

## 8. Staff matters

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# Acknowledgments

The Staff matters section has been written using a number of manuals as source material. We gratefully acknowledge this input. The resources used include:

Albury Wodonga Women's Refuge Inc 2002, *Policy and Procedure Manual*

Australian Services Union 2002, *various Information sheets*

Kempsey Women and Children's Service, *Management Committee Manual*

National Case Management Working Group 1997, *Case Management Resource Kit for SAAP Services, Section 4*

NSW Women's Refuge Movement 1999, *An Open Door — NSW Women's Refuge Movement Access and Equity Manual* NSW Women's Refuge Resource Centre Inc, Sydney

Upper Hunter Community Services Policy Group 1999, *Policy and Procedure Register*, Muswellbrook Shire Council

## 8.1 Staff recruitment process

### Primary responsibility

Management committee/broader collective and manager/collective

### Policy

- The Organisation aims to ensure that the best applicant is appointed for any position based on merit in a fair and transparent process.
- Staff are recruited according to *(Insert name)* Refuge's Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Policy. Where appropriate, the refuge will consider designated positions, for example an Aboriginal support worker or a migrant support worker etc.
- *(Insert name)* Refuge will always try and promote diversity among staff to reflect the diversity in the community and among service users. Where appropriate, Affirmative Action strategies will be implemented.
- All permanent vacancies will be advertised externally.
- The manager/collective is responsible for the recruitment of all refuge staff.
- The management committee is responsible for the recruitment of the manager.
- Interview panels for the manager will be made up of three people, including the chairperson and at least one other committee member.
- Selection panels for other staff will be made up of at least two people, including the manager and a committee member or other staff member.
- Selection panels will reflect the cultural diversity of the community wherever possible.
- All advertisements for staff are to include the following statement:  
*It is an offence under the Prohibited Employment Act 1998 for a person convicted of a serious sex offence to apply for this position.*

- All advertisements must also state that any successful applicant will be required to undergo the *Working with Children Check* as a condition of employment.
- All successful applicants will complete a *Working with Children Check* application which will be submitted to the NSW Department of Community Services Screening Agency for clearance.

## Procedure

- If a position becomes available, clarify the need for and role of the worker.
- Write the job description for a new position or revise the existing one.
- Write the person specification/selection criteria for the position. Write in terms of competencies (job related skills, knowledge, attitude and potential) not years of experience or unrealistic, unnecessary qualifications.
- Write the advertisement in plain English. This should include:
  - the position title
  - the number of hours per week/basis of employment (eg, full time, maternity relief, eligibility list for relief)
  - the refuge name and a brief statement of function
  - selection criteria for the position in terms of essential and desirable if appropriate
  - a closing date for applications
  - the requirement for references or referees
  - the return address
  - a contact person for inquiries by phone
  - an instruction to ring the contact person to receive an information package on the position
  - a statement that selection will be based on merit
  - the name of the appropriate Award.
- Put together an information package about the job and the refuge. This should include:

- an information brochure/sheet about the refuge and the services offered
- more detailed selection criteria if relevant
- a copy of the job description
- Work out who will be on the interview panel. Set the limits of the interview panel's authority, ie can they make the offer of employment or should they seek committee approval.
- The interview panel should agree on the selection methods, assessments, interview questions and answers sought.
- Advertise the position widely. Ensure the advertising strategy will reach diverse communities, for example advertise in the Koori Mail and in ethnic and disability media, send information to key community organisations and ask them to display the ad or include it in their newsletter etc.
- Send out information packs as requested.
- The interview panel should shortlist applicants on the basis of their relevant skills and experience when compared with the selection criteria.
- The applicants for interview will be notified.
- Conduct interviews
- Decide who will be offered the position and whether to offer the position to the second or third choice if the first offer was not accepted.
- Check at least two referees, preferably from the most recent place of employment (this could be done before deciding who will be offered the position if appropriate).
- Do '*Working with Children*' check on potential employees.
- Make an offer in writing for a three-month review period of employment or of permanent employment. Request that the applicant accept or refuse the offer in writing. (See making an offer of three month review employment and making an offer of permanent employment.)
- Following the receipt of the letter of acceptance, telephone the applicant to confirm start date, time, place and let them know who will meet them there.

- All new staff members being offered a three-month review period of employment or permanent employment must sign a contract of confidentiality (*see resources for a copy*).
- Write to all unsuccessful applicants to notify them that their application was not successful.
- Provide orientation to new worker (see orientation/induction).

## 8.2 Making an offer of a three-month probation period of employment

### Primary responsibility

Management committee/broader collective and manager/collective

### Policy

- All successful applicants for jobs at the Refuge will be offered an initial three-month probation period of employment.
- All offers of employment must be made in writing.
- The employee must be told they will be placed on a three-month review before they accept the position.
- All new staff members accepting a three-month review period of employment must sign a contract of confidentiality (*see resources for a copy*).

