

# Workplace Health and Safety Policy

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 St. Merkorious Charity is committed to safeguarding the health, safety and welfare of all people who interact with the organisation and discharging its workplace health and safety obligations.
- 1.2 This policy falls within the field of operation of St. Merkorious Charity's overall Risk Management Processes, under the general supervision of the organisation's risk management officer.

## 2. Purpose

- 2.1 St. Merkorious Charity recognises that workplace health and safety is integral to achieving excellence in service delivery, employee well-being, and overall work performance outcomes and work performance outcomes. The purpose of this policy is to, as far as reasonably practicable:
  - prevent workplace injuries and illnesses
  - promote a safe and healthy workplace culture
  - provide a framework for consulting, collaborating and communicating with workers and health and safety representatives
  - consider workplace health and safety in project planning and work activities
  - allocate adequate resources to prevent health and safety risks and promote a safe and healthy workplace
  - ensure that workers understand their rights and responsibilities, and can identify and control risks in the workplace
  - drive continuous improvement in workplace health and safety.
- 2.2 This policy applies to all employees, contractors, consultants, and volunteers at St. Merkorious Charity, including all personnel affiliated with third parties.

## 3. Definitions

- 3.1 For the purpose of this policy, employees, contractors, consultants and volunteers will be referred to as **'staff' or 'staff members'**.
- 3.2 In this policy, **'workplace'** means places where people undertake work in connection with St. Merkorious Charity, whether on-site or off-site, including work-related conferences, functions, client events, retreats and social events.
- 3.3 **'Occupational violence'** refers to any incident where a person is physically attacked, abused, assaulted, or threatened in the workplace.

## 4. Policy

- 4.1 This policy applies to any location where duties are performed (i.e. any workplace), as outlined earlier at 3.2

## **Commitment to workplace health and safety**

- 4.2 St. Merkorious Charity aims to safeguard the rights of all people to work in an environment that is safe and without risks to health and safety, to the extent reasonably practicable.
- 4.3 St. Merkorious Charity is committed to working in partnership with all workers to identify and address workplace health and safety issues. It encourages the formation of work groups and the appointment of health and safety representatives to represent employees on health and safety matters.
- 4.4 St. Merkorious Charity is committed to continuously improving its workplace health and safety practices through the ongoing development of systems and processes to:
- identify, assess and control workplace hazards
  - reduce the incidence and cost of occupational injury and illness
  - provide a rehabilitation system for those affected by occupational injury or illness.
- 4.5 St. Merkorious Charity is committed to facilitating the return to work of employees as soon as practicable after a work-related incident or illness.
- 4.6 St. Merkorious Charity is committed to ensuring all workers are free from bullying and occupational violence in the workplace.

## **Workplace Health and Safety Committee and representatives**

- 4.7 Where a Workplace Health and Safety Committee is required by legislation, or where the management otherwise deems it necessary, St. Merkorious Charity will establish a Workplace Health and Safety Committee in accordance with the applicable legislation.
- 4.8 Any Workplace Health and Safety Committee will meet at least quarterly. An agenda will be circulated by the head of the Committee before the meeting. A designated note-taker will take minutes of the meeting.
- 4.9 Where required by law, or deemed necessary, designated work groups shall each elect a workplace health and safety representative as their elected spokesperson. Representatives are encouraged to work with management to discuss workplace health and safety issues, and to work with management to improve health and safety standards.
- 4.10 Where feasible, the workplace health and safety co-ordinator shall be a member of the Committee.
- 4.11 Where feasible, the risk management officer shall be a member of the Committee.
- 4.12 Where the organisation is not required to establish a Workplace Health and Safety Committee, and does not otherwise establish such a committee, St. Merkorious Charity may conduct regular health and safety forums.

## **Review**

- 4.13 St. Merkorious Charity's Workplace Health and Safety Policy and Procedures will be reviewed at least every two years. The review will involve assessing the effectiveness of the policy and procedures by (among other things):
- reviewing overall health and safety performance
  - ensuring continued compliance with the relevant legislation.



