

## Policy

Subject: **Work Health and Safety (WHS)**  
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The Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia (**RCPA**) is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace and to eliminating conditions and incidents that could result in personal injury or ill health.

The RCPA requires its activities to conform with relevant state and federal legislation and good, established practices including Australian Standards. The RCPA is responsible for, so far as is reasonably practicable, ensuring the health and safety at work of all of its workers (being its employees, contractors, sub-contractors; volunteers; apprentices; and work experience students). The RCPA will provide its workers with guidance on, and training in, the identification, assessment and control of hazards in the workplace.

Effective management of WHS risks depends on the commitment and cooperation of workers. The RCPA is committed to consulting with workers in a meaningful and effective manner on WHS issues, enabling each worker to contribute to decisions that may affect their health and safety at work.

The RCPA expects all workers to comply with their statutory WHS obligations and the RCPA's work health and safety policies, procedures and guidelines, and to conduct themselves in a safe manner, not placing themselves or others at risk. Managers are required to take reasonable care for the health and safety of workers working under their direction.

The RCPA is also responsible for providing a safe and healthy environment for its visitors and members of the public who come onto RCPA premises or who are affected by the RCPA's activities. As a medical institution, with responsibilities to the wider community, the RCPA is committed to providing its workers and visitors with appropriate work health and safety instruction.

### Introduction

The applicable Work Health and Safety legislation (**WHS legislation**) imposes specific and general duties on persons conducting a business or undertaking (such as employers), and workers with respect to the health and safety of people at places of work.

Under the WHS legislation, the RCPA has a primary duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of:

- all RCPA workers; and
- those persons who are not RCPA workers, but who could be exposed to [risks](#) to their health or safety arising from the conduct of RCPA's business.

The RCPA's primary duty extends to the RCPA ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable:

- the provision and maintenance of a work environment without risks to health and safety; and
- the provision and maintenance of safe plant and structures; and
- the provision and maintenance of safe systems of work; and
- the safe use, handling, and storage of plant, structures and substances; and
- the provision of adequate facilities for the welfare at work of workers in carrying out work for the RCPA, including ensuring access to those facilities; and
- that any premises controlled by the RCPA where its workers work (and the means of access to or exit from the premises) are safe and without risks to health; and

- the provision of any information, instruction, training or supervision that is necessary to protect all persons from risks to their health and safety arising from work carried out as part of the RCPA's business; and
- the monitoring the health of workers and the conditions at the workplace for the purpose of preventing illness or injury of workers arising from the conduct of RCPA's business.

The extent of the duty owed by a worker under the WHS legislation is the standard considered reasonable for a person in that worker's position. Under the WHS legislation, an RCPA worker has a duty to:

- take reasonable care for his or her health and safety and the health and safety of all persons at his or her place of work who may be affected by the worker's acts or omissions at work; and
- comply, so far as the worker is reasonably able, with any reasonable instructions, procedure and policies of the RCPA relating to WHS, so that the RCPA can comply with its legal obligations in relation to WHS.

This policy (**Policy**) gives general guidance on how these duties apply in the context of the RCPA.

The RCPA has adopted the Work Health and Safety guidelines and procedures outlined in this Policy (**Guidelines and Procedures**) as part of its obligations under WHS legislation.

The WHS legislation also imposes duties on the RCPA and its workers in certain situations. These include specific duties in connection with dangerous goods, hazardous substances, and hazardous processes, and the design, installation and use of plant and equipment.

All workers, particularly those who supervise other workers and/or visitors, should ensure that they are familiar with their obligations under WHS and associated legislation, as it relates to their position, and take all steps within their power to meet those obligations.

## **Lines of Responsibility**

### **Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors is responsible for overseeing, assisting the CEO with, and ensuring the overall implementation of this Policy and the Guidelines and Procedures, and for exercising due diligence to ensure the RCPA meets its obligations under WHS legislation.

### **CEO**

The CEO is responsible for the overall implementation of this Policy and the Guidelines and Procedures, and for exercising due diligence to ensure the RCPA meets its obligations under WHS legislation. This responsibility follows from the CEO's position, and duties to promote the interests of the RCPA and to manage its business. The responsibility includes ensuring that both the RCPA and its workers are able to meet their WHS obligations through the provision of adequate budgets, the allocation of resources, and the availability of specific guidelines for achieving the RCPA's health and safety standards.