### Procedure

- Make an offer of a three-month review period of employment in writing. The letter is to include:
  - name of position
  - the hours per week
  - the Award category and level and dollar amount and any other conditions, eg car usage
  - the proposed start and end date for the three-month review period of employment
  - the employment contract and job description
  - contact person for queries
  - instructions to the applicant to accept the position in writing and for them to nominate a start date

- details of what will happen at the end of the review period.
- Include details of the Award category the new staff member is to be employed under in all initial letters of offer. Include details of any above Award conditions offered by the organisation to the staff member as an attachment to the letter of offer.
- Notify staff that a copy of the Award or Enterprise Agreement is available if they wish to peruse.
- Keep a copy of all letters of offer and acceptance of positions in the staff member's personnel file.

## 8.3 Making an offer of permanent employment

### Primary responsibility

Management committee/broader collective and manager/collective

### Policy

- At the end of the three-month review period of employment, the manager/collective will review the performance of the staff member and ensure she is suitable for the position.
- An offer of permanent employment will be made to suitable staff.
- All offers of employment must be made, and accepted or refused, in writing.
- All new staff members accepting an offer of permanent employment must sign a contract of confidentiality (*see resources for a copy*).

### Procedure

- Make the offer of permanent employment in writing. The letter is to include:
  - name of position
  - the hours per week
  - the Award category and level and dollar amount and any other conditions, eg car usage
  - the employment contract and job description
  - contact person for queries
  - instructions to the applicant to accept the position in writing and for them to nominate a start date.
- Include details of the Award category the new staff member is to be employed under in all letters of offer. Include details of any above Award conditions offered by the organisation to the staff member as an attachment to the letter of offer.

- Keep copies of all letters of offer and acceptance of positions in the staff member's personnel file.

## 8.4 Staff orientation

### Primary responsibility

Management committee/broader collective and manager/collective

### Policy

- A staff orientation kit will be maintained by the manager/collective.
- All new staff members will be given an orientation kit on recruitment.

### Procedure

- Manager/collective will put together an orientation kit that contains the following:
  - details of agency name, address, phone numbers and fax numbers
  - agency philosophy and objectives
  - management model
  - organisational chart
  - staff roles, rights and responsibilities
  - pay day and method of payment
  - staff meetings
  - copy of the Award or Enterprise Agreement.
  - code of conduct
  - the refuge's gross misconduct policy
  - occupational health and safety information, including emergency procedures
  - contact details for other useful services within the region
  - dates to remember
  - client rights and responsibilities
  - information about the function of and location of the policy and procedures manual
  - a copy of (*Insert name*) Refuge's case management policy and procedures

- Go through the orientation kit with new staff members when they first start work, explaining any important documents and highlighting emergency procedures.
- Give new staff a copy of the orientation kit to keep and allow them time to become familiar with the information.
- Show all new staff around the refuge and introduce them to other staff.
- Explain key aspects of how the refuge operates and be available for questions.
- Organise any training identified as necessary during the recruitment process as soon as possible after the staff member starts their position.

## 8.5 Staff Code of conduct/behaviour

### Primary responsibility

Management committee/broader collective and manager/collective and staff

### Policy

- Staff and management will maintain an acceptable standard of behaviour (as outlined in the procedure below) at all times.
- Failure to comply with this code of behaviour may result in instant dismissal (see Gross misconduct) or with the implementation of the Grievance and disputes Policy.

### Procedure

Management committee/broader collective members will:

- Support the aims of the organisation.
- Observe all the rules of the organisation including those set out in the constitution, the Associations Incorporation Act and any others set by the management committee or the membership of the organisation.
- Follow any policies and procedures set down in the policy & procedure manual.
- Attend monthly committee/broader collective meetings whenever possible, and if unable to attend, send apologies.
- Not act on matters without the consent of the committee/broader collective, including not interfering in the day-to-day operations of the organisation.
- Adhere to all the accounting procedures of the organisation.
- Represent the organisation in a positive way.
- Only represent the organisation at meetings and functions if prior approval of the committee/broader collective has been given.

- Not discuss confidential issues with people outside of the organisation or with staff or members of the organisation without the consent of the management committee/broader collective.
- Follow any grievance procedures set down by the refuge to try to resolve any conflicts with staff or members of the organisation.
- Not abuse, physically or verbally, consumers, staff or members of the organisation.
- Not have sexual or unprofessional relationships with clients or have clients visit your home.
- Not harass in any form clients, other staff or members of the Organisation.
- Treat other Committee/collective members with respect and assist the group decision making process.

Staff will:

- Support the aims of the organisation.
- Observe all the rules of the organisation including those specified in the constitution and any others determined by the management committee or the membership of the organisation.
- Adhere to all the accounting procedures of the organisation.
- Follow any policies and procedures set down in the policy manual.
- Follow any grievance procedures set down by the refuge to try and resolve any conflicts with clients, staff, members of the management committee or members of the organisation.
- Represent the organisation in a positive way.
- Not remove property or funds from the organisation without proper permission.
- Not discuss confidential issues of the organisation with people outside the organisation, except where the worker has a duty of care.
- Not take illegal drugs or consume alcohol when at work.
- Not accept gifts or money from clients.

