

Healthier
Work.



Workplace health, safety and wellbeing policies

September 2023



Workplace health, safety and wellbeing policy approach

Written policies communicate your organisation’s commitment to workplace health safety and wellbeing. They elevate healthier work to a key outcome for which your leaders are held accountable.

Policies acknowledge and communicate the connection between workplace health, safety and wellbeing and your organisation’s values and deliverables. They describe the responsibilities and actions required from people at different levels of the business to achieve your business goals.

Healthier work is best achieved through an integrated approach that looks to protect, support and promote workplace health safety and wellbeing. Bring this thinking to your policy approach to cover the breadth of protective, supportive and promotional priorities for your organisation. Review your existing policies to consider those that have an impact on workplace health. Do they take an integrated approach? Consider whether you need additional policies to cover all situations and experiences.

Healthier Work recommend the following policy structure.



Recommended workplace policies



Key policies

1. Employee health, safety and wellbeing policy (overarching policy)

Demonstrates your organisational commitment to the health safety and wellbeing of your workforce. It ensures that the organisation and/or individual departments implement and monitor integrated policies and programs relevant to their risk profile.

a. WHS policy

Provides information on risk management, responsibilities, incident reporting and record keeping as a minimum. Consider also including other key information relevant to your business.

- » **Risk management** – commits to and defines risk management practices including how to eliminate and control risks with a methodology.
- » **Responsibilities** - defines responsibility and accountability for the management of WHS risks. Identifies risk management obligations for different roles and functions.
- » **Incident reporting and record keeping** - commits to effective systems to identify and report WHS incidents and describes how the systems work. Identifies how records should be kept, for how long and how to access them.

b. Injury management and support policy

Describes commitment to supporting work participation for employees who are injured or ill, including

- » **Early intervention** – describes workplace response to any problem or circumstance that may impact an employee's physical or psychological wellbeing in the workplace. Early intervention aims to limit the impact of injury and prevent recurrence.
- » **Reasonable adjustments** – describes the provision of suitable duties or reasonable adjustment to work tasks.
- » **Return to work** - outlines the shared responsibility between the workplace and the employee to maintain or restore participation at work.

c. Wellbeing policy

Contains information about your organisation's commitment to wellbeing and what services, programs, policies and guidance are available.



- » **Physical health** - describes your organisation's commitment to implementing policies and program to support physical health and encourage employees to nurture their own physical wellbeing.
- » **Mental health** - describes your organisation's commitment to implementing policies and program to support mental wellbeing, including describing responsibilities in the workplace for promoting a psychologically safe and mentally healthy work environment.
- » **Alcohol and other drugs** - provides guidance about managing work performance conduct and WHS issues associated with alcohol or other drug use and references relevant legislation. Expresses how employees are expected to comply as well as offering wellbeing options.
- » **Smoking** – provides guidance about managing work performance conduct and WHS issues associated with smoking and includes information on designated smoking areas.
- » **Healthy eating and nutrition** - commits to providing employees with healthy food and drink choices at work, and the facilities and environment to support the preparation and consumption of healthy choices while at work.
- » **Functions and events** - commits to ensuring workplace functions and events are physically and psychologically safe for all attendees and outlines the required risk assessments and procedures. Considers the provision of alcohol and catering, the time of day, and whether employees are required to attend.



Supporting policies

The following policies all play an important role in creating a healthier workplace. They affect the physical and mental health and wellbeing of employees.

2. Code of conduct policy

Articulates the key values and behaviours necessary to deliver on your organisations purpose and shape positive workplace culture. Describes the consequences for not upholding minimum standards of acceptable behaviour.

3. Anti-bullying, anti-discrimination and harassment policy

Describes your organisation's commitment to respectful behaviours at work, defines workplace bullying harassment and discrimination, and sets out measures to prevent, manage, and respond to bullying and harassment.

4. Complaints and grievances policy

Describes how employees are to report complaints and grievances which may include illegal, unsafe, and unethical behaviour, or other breaches of the code of conduct. Describes how matters are managed including confidentiality, record keeping, and communication between relevant parties.



5. Communication policy (online, face to face, internet, email, phone)

Outlines your organisation's commitment to clear, appropriate and timely communication with all employees at every level. Describes the various methods that will be used for different messages and the governance arrangements around these.