## 5. Above and beyond provisions

- 5.1 St. Merkorious Charity is committed to ensuring its safety procedures exceed minimum statutory requirements.
- 5.2 St. Merkorious Charity will provide the following additional benefits to help ensure a safe system of work:
- Mental health days in accordance with its policies and procedures
  - Access to counselling via a dedicated employee assistance program
  - Access to workplace health and safety webinars, apps and resources
  - Fostering a people-oriented organisational culture through supportive management.

## 6. Legislation and industrial instruments

Workplace health and safety laws do not operate in isolation, and other laws also regulate the conduct of employees and other stakeholders in the workplace. All officers, employees, contractors, suppliers and volunteers must observe and comply with all laws that relate to their engagement, including, but not limited to:

- Workplace health and safety laws that operate in NSW
- Workers' compensation legislation that operates in NSW
- Criminal laws, including recently introduced industrial manslaughter offences that operate in NSW at the time of writing (broadly, these offences expose individuals to significant penalties and possible incarceration for negligent conduct causing death in the workplace)
- Anti-discrimination laws (each Australian jurisdiction regulates discrimination on the basis of certain protected attributes including sex, race and age)
- Employment laws (including measures to address bullying at work under the Fair Work Act 2009).

# Workplace Health and Safety Procedures

## 1. Responsibilities

### 1.1 The **President and other executive members** will:

- demonstrate a commitment to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace
- appoint a workplace health and safety co-ordinator
- consult with workers about, and participate in, St. Merkorious Charity's workplace health and safety program
- use risk identification, assessment and control principles to reach St. Merkorious Charity's health and safety objectives
- ensure that all workers receive appropriate information on the policy and related procedures, and on their obligations under workplace health and safety laws.

### 1.2 The **Staffing and Administration Team** will:

- demonstrate a commitment to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace
- ensure that all staff receive appropriate information on the policy and related procedures, and on their obligations under workplace health and safety laws.

### 1.3 The **workplace health and safety coordinator** will:

- demonstrate a commitment to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace
- coordinate the identification, development, implementation and review of workplace health and safety policies and procedures
- assist supervisors/managers to identify, assess and select measures to control hazards and risks to health and safety in the workplace, and to others as a result of the St. Merkorious Charity's undertaking and work
- assist supervisors/managers to monitor and evaluate hazard- and risk-control measures
- assist supervisors/managers to identify, develop and provide appropriate workplace health and safety-related information, instruction and training
- monitor and advise on legislative and technical changes relating to workplace health and safety
- monitor and provide regular reports to the President and the Health and Safety Committee on St. Merkorious Charity's workplace health and safety performance
- help employees and health and safety representatives to follow policies and safe work procedures.

### 1.4 The **workplace health and safety coordinator** is responsible for coordinating management of health and safety on behalf of the President. The workplace health and safety coordinator does not assume the responsibilities of supervisors/managers.

### 1.5 **Supervisors/managers** will:

- demonstrate a commitment to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace
- review relevant workplace health and safety legislation to determine whether a Workplace Health and Safety Committee is required for the workplace and/or at any particular site

- consult with workers about, and participate in, St. Merkorious Charity's workplace health and safety program
- use risk identification, assessment and control principles to achieve St. Merkorious Charity's workplace health and safety objectives
- provide information to workers on relevant policies, procedures and workplace health and safety obligations.

1.6 **Employees and volunteers** will:

- demonstrate a commitment to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace
- participate in workplace health and safety training, actions and activities and support St. Merkorious Charity in its efforts to achieve its workplace health and safety and, where relevant, rehabilitation objectives
- follow lawful and reasonable workplace health and safety instructions from managers or supervisors
- report any serious incidents, accidents, injuries or hazards in the workplace to supervisors or designated representatives
- work in a way that does not endanger the health or safety of themselves or others
- properly use and maintain safety equipment
- make sure visitors follow safety rules in the workplace.