- Not have sexual or unprofessional relationships with clients or have clients visit your home.
- Not harass in any form clients, other staff or members of the Organisation.
- Not abuse, physically or verbally, clients, other staff or members of the Organisation. Racism and homophobia will not be tolerated.
- Not carry on a private business from the organisation premises or use organisation resources for private business.
- Ensure that client's rights are met.
- Ensure the committee/broader collective is fully informed of any issue which requires decision making.

## 8.6 Job descriptions

### Primary responsibility

Management committee/broader collective and manager/collective and staff

### Policy

- All staff employed at (*Insert name*) Refuge will have a job description which specifies their roles and responsibilities.
- All staff will be given a copy of their job description as part of their staff orientation kit.
- Position descriptions are to be reviewed and updated when a staff member leaves, taking account of comments the staff member makes at their exit interview, to ensure they are appropriate.
- If no staff member leaves, position descriptions are to be reviewed every two years regardless to make sure they stay relevant.
- All staff employed for the same position will have the same job description at the same time unless it has been specifically negotiated with the staff member to do otherwise. For example, if the refuge employs three support workers, all support workers will do the same job. If a staff member leaves and the position is updated, the changes will also be made to the job descriptions of current employees doing that job unless it is not appropriate to do so.
- Updated copies of position descriptions will be included in this manual. Current position descriptions are included below.

## Job description for manager

### Purpose of position

The manager will work with the management committee to coordinate the delivery of services to women and children who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless because of domestic violence.

### Responsible to

The manager is directly responsible to the management committee.

### Positions under direct supervision

- X general support workers
- X child support workers
- X outreach workers
- X administration workers (including bookkeeper)

### Duties

#### General

- Ensure the management committee are provided with support, information and expertise required to effectively meet their responsibilities.
- Ensure the service runs effectively and efficiently on a day-to-day basis.
- Be responsible for the development and implementation of administrative and information systems and the development, maintenance and implementation of the (*Insert name*) refuge's policy and procedure manual.
- In conjunction with the treasurer and the bookkeeper, be responsible for the financial management of the organisation, including presenting budgets and financial reports to the management committee and to the funding body.

- Assist in the development of an annual plan and coordinate the activities of the service, ensuring they are in accordance with the philosophy, objectives and agreed upon plans.
- Ensure that appropriate client records and data on services are maintained, and that regular evaluations of client need and service delivery occur.

#### Service delivery

- Develop appropriate programs and policies for meeting the needs of clients for consideration by the management committee.
- Coordinate the delivery of all services.
- Directly assess (or supervise assessment) people seeking assistance from the service.
- Ensure that all services are in line with (Insert name) Refuge's approach.

#### Staff management

- Advise the management committee on matters of employment of staff.
- Ensure that staff fulfil the requirements of their position descriptions.
- Ensure appropriate written procedures are in place and maintained including contracts of employment, job descriptions, selection criteria and staff records.
- Ensure staff entitlements including superannuation, and other contractual and legal obligations are met.
- Ensure adequate and appropriate orientation, supervision, training, support, debriefing and performance appraisals are provided to staff.
- Ensure the provision and maintenance of safe working conditions for all staff.

#### Public relations and coordination

- Represent the service to government, other community agencies and the wider community.
- Coordinate the development of appropriate promotional material.
- Develop links with relevant organisations to promote greater and more effective coordination of services for the community.

- Maintain and regularly update the Directory of Community Resources.
- Prepare submissions for funding and policy submissions to Government and other bodies, and coordinate fund-raising activities in consultation with the management committee.
- Take part in community development projects and structural advocacy activities as required.

#### Other duties

- Provide a written monthly report to the management committee on the operations of the service.
- Carry out other duties in line with the philosophy and objectives of the organisation, and as directed by the management committee.

#### Skills and experience required

##### Essential

- A feminist philosophy and commitment to the over-arching principles of the NSW Women's Refuge Movement.
- Sound knowledge of issues pertaining to domestic violence.
- Awareness of the specific issues arising for Aboriginal women, women from non-English speaking background, lesbians, women with disabilities and children experiencing domestic violence.
- An awareness of cross-cultural issues and an understanding of how these relate to the work of the refuge.
- A demonstrated ability to manage a human service organisation including staff management, administration and financial management skills.
- Ability to work with a management committee.
- Demonstrated knowledge of relevant community resources.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- An understanding of the factors which can lead to homelessness and the effect on clients, particularly children.

- A strong motivation and commitment to the principles of SAAP case management.
- An ability to get and use community language interpreters when required.
- Motor vehicle driving licence.

## Desirable

- Tertiary qualifications in a social or behavioural science.
- Experience in direct service delivery work with the SAAP client group.
- Experience in public relations work.

## Job description for general support worker

### Purpose of the position

Support workers will work with the coordinator of the service to ensure that the most appropriate and effective services are provided to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness because of domestic violence.

### Responsible to

The support worker will be responsible to the manager.