6. Recruitment and training policy

Describes your organisation's commitment to providing fair and equitable opportunity to all employees. Merit based recruitment ensures selection is fair and objective, and the best applicant for the job is chosen. It also provides pathways to ensure any conflict of interest is effectively managed. Describes how training opportunities are identified and granted, including clear application processes and governance around financial support.

7. Performance management policy

Describes your organisations performance management system including setting employee goals and targets, documenting performance management plans, and the timing and method of performance reviews. Articulates that performance feedback is regular, expected and two-way.

8. Diversity, disability and inclusion policy

Outlines your organisation's commitment to a workplace that is welcoming, accessible, and inclusive. Recognise that employees and customers come from a variety of cultural and social backgrounds and identities that with differing capacities, strengths and needs. Describes procedures to embed diversity, equity and inclusion in organisational practices.

9. Leave policy

Articulates how leave provisions in relevant enterprise agreements are operationalised within the business and supports the concept of leave as an integral aspect of employee wellbeing.

10. Flexible work policy

Outlines your organisation's commitment to flexible working arrangements. Provides guidance on the flexible work arrangement that are available in accordance with the relevant enterprise agreement, including how these can be implemented while still meeting the business requirements.

11. Change management policy

Articulates your organisation's commitment to ensuring change is positive and does not adversely impact on employee health and wellbeing. Ensures risks are managed through optimal communication and clear organisational processes.

12. Travel policy

Describes how travel opportunities and requirements are managed to ensure fairness and equity, and negative impacts on employee health safety and wellbeing are minimised.





Policies for consideration

13. Corporate social responsibility policy

Describes your organisations commitment to recognising and managing the business impact on society. Commits to making business activities and, where practicable those of supplier organisations, socially and environmentally responsible.

14. Volunteer policy

Recognises the health and wellbeing benefits of volunteering. Describes how your organisation encourages and supports workplace and employee participation in volunteer activities.

15. Second job policy

Provides clear guidance on when employees are required to seek prior approval before engaging in second jobs. Outlines conflict of interest and WHS related concerns.

17. Active travel policy

Outlines your organisation’s commitment to employee active travel. Describes provision of active travel facilities and resources.

When creating a workplace policy take these five steps



Tailor policies to your workplace. Define your obligations clearly. Make your policies succinct, easy to understand and realistic.

Consult widely with all employees. Ensure that all interests are considered and there is equal access for input and feedback.

Use an existing template to help craft your policy. See our policy resources for examples and advice.

Provide adequate information and training to employees. Communicate policy information regularly. Make policies easily accessible.

Implement policies consistently and enforce their adherence. Develop formal review and update plans. Provide ongoing training to employees.



Resources

These are only suggested resources. Organisations should consider their own needs when selecting resources to use.

Related legislation

- » [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#)
- » [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011](#)
- » [Fair Work Act 2009](#)
- » [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#)
- » [Human Rights Act 2004](#)
- » [Human Rights Commission Act 2005](#)
- » [Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986](#)
- » [Information Privacy Act 2014](#)
- » [Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988](#)

Templates

- » **WorkSafe Tasmania:** [Work health and safety policy – samples](#) (downloadable Word doc)
- » **WorkSafe Queensland:** [Work health and safety policy template](#) (downloadable Word doc)
- » **SafeWork South Australia:** [Work health and safety policy template](#) (PDF document)
- » **Queensland Government:** [Work health and safety sample policy](#)
- » **NADA (Network of alcohol and other drugs agencies):** [Policy templates](#)

More information

- » **WorkSafe Queensland:** [Establishing policies and procedures](#) – general information on why to establish policies and procedures, where to start and when to review.
- » **WorkSafe Tasmania:** [Safety policies and procedures](#) – general information on why to create a policy, what to include and other supporting resources and information.
- » **NSW Government:** [Work Health and Safety Policy](#) – this is the NSW Government's work health and safety policy and can be viewed as an example.
- » **SafetyDocs by SafetyCulture:** [10 WHS Policies and Procedures Every Workplace Should Have](#) – lists 10 different policies and procedures for workplaces to consider creating for their workplace.
- » **NADA (Network of alcohol and other drugs agencies):** [Policy toolkit](#) – provides supporting documents for safety policies that are available for download and also lists related legislation.





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For further assistance, please
contact the Healthier Work team.

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