In particular the CEO will work with the Board of Directors and the management team to:

- ensure that the RCPA and its officers and workers (including the CEO and the Board of Directors) have up-to-date knowledge of work health and safety matters and their impact on the operations of the RCPA;
- gain an understanding of the nature of the business of the RCPA and generally of the hazards and risks associated with that business;
- ensure that the RCPA and its officers and workers (including the CEO and the Board of Directors) have available for use, and use, appropriate resources and processes to:
  - eliminate or minimise risks to health and safety;
  - receive and consider information regarding incidents, hazards and risks and respond in a timely way to that information; and
  - comply with its duties under the WHS legislation.
- ensure the RCPA's compliance with its statutory WHS obligations;
- provide a healthy and safe environment for the RCPA's workers and visitors;

- provide and maintain suitable premises, facilities and equipment and systems of work for the safe and healthy conduct of the RCPA's activities and the welfare of RCPA workers and visitors;
- provide RCPA workers with health and safety information, instruction, training and supervision;
- allocate administrative tasks required for work health and safety purposes including the appointment of a Safety Officer;
- ensure the worker appointed as the Safety Officer is provided with time and opportunity to receive adequate training and to carry out their extra duties;
- understand the responsibilities and the powers and rights of the RCPA with respect to WHS;
- respond to inspection reports and other correspondence;
- deal with health and safety issues raised by workers in accordance with this Policy;
- manage the RCPA's requirements for prompt reporting of workplace injuries and illnesses;
- support the rehabilitation of injured or ill employees.

### **Safety Officer**

From time to time, the CEO will appoint a suitable senior manager to act as Safety Officer with appropriate delegated authority in WHS matters.

The name and contact details of the current Safety Officer can be found in the TRIM document management system under Operations/Management Team/WHS.

The Safety Officer is responsible for assisting the CEO in the overall implementation of this Policy, and the Guidelines and Procedures. This includes providing guidance in the management of WHS to managers and workers when necessary, advising the CEO of WHS implications of RCPA activities. In particular, the Safety Officer will:

- ensure that risks are identified, assessed and controlled in consultation with the workers affected by the risks in accordance with WHS Policy and the Guidelines and procedures;
- ensure WHS procedures are developed, documented, reviewed and issued to workers and visitors as necessary to safeguard their WHS, and ensure these procedures are enforced;
- ensure procedures are consistent with requirements of the relevant WHS Legislation from time to time;
- ensure that workers receive the appropriate information, instruction and training and the necessary supervision for them to perform their work safely and without risks to their health;
- review reports of incidents and accidents to ensure appropriate measures are taken to assess and control the risks to prevent recurrence;
- notify the CEO of WHS implications of new activities or initiatives;
- ensure that submissions to the CEO concerning capital works proposals take into account WHS needs;
- ensure that planning for new equipment, new experimental works, new work systems or new work environments includes assessment of the WHS implications;
- manage the RCPA's requirements for prompt reporting of workplace injuries and illnesses;
- inspecting work areas when requested by workers and advising on WHS problems or obtaining advice on such problems from other sources;
- assisting with provision of information to workers and visitors concerning WHS hazards associated with their work or interactions with the RCPA;
- bringing to the attention of the CEO unresolved WHS problems, together with any advice the Safety Officer can provide on resolving these problems;
- investigating and reporting on all significant incidents, injuries and occupational health problems and notifying the CEO of these;
- participating in appropriate training courses and encouraging other workers to participate in relevant training courses;

- dealing with health and safety issues in line with the procedures set out in this document and maintaining/undertaking the management of specific assets or activities.

The Safety Officer will be allocated adequate time among their other duties to attend to WHS matters.

All workers should have direct access to the Safety Officer.

### **Managers**

In addition to their obligations as workers (outlined below), managers have obligations to take reasonable care for the health and safety of the people that they manage, and more broadly to the extent that this is part of the manager's role.

Managers are also responsible for working with the CEO, the Safety Officer and their workers to ensure the overall implementation and compliance with this Policy and the Guidelines and Procedures. Those managers who make or participate in making decisions that affect the whole, or a substantial part of the RCPA are also required to exercise due diligence (as outlined above).

### **Workers**

Workers (being employees; contractors; sub-contractors; volunteers; apprentices; and work experience students) have a responsibility for ensuring that the work for which they are responsible is carried out in ways that safeguard the WHS and well-being of workers and visitors in their charge. All workers are required to follow this Policy and the Guidelines and Procedures, and to meet all relevant regulations, standards and codes of practice.

Workers should:

- take reasonable care for their own health and safety and the health and safety of all persons at work;
- cooperate with the RCPA and comply with its instructions so that the RCPA can comply with its legal obligations in relation to WHS;
- actively practise and develop responsible attitudes towards WHS matters;
- ensure that safe working practices are developed and maintained at all times;
- co-operate with injury management programs;
- review reports of incidents and accidents to ensure appropriate measures are taken to prevent recurrence;
- understand the RCPA's responsibilities and the powers and rights of workplace WHS committees under the WHS legislation;
- tell the Safety Officer of health and safety concerns that they have not been able to resolve;
- comply at all times with the RCPA policies in relation to WHS, including without limitation this Policy and the RCPA policies in relation to:
  - Smoking, Drugs and Alcohol in the workplace;
  - Equal Employment Opportunity, Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment;
- comply with all of the above obligations when working outside the RCPA office, including when working from home or from another location.

