relationship, a family member or an informal care relationship).

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible for:

- Ensuring a safe and supportive environment for employees who are experiencing domestic and/or family violence.

- Ensuring support and consistent application of this policy.

Directors, Managers and Supervisors:

Directors Managers and Supervisors are responsible for:

- Ensuring employees who are experiencing domestic violence are supported.
- Ensuring awareness of this policy to all Isaac Regional Council team members when and if opportunity arises.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Seek advice from Manager People and Performance on the employee's behalf and encourage the employee to contact IRC's Employee Assistance Program.

Manager People and Performance:

The Manager People and Performance is responsible for:

- Ensuring communication of this policy and the confidential support services through induction, noticeboard, toolbox presentations and staff communication tools..
- Ensuring that communication of this policy and the confidential support services is also available to immediate family members through external communications methods such as Council's internet.
- Provide confidential advice, information and support to the employee, supervisor and/or manager.
- Maintain confidentiality.

Employee:

Employees are responsible for:

- Complying with this policy;
- Raising the issue of domestic and family violence with their immediate Supervisor/Manager or People and Performance team member for confidential assistance.

POLICY STATEMENT

IRC recognises that employees sometimes face situations of domestic or family violence in their personal life that may affect their attendance or performance at work. IRC recognises that any person can be affected by domestic and family violence and that the impact is not restricted only to private life and that its impacts can extend to the workplace or learning environment. Therefore, IRC is committed to providing support to employees who are impacted by domestic and family violence. Domestic and family violence is an extremely sensitive issue that affects individuals, families, and communities.

IRC commits to the following principles when assisting impacted employees:

- Assuring employees of their right to confidentiality and support if they disclose domestic and family violence;
- Safety planning strategies to ensure protection for employees;

- Support for employees affected by domestic and family violence by providing access to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) which provides free confidential counselling (face to face, telephone or online) and access to a wide range of information and support resources;
- Support for employees to access relevant leave/flexible work arrangements;
- Protection against adverse action, discrimination, harassment or bullying as a result of any disclosure, experience or perceived experience relating to domestic and family violence.

Implementation

An employee experiencing domestic and family violence may raise the issue with their immediate director/manager/supervisor or directly with the Manager People and Performance. The supervisor/manager may seek advice from the Manager People and Performance on the employee's behalf.

Where requested by an employee, the Manager People and Performance will liaise with the employee's supervisor/manager on the employee's behalf to identify the most appropriate form of support to provide.

IRC may request evidence that the employee has experienced domestic violence and needs to take leave as a result. This can be in the form of an agreed document issued by the Police or a Court or a Doctor or a Health Practitioner or a Counsellor or a written advice or statutory declaration from the employee.

IRC is committed to continuing to support employees who are experiencing domestic and family violence, including supporting all forms of Domestic and Family Violence where the subject employee is seeking support in any form.

Leave

An employee experiencing domestic and family violence may access up to twenty (20) working days per year of paid domestic and family violence leave for medical appointments, legal proceedings and other activities related to domestic and family violence. Where exceptional circumstances arise, access to additional working days may be granted upon a request by the employee's supervisor/manager to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and/or Manager People and Performance. This leave will be in addition to existing leave entitlements and may be taken as consecutive or single days or as a fraction of a day and can be taken without prior approval in extenuating circumstances. An employee who supports a person experiencing domestic violence may access up to ten (10) working days per year of paid carer's leave to accompany them to court, hospital, or to mind children.

Individual Support

In order to provide support to an employee experiencing domestic violence and to provide a safe work environment to all employees, IRC will approve any reasonable request from an employee experiencing family domestic violence for:

- changes to their span of hours or pattern or hours and/or shift patterns; job redesign or changes to duties;
- relocation to suitable employment within the IRC;

- a change to their telephone number or email address to avoid harassing contact, any other appropriate measures.

An employee experiencing family domestic violence will be encouraged to contact IRC's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and/or other local resources. The EAP includes professionals trained specifically in family domestic violence.

An employee that discloses to the Manager People and Performance or their supervisor/manager that they are experiencing domestic and family violence will be assisted by the Manager People and Performance with locating information regarding support services specific to their needs including access to 24-hour QLD domestic violence phone line.

LEGISLATIONS AND RELATED GUIDELINES

- *Industrial Relations Act 2016 (Qld)*
- *Domestic and Family Violence Act 2012 (Qld)*
- Isaac Regional Council Certified Agreement

REFERENCES

TYPE	DOCUMENT ID/NAME
CORP-POL-079	Code of Conduct
STAT-POL-065	Workplace Bullying and Harassment Policy
CORP-POL-009	Anti-Discrimination and Equal Employment Opportunity Policy
CORP-PRO-003	Disciplinary Procedure
CORP-GDS-157	Family Domestic Violence Guide for Council Managers and Supervisors – COVID - 19