1.7 **Contractors of, visitors to and volunteers** of St. Merkorious Charity will:

- demonstrate a commitment to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace
- follow lawful and reasonable workplace health and safety instructions from St. Merkorious Charity
- report any serious incidents, accidents, injuries or hazards in the workplace to St. Merkorious Charity assess risks to their health and safety arising from the provision of their services and activities.
- have control measures in place to address those risks, including complying with any relevant policies and practices.

1.8 The role of the **Workplace Health and Safety Committee** is to:

- assist in developing, monitoring and reviewing health and safety policies and procedures
- consider any proposed or actual changes to the workplace, policies, work practices or procedures which may affect the health and safety of workers
- promote the importance of health and safety among workers
- monitor St. Merkorious Charity's health and safety performance
- monitor the rehabilitation of injured workers
- assist in the resolution of health and safety disputes.

1.9 The role of **health and safety representatives** is to:

- represent employees from their work group in relation to workplace health and safety matters
- investigate health- and safety-related complaints before making representations to management
- make representations to management and report back to employees on any matter relating to workplace health and safety
- discuss with the employees any proposals or matters which may affect the health and safety of employees
- assist management in identifying hazards, assessing risks and implementing risk control measures
- assist in promoting adherence to health and safety policies and procedures

- assist in the monitoring of risk controls and health and safety policies and procedures.

## 2. Processes

- 2.1 This procedure outlines the process that St. Merkorious Charity and its workers should use to raise workplace health and safety concerns, and how St. Merkorious Charity will respond.
- 2.2 Detailed work health and safety procedures are set out in St. Merkorious Charity's Workplace Health and Safety Manual.
- 2.3 The Workplace Health and Safety Policy and related procedures will be displayed in the workplace and all employees and volunteers will be provided with a copy by the manager. New employees/volunteers will be provided with a copy of the documents as part of their induction.

### Emergency evacuation

- 2.4 Fires, bomb threats, gas leaks and similar incidents are risks in all workplaces. St. Merkorious Charity will provide workers with information on emergency evacuation procedures to cover all identified scenarios relevant to the workplace.
- 2.5 It is imperative that all workers are aware of the procedures to follow in the event that evacuation is required and follow any direction given by employer representatives in the event of an evacuation. All workers must participate as directed in any emergency evacuation drills.

### Reporting

- 2.6 If a worker identifies:
- a workplace health or safety incident, accident, injury or hazard, including a near miss
  - any non-compliance with St. Merkorious Charity's Workplace Health and Safety Policy or Procedures,
- they must report it to their manager as soon as possible.
- 2.7 Where a hazard or near miss is identified and/or reported, the worker must submit an incident report to their supervisor/manager, who will work with the worker and the workplace health and safety coordinator to:
- identify, assess and select measures to control hazards and risks to health and safety
  - monitor and evaluate hazard- and risk-control measures.

- 2.8 Incident reports are available at the office.

### Workers' compensation

- 2.9 If an employee develops an illness or injury in connection with work, they should report the incident to their supervisor as soon as possible and consider whether to submit a worker's compensation claim.

### Breaches

- 2.10 Any breach of this policy or associated workplace health and safety procedures may result in disciplinary action, which may include counselling, dismissal, or cessation of the person's engagement with St. Merkorious Charity.

### First aid

- 2.11 A first aid kit is located in St. Merkorious Charity's Office and Kitchen.



### **Emergency contact**

- 2.12 It is important that St. Merkorious Charity has details of the person/s whom each employee would wish to be notified in the event of any emergency at work. Details will be noted in each employee's personnel file. Employees should notify human resources of any changes.

### **Workers' compensation**

- 2.13 Any worker who is injured at work should report the incident to their supervisor as soon as possible and consider whether to submit a worker's compensation claim.

### **Rehabilitation**

- 2.14 Early return to work should be a normal expectation in this process. Where appropriate, rehabilitation programs will be individually developed by St. Merkorious Charity's rehabilitation co-ordinator in consultation with the employee, supervisor, provider and any other relevant party.