### Duties

- Provide practical and emotional support to clients.
- Supervise the activities of clients.
- Ensure that information on relevant community resources is available to clients.
- Assist clients (and their children) to identify their needs and goals, and to develop a support plan to achieve those goals.
- Support and assist clients to carry out their support plan, and monitor and review the plan in line with the service case management policy and procedure.
- Provide an information and referral service to non-government and statutory organisations, community organisations and individuals when requested.
- Adhere to procedures relating to client services, data collection and financial management.
- Attend meetings as requested by the manager.
- Maintain records of the activities undertaken in this position and provide a monthly report to the manager.
- Undertake tasks as directed by the coordinator or the management committee of the service.

- Take part in community development projects and structural advocacy activities as required.

## Skills and experience required

### Essential

- A feminist philosophy and commitment to the over-arching principles of the NSW Women's Refuge Movement.
- Sound knowledge of issues pertaining to domestic violence.
- Awareness of the specific issues arising for Aboriginal women, women from non-English speaking background, lesbians, women with disabilities and children experiencing domestic violence.
- Good interpersonal skills, including the ability to engage clients and show empathy.
- An awareness of cross-cultural issues and an understanding of how these relate to the work of the refuge.
- An ability to get and use community language interpreters when required.
- Excellent communication skills including ability to communicate effectively with clients and other service providers, and document case work.
- Skills in negotiation and advocacy.
- An awareness of the main symptoms of mental health problems.
- An ability to communicate effectively with children.
- An understanding of family dynamics and domestic violence issues.

### Desirable

- Tertiary qualifications in social or behavioural sciences or appropriate experience.
- Experience in non-government agencies.
- Knowledge and understanding of homelessness.

### Other requirements

- Drivers licence.

## Job description for child support worker

### Purpose of job

To provide a non-institutionalised environment which is conducive to the emotional, physical and developmental well-being of all children who are clients of this service.

### Duties

#### Support for children

- Provide practical and emotional support to child clients of the service, referring them to appropriate agencies when required.
- Explain the rules of the child support program to children, for example no violence etc.
- Assist child clients to identify their needs and goals, and to develop a support plan to achieve those goals.
- Support and assist children to carry out their support plan, and monitor and review the plan in line with the service case management policy and procedure.
- Provide a wide variety of age appropriate activities to meet the physical, emotional, educational and social needs of all children who are clients of the service.
- Organise and provide outings and excursions for resident and ex-resident children.
- Organise and implement school holiday programs, including excursions and outings.
- Liaise with schools and pre-schools where necessary.

- Supervise the activities of children.

#### Support for mothers

- Provide a positive role model for parents.
- Observe the parenting needs of the mother and provide information or resources where available.
- Provide mothers with time out from children where appropriate. However, child support workers are not babysitters.

#### Safety of children while at the refuge

- Ensure that the refuge and child care areas are safe for children and make sure all equipment is safe and in working order.
- Be responsible for the safety of children while they are doing child support programs

#### Communication

- Provide information to other staff about the needs of the children so as to foster a unified approach to supporting the children.
- Maintain records of the activities undertaken in this position and provide a monthly report to the manager.
- Attend meetings, conferences and training courses as requested by the manager.
- To maintain confidentiality at all times.

#### Information

- Keep abreast on information, resources and research in the area of women and children's services, and in particular the laws relating to domestic violence and children.
- Maintain a library of resources relating to children's issues.

#### Service administration

- Adhere to procedures relating to client services, data collection and financial management.
- Keep accurate records of child support petty cash float.
- Actively participate in regular evaluation of the service, for example staff appraisals, review of job description etc.
- Attend to general day to day running of the refuge as required.
- Undertake tasks as directed by the coordinator or the management committee of the service.
- Recognise and monitor job stress and personal needs and take active responsibility for personal well-being in the workplace.
- Be able to work flexible hours, weekends and on-call as required.

## Skills and experience required

### Essential

- A feminist philosophy and commitment to the over-arching principles of the NSW Women's Refuge Movement.
- Sound knowledge of issues pertaining to domestic violence.
- Awareness of the specific issues arising for Aboriginal women, women from non-English speaking background, lesbians, women with disabilities and children experiencing domestic violence.
- An ability to communicate effectively with children.
- An awareness of cross-cultural issues as experienced by children and an understanding of how these relate to the work of the refuge.
- An ability to get and use community language interpreters when required.
- Excellent communication skills including ability to communicate with other service providers, and document case work.
- Skills in negotiation and advocacy.
- An awareness of the main symptoms of mental health problems.
- An understanding of family dynamics and domestic violence issues.

## Desirable

- Tertiary qualifications in social or behavioural sciences or appropriate experience.
- Experience in non-government agencies.
- Knowledge and understanding of homelessness.

## Other requirements

- Drivers licence.

## Job description for bookkeeper/admin worker

### Purpose of position

The bookkeeper/admin worker will work with the manager to manage the day-to-day finances of the refuge, keep accurate records of all financial transactions and report the financial status of the refuge to the management committee/broader collective at the monthly management meeting.

### Responsible to

The bookkeeper/admin worker is responsible to the manager and the management committee.

### Duties

#### General

- Carry out all work in accordance with current policy and the guidelines of the Association as well as the specifics of the funding agreement and the law.

#### Financial responsibilities

#### Wages

- Pay and record wages manually and electronically using MYOB payroll program.