### **Visitors**

All visitors are required to follow this Policy and the Guidelines and Procedures, and, as with RCPA workers, to meet all relevant regulations, standards and codes of practice.

Visitors must:

- take reasonable care for their own health and safety and the health and safety of all persons at the workplace, including ensuring that their acts or omissions, do not adversely affect the health or safety of other persons;
- comply, so far as the visitor is reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction that is given by the RCPA to enable the RCPA to comply with its legal obligations in relation to WHS.

## **WHS Consultation Statement**

Consultation on WHS issues will be conducted in accordance with the terms of the WHS legislation.

Such consultation must be meaningful and effective to allow each worker to contribute to decisions that may affect their health, safety and welfare at work. All workers will be given relevant information concerning WHS issues and will be given the reasonable opportunity to express their views, raise health and safety issues and contribute in a timely manner to the resolution of WHS issues that affect them. These views will be valued and taken into account by those making decisions, and workers will be informed of the outcome of WHS consultation in a timely manner.

Each manager is required to consult with the workers who report to the manager whenever:

- the risks associated with workplace activities are being assessed and decisions are being made about the control of these risks;
- changes are proposed to the RCPA's premises, facilities and equipment, or systems of work;
- making decisions about procedures to be used for consultation, resolving WHS issues, monitoring worker health and workplace conditions and provision of training.

## **Procedures for Dealing with Work Health and Safety (WHS) Issues:**

### **Workers**

Workers are encouraged to fix minor WHS issues where they are authorised and it is safe to do so. Otherwise, the issue should be raised with the manager of the area concerned.

If it is not possible for workers to raise the matter with their immediate manager or the manager fails to resolve the matter in consultation with them, then they may contact the Safety Officer or the CEO.

### **Managers**

When presented with an WHS issue that they cannot resolve through consultation with the workers affected, a Manager should seek the advice from the Safety Officer.

### **Safety Officer**

When presented with an WHS issue, the Safety Officer should first consult the Manager of the area concerned and the affected workers. If this does not lead to a resolution of the issue, the Safety Officer should take the matter to the CEO.

The Safety Officer is responsible for maintaining and updating all forms, records and reports relating to WHS issues.

When resolving a WHS issue, the relevant parties involved in the WHS issue must have regard to all relevant matters, including the following:

- the degree and immediacy of risk to workers or other persons affected by the issue;
- the number and location of workers and other persons affected by the issue;
- the measures (both temporary and permanent) that must be implemented to resolve the issue;
- who will be responsible for implementing the resolution measures.

A party may, in resolving the issue, be assisted or represented by a person nominated by the party and that representative may enter the workplace for the purpose of attending discussions with a view to resolving the issue.

Once an issue is resolved, details of the issue and its resolution must be set out in a written agreement if any party to the issue requests this and given to all parties to the issue.

## **Other Specific Matters:**

### **First Aid Supplies**

A clearly marked First Aid kit is kept in Reception. The Safety Officer is responsible for First Aid. Please advise the Safety Officer if any items are used from the First Aid kit and replacements are required.

### **Fire Drills**

Fire Drills will be carried out annually at the RCPA under the guidance of the Safety Officer. All workers and visitors are required to comply with these instructions.

All fire fighting equipment will be checked at least biannually by qualified service personnel.

### **Emergency Evacuation Plans**

Evacuation plans will be reviewed periodically and revised as appropriate.

### **Smoking, Drugs and Alcohol**

All workers and visitors must comply with RCPA policy in relation to smoking, drug and alcohol use in the workplace.

All RCPA premises are non-smoking,

### **EEO, Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying**

All workers and visitors must comply with RCPA policies dealing with Equal Employment Opportunity, workplace discrimination, harassment and bullying.

### **Breach of this Policy**

All workers and visitors are required to comply with this Policy at all times.

If an employee breaches this Policy they may be subjected to disciplinary action, which in serious cases may include termination of employment.

Visitors, contractors and sub-contractors who are found to have breached this Policy may be asked to leave RCPA premises and, in the case of contractors and sub-contractors, may have their contracts with RCPA terminated or not renewed.

All persons should be aware that breach of WHS legislation by them may result in personal liability. Further, in certain circumstances, RCPA may be legally required to notify the police or other government authority where a person's conduct may involve a breach of any Australian or overseas law.

### **Changes to this Policy**

The RCPA may need to amend this Policy from time to time, including to reflect changes to its structure, procedures or statutory obligations. The RCPA reserves the right, in its absolute discretion, to supplement, change or amend this Policy from time to time.