- Pay leave loading and increment staff wages on anniversary dates and update records.
- Pay and record group tax installments and prepare and distribute group tax certificates as per Australian Taxation Office requirements.

Day to day finances

- Organise for cheques to be signed by appropriate signatories.
- Pay all bills and accounts by the due date.
- Bank any monies received by the refuge.
- Maintain petty cash.

### Keeping records

- Balance all financial records quarterly.
- Keep accurate records of all income and expenditure.
- Enter all financial data onto MYOB.
- Reconcile all financial transactions monthly.

### Reporting

- Prepare monthly financial position statements (monthly profit and loss reports including comparison to budget, year to date profit and loss report to budget, schedule of cheque payments made during the month) for tabling at management committee meetings.
- Draw attention to any anomalies or areas of concern in the financial position so management can discuss the issues further.
- Prepare books and all financial records for auditors.
- Prepare annual financial statement for the Department of Fair Trading.

### Budgeting

- Help management prepare a budget for future periods.

### Clerical duties (if bookkeeper is also admin worker)

- Type and dispatch all letters, reports, minutes of meetings as directed by the manager.
- Regularly file all relevant documents and information.
- Maintain an orderly financial record filing system.
- Maintain accurate staff leave records, ie leave taken and accrual.
- Archive all relevant records at the end of each financial year.
- Keep up to date records of Association membership.
- Ensure there is an adequate supply of refuge letterhead available and arrange to print more when stocks run low.

### Other duties

- Notify the manager of any areas of concern.

- Attend staff training as required.
- Ensure property is maintained to an appropriate standard.
- Attend other duties as directed by staff, manager or management committee.
- Recognise and monitor job stress and personal needs as a worker and take responsibility for your own well being in the workplace.

## Skills and experience required

### Essential

- A feminist philosophy and commitment to the over-arching principles of the NSW Women's Refuge Movement.
- Sound knowledge of issues pertaining to domestic violence.
- Awareness of the specific issues arising for Aboriginal women, women from non-English speaking background, lesbians and children experiencing domestic violence.
- Good interpersonal skills.
- An awareness of cross-cultural issues and an understanding of how these relate to the work of the refuge.
- Sound bookkeeping abilities.
- A thorough understanding of the finances of the refuge (or similar organisation).

### Desirable

- Tertiary qualifications in accounting or bookkeeping.

## 8.7 Staff wage and salary policy

### Primary responsibility

Management committee/broader collective and/or manager/collective and bookkeeper

### Policy

- All matters pertaining to wages and salaries will be undertaken in accordance with the Award and appropriate legislation.
- The manager is responsible for ensuring that the pay roll system is completed each (*week/fortnight*).
- The pay (*week/fortnight*) shall run from: (*insert day*) to (*insert day*).
- Wages shall be paid during working hours on a week day which is not more than five (5) working days following the end of a pay period.
- All permanent staff will be paid by direct debit of funds to their designated bank account unless the staff member requests payment by cheque.
- Direct debits will be made on (*insert day*) of each (*week/fortnight*).
- In accordance with the NSW *Industrial Relations Act 1996*, the refuge will provide all staff with a pay slip that details the following:
  - name and ABN of the refuge
  - name of employee
  - classification
  - date of payment made
  - period of employment covered
  - gross amount
  - amount paid as overtime/penalties/allowances
  - amount deducted for taxation
  - superannuation contributions
  - other deductions (such as Union fees)

- net amount paid.
- The manager will be responsible for ensuring that taxation payments are deducted from employee wages and remitted to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) by *(insert date and time period)* as required.
- The manager will be responsible for making sure that superannuation payments are made monthly.
- The treasurer will be responsible for viewing and signing the employee timesheets.
- Where appropriate, and where the employee has given permission, HECS payments and Union fees will be deducted.

## Procedure

- All staff (including the manager) are to complete timesheets daily and forward completed timesheets to the manager on the first day of the following week.
- The manager/bookkeeper is to ensure the treasurer signs the timesheets for payment.
- The manager/bookkeeper is to calculate the appropriate wages payment.
- The manager/bookkeeper is to deduct the appropriate taxation payment and pay to the ATO.
- The manager/bookkeeper is to make the appropriate payment to employee's superannuation fund.
- Where relevant, the manager/bookkeeper is to deduct HECS or Union fees.
- The manager/bookkeeper is to arrange direct debit (or cheque) payment to staff member.

## 8.8 Staff records

### Primary responsibility

Manager/collective and bookkeeper

### Policy

- *(Insert name)* Refuge will keep employment records for all staff.
- Staff employment records will be confidential and only accessible to the manager/collective and the individual staff member.
- Staff employment records will be kept at the refuge for 6 years.

### Procedure

- When a new staff member accepts an offer of employment, open an employment record file for that staff member.
- The employment record file for each staff member must contain:
  - full name and ABN of the refuge
  - full name of employee
  - classification of employee
  - employment status of employee (full-time or part-time)
  - whether employed on a permanent, temporary or casual basis
  - date on which the employee started work
  - if the employee is an apprentice or trainee within the meaning of the Apprenticeship and Traineeship Act 2001, the date the person became an apprentice or trainee
  - the number of hours to be worked per week, day or other period
  - times for starting and finishing work
  - overtime hours worked (including time in lieu)
  - rate of remuneration per week, day or hour

- the gross amount of remuneration paid to the employee and any deductions made
- date of termination of employee if applicable.

**Details about leave**

- leave application requests
- any leave taken by the employee
- the employees entitlement to leave
- the accrual of leave.

**Details about superannuation**

- amount of contribution made
- period over which the contribution is made
- when contributions are made
- name of the fund or funds to which contributions are made
- basis on which the employer became liable to make contribution
- the recommended superannuation fund is HESTA as it is industry specific for Health and Family Services.

- Staff employment records should also contain:
  - the employee's application for the position and a copy of the letter of offer of employment
  - a copy of the agreement of employment specifying all the terms and conditions of employment, signed by the staff person and the manager or the committee
  - a copy of the job description under which the person was employed
  - copy of any documents relevant to the position, such as driver's license, insurance, First Aid Certificate etc
  - a record of all training attended
  - any other details relevant to the employment of the person.

## 8.9 Staff leave

### Primary responsibility

Management committee/broader collective and manager/collective

### Policy

- Staff are entitled to all leave provisions outlined in the relevant Award or Enterprise Agreement.
- If above Award conditions are offered by the organisation, details will be attached to the letter of employment given to the staff member.

### Procedure

#### Annual leave

- Staff are to complete a leave application form at least one month before the requested leave dates if possible and submit this to the manager/collective. (The manager should submit their leave application to the management committee.)
- Leave may be granted with less notice in special circumstances.
- The staff member going on leave should meet with the manager/collective and other relevant staff prior to going on leave to make sure their work is managed while they are away.

#### Sick leave

- Staff should call in before their shift commences if possible, so there is time to call in a replacement if necessary.
- Staff should phone the same afternoon if they know they won't be in the following day.

- If staff are off for more than two days, they will be required to present a doctor's certificate.

## Long service leave

- Staff are to complete a leave application form at least one month before the requested leave dates if possible and submit this to the manager/collective. (The manager should submit their leave application to the management committee.)
- Once leave has been approved, this should be announced at the next staff meeting.
- The staff member going on leave should meet with the manager/collective and other relevant staff prior to going on leave to make sure their work is taken care of while they are away.

## Parental leave

- Staff are to complete a leave application form notifying the manager/collective of their intention to take extended parental leave, at least ten weeks before the requested leave dates.
- Submit this to the manager/collective. (The manager should submit their leave application to the management committee.)
- Once leave has been approved, this should be announced at the next staff meeting.
- The employee must then provide confirmation of dates the leave is to start and finish no later than 14 days before the leave is due to commence.
- The staff member going on leave should meet with the manager/collective and other relevant staff prior to going on leave to make sure their work is taken care of while they are away.
- (*Insert name*) Refuge will usually employ a replacement staff member for the duration of the leave.

## 8.10 Staff meetings

### Primary responsibility

Manager/collective and staff

### Policy

- Staff meetings are held every (*insert week or fortnight*) at (*insert time*).
- All staff rostered on at that time are to attend the meetings.
- Staff meetings should go for a maximum of (*insert time, say one hour or two hours*). If there is extra business, another meeting may need to be convened.
- Staff meetings aim to provide a forum where: current issues can be discussed with decisions made or recommendations made to the management committee; workload can be shared; continuity can be affirmed; and organisational issues, such as training or leave, can be planned.

### Procedure

- Hold the staff meeting in an informal setting.
- Gather everyone together five minutes before scheduled start time.
- Appoint a minute taker (if there is not a regular person).
- Appoint someone to chair the meeting.
- Open the agenda, giving everyone the chance to add to it.
- Make minutes from previous meeting available for everyone to peruse.
- Decision-making is by (*insert consensus or majority vote or other*).
- Staff who have attended a meeting or workshop or conference or training outside of the refuge in the previous period are to be given time to present back to other staff.
- Distribute minutes to all staff (including staff who did not attend the meeting) as soon as possible after the meeting is finished.

## 8.11 Staff travel

### Primary responsibility

Management committee/broader collective, manager/collective and staff

### Policy

- Sometimes, staff may be required to travel for work-related reasons. Staff will be reimbursed for all approved work-related travel expenses as per the Award or Enterprise Agreement.
- If the travel required involves overnight stays, accommodation and meal allowances will be provided as per the Award.
- All work-related travel must be approved the manager/collective or the management committee/broader collective.
- When a travel claim is made by a staff member, this must be approved by the manager/collective or the management committee/broader collective prior to payment.
- Reimbursement of travel expenses will be made within one week of the claim being approved.
- Parking or speeding infringement notices will not be paid by the refuge.

### Procedure

- If work-related travel is required, the manager/collective should give staff a travel claim form and let them know they will be reimbursed for travel expenses.
- After the travel is complete, the staff member should:
  - complete a travel claim form, detailing date of travel, purpose of travel, destination of travel, odometer readings at the start and the end of the journey (if the staff member took their own car) and distance travelled.

- attach receipts for any travel expenses (taxi fares, airfares, train fares, parking, hotels, meals etc) to the claim form.
- submit the claim form and receipts to the manager/collective for approval and payment. (The manager should submit their claim to the management committee.)

## 8.12 Staff training and development

### Primary responsibility

Management committee/broader collective, manager/collective and staff

### Policy

- All staff will be provided with opportunities to participate in training appropriate to their position.
- Staff are encouraged to further develop their skills and abilities through training, case discussion and supervision.
- (*Insert name*) Refuge will make (*insert number*) days of training available to all full-time staff per year (in addition to basic training). Staff training needs and wishes will be identified through supervision and performance appraisals.
- Training needs may be identified by the staff member themselves, the manager or other staff.
- Full-time staff are entitled to (*insert number*) hours per week unpaid study leave to complete an approved course of study.
- Basic training needs will be discussed with staff member on recruitment.
- All staff working at (*Insert name*) Refuge are expected to know about cross-cultural issues (Indigenous and ethnic communities), issues facing women with a disability, lesbians and women with a mental illness and how to get and use an interpreter (ethnic community language and Auslan). If staff do not have these skills on recruitment, training will be provided as a matter of urgency within their first year of employment (*A&E Resolution 51, 59, 64, 73, 80*).
- All support staff are to receive training in conflict resolution if they are not already trained (*A&E Resolution 27*).
- All support staff are encouraged to take training in working with women alcohol and other drugs issues.



## Procedure

- On recruitment, make sure the staff member receives:
  - their orientation kit and a copy of the procedures manual.
  - information about any legal responsibilities associated with their work.
  - information about any specific needs of their client group.
  - a case management manual or details of the case management procedure used at the refuge.
  - referral to an external training course if required.
  - any ‘in-house’ or on the job training required, including details of the services and resources available in the area and any interagency protocols.
  - information about occupational health and safety issues, including dealing with conflict and threat of violence, procedures for fire, evacuation or bomb threats, harassment, and safety around infectious diseases.
- Identify on-going training needs of staff in supervision and at performance appraisals.

## 8.13 Staff performance appraisal

### Primary responsibility

Management committee/broader collective and manager/collective

### Policy

*(Insert name)* Refuge is committed to supporting staff to improve their own efficiency and effectiveness.

- A performance appraisal for each staff member will be conducted annually by the staff member's supervisor or by someone delegated by the management committee/broader collective.
- Information arising from performance appraisals will only be shared with other staff on a need-to-know basis.

### Procedure

Before conducting the staff performance appraisal

- Give the staff member a copy of the appraisal form to complete before the appraisal session and arrange a session time well in advance.
- Review the job requirements so that the staff member is fully aware of them.
- Review the goals and objectives or job expectations previously agreed to. (These may have been agreed to in the last performance appraisal).
- Review the staff member's history, including their skills, training, experience and past performance appraisals.
- Use the performance appraisal form to assess the staff member's job performance against the expectations of the position using all sources of information available.
- Rate each area or duty from unacceptable to outstanding.
- Note any performance issues that need to be discussed with the staff member.

- Include strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for development.
- Provide specific examples, especially where performance is poorly rated and be clear on how performance would be improved.
- Where follow up will be done on an aspect of performance be clear on what the follow up will entail.

### Conducting the appraisal

- Meet with the staff member.
- Be open and honest.
- Try to be positive even when dealing with negative issues.
- Give the staff member opportunities to speak and make comment about aspects of the workplace and their job that works or doesn't work for them.
- Identify any training needs and set goals with staff member for the year to come.
- Keep in mind that this is a positive meeting for the benefit of the employee and the refuge.

### Write up the performance appraisal

- Include all issues covered, goals, actions to be taken, training, time lines and employee comments.
- Give the staff member a copy and ask her if she agrees with the report.
- Once the report is finalised, sign the report and get the staff member to sign the report also. File the original in the staff member's personnel file and give a copy to the staff member.
- Table a copy of the appraisal at the next management committee meeting and discuss any issues arising as appropriate.

## 8.14 Use of personal motor vehicles

### Primary responsibility

Management committee/broader collective and manager/collective

### Policy

- Staff are not to use their personal vehicles for work-related purposes unless they are comprehensively insured and approved by the management committee/broader collective.
- If the proposal is approved by management, a copy of the comprehensive insurance policy will be made and filed in the staff member's personnel file prior to the vehicle being used.
- Expenses covering mileage and parking incurred while using the vehicle for work-related activities will be reimbursed by the refuge upon presentation of agreed records and receipts. Amounts will be paid according to the Award.
- If the vehicle is damaged while it is being used for refuge activities, the organisation usually will decide whether the refuge will pay the insurance excess.
- The travel claim must be approved by the manager/collective or the management committee/broader collective prior to payment.
- Reimbursement of travel expenses will be made within one week of the claim being approved.
- Parking or speeding infringement notices will not be paid by the refuge.

### Procedure

- After the travel is complete, complete and sign a travel claim form, detailing date of travel, purpose of travel, destination of travel, odometer readings at the start and the end of the journey and the distance travelled.

- Attach receipts for any other vehicle related expenses (such as parking) to the claim form.
- Submit the form the manager/collective for approval and payment.  
(Managers should submit their claim the management committee.)

## 8.15 Staff exit procedure

### Primary responsibility

Management committee/broader collective and manager/collective

### Policy

- When a staff member resigns or is dismissed, (*Insert name*) Refuge will implement the following exit procedure.

### Procedure

- Ensure there is a letter of resignation from the employee if they resigned, or a letter of termination from the management committee/broader collective if the employee was dismissed. (Copies of these letters should be kept in the employee's file with copies of employee contracts etc).
- Calculate ordinary wages due or wages in lieu of notice.
- Calculate annual leave due to the date of termination. This is paid at the employee's current rate of pay.
- Calculate leave loading in accordance with the Award.
- Check if the employee is entitled to pro-rata long service leave.
- Check if any allowances are owing (eg travel, meals).
- Check if the employee owes the refuge any monies or has any resources belonging to the refuge.
- Ensure any keys held by the worker are returned and documented in the key register.
- Prepare a written statement showing the detailed calculation of all monies to be paid to the employee or owed by the employee.
- Ensure any outstanding superannuation payments are made.
- If appropriate, prepare a reference.

- Offer the staff member an exit interview. Exit interviews can be offered to staff who have been dismissed if the manager/collective decides it is appropriate. This will give the staff member a chance to 'have their say', as well as giving the refuge the opportunity to find out what happened for the staff member and whether procedures could be improved. (see *Exit interview form* in resources).
- Complete a Centrelink Employment Separation Certificate and give it to the employee.
- Note the date employment ceased on the Employee's Record card.
- Obtain a forwarding postal address for employee for documents such as Group Certificate.
- Ensure that the employee receives a Group Certificate.

## 8.16 Supervision

### Primary responsibility

Management committee/broader collective and manager/collective

### Policy

- The purpose of supervision is to: monitor the case load of the worker; ensure the quality of the service being provided; and provide personal support and guidance to the worker in working through case management tasks.
- (*Insert name*) Refugee workers undertaking case management will be provided with adequate support and regular supervision.
- The chairperson of the management committee is responsible for conducting or organising supervision for the manager.
- The manager/collective is responsible for conducting or organising supervision for all other staff.
- Staff will be provided with regular supervision at least once a month (*or insert time frame*). This will include an annual performance appraisal.
- Supervision sessions will:
  - review case management tasks and case load
  - discuss current client needs and support plans
  - discuss any cases closed since the last supervision session, and the client and worker's evaluation of the case management plan
  - provide feedback on performance, including any strengths and weaknesses
  - identify strategies for staff development.
- Debriefing will also be included in supervision sessions where necessary and will provide staff with an opportunity to talk about individual cases and problems that occur, and their feelings.
- Emergency supervision sessions will be provided to staff if necessary.

- Supervision sessions will follow an agenda, but will provide adequate time for the staff member to talk freely about any issues or problems.
- Anything discussed in supervision sessions is confidential.

## Procedure

- Meet with staff member and arrange a time and place for a supervision session.
- Conduct the session in private and ensure it is uninterrupted (unless there is an emergency requiring the supervisor or the staff member).
- Develop an agenda and ask staff member to contribute any other items they wish to discuss.
- Provide adequate time for the staff member to talk freely about any issues or problems that arise during the session.
- Keep anything discussed during supervision sessions confidential.

## 8.17 Debriefing after a critical incident

### Primary responsibility

Management committee/broader collective and manager/collective

### Policy

- If workers or residents are involved, or present, in a situation that causes distress, debriefing will be provided. Situations that cause distress could include abusive behaviour, violent behaviour or assault, revealing information, viewing an event that is disturbing such as a suicide, an attempted murder or a murder, or eviction.
- Critical incident debriefing will aim to provide:
  - an analysis of the incident
  - a decision about how to respond to the client/s involved
  - an awareness of any legal issues
  - support for affected workers
  - a decision about debriefing for clients who may have been involved in or witnessed the incident.
- Staff are encouraged to ask for debriefing when required.
- If staff are involved in a critical incident outside of hours, it is recommended that they call the coordinator or another staff member.
- Clients who are present or involved in critical incidents will be offered debriefing by their support worker.
- If an incident occurs with a group of clients, debriefing can be carried out with the group.
- For day-to-day incidents that cause some distress, shorter debriefing sessions may be provided by the manager or another worker.
- All staff are to be trained in the basic principles of debriefing.
- All staff are to be responsive to the needs of their colleagues.

- Debriefing will be carried out by someone skilled in debriefing. This could be the coordinator, a member of the management committee, another staff member or an external person if required.
- If a staff member is distressed by an event, they can seek informal debriefing from another staff member or the manager.

## Procedure

- For major critical incidents, conduct debriefing as soon as possible after the event.
- Conduct debriefing in a comfortable, safe and private setting.
- During debriefing, encourage the staff member to retell the incident and express their associated feelings in a confidential setting, so they can acknowledge and discharge feelings and re-establish perspectives and attitudes.

# Resources for staff matters

## 8.18 Exit Interview form