

To establish Council's expectations and commitment to worker and workplace health and safety.

Background

The primary duty of Council under WHS Legislation is the protection of the health and safety of its workers and to avoid putting the health and safety of other people at risk through Council's actions or omissions.

Council staff, Councillors and visitors to Council's workplaces similarly have duties under the WHS Legislation to protect their own and others health and safety.

Policy statement

Council is committed to the prevention of both mental and physical work-related injuries through the provision of safe and healthy work environments, facilities, equipment and systems aligned with relevant Australian and international standards and legislative requirements.

Council will achieve this by implementing proactive strategies aimed at:

- a) **Culture** - promoting and maintaining a safety-first workplace culture where we take care of each other and provide a work environment where safety is prioritised.
- b) **Resources and processes** - ensuring appropriate resources are allocated and processes are followed, including the hierarchy of control methodology, to eliminate or minimise risks to safety, especially for higher risk activities.
- c) **Targets** - establishing measurable health and safety objectives and targets and regularly reviewing and reporting on our performance.
- d) **Standards** - fulfilling all legal requirements and meeting the AS/NZS ISO 45001 standard for safety.
- e) **Continuous Improvement** - continuously improving our WHS Management System, including a formal review of the management system and this policy every two years.
- f) **Information and activities** - providing information, wellbeing programs and regular training for our workers and consulting with them and other stakeholders regarding health, safety, and wellbeing activities at work.
- g) **Early intervention** - promoting early identification and reporting of hazards through technology systems and initiatives such as Hazardous Manual Task training and access to Employee Assistance Programs (EAP), to reduce the risk and impact of physical and psychological harm to workers.
- h) **Psychosocial Hazards** - recognising, preventing and managing psychosocial risks such as workload, bullying, isolation, role clarity, and interpersonal conflict.
- i) **Remedial action** - ensuring there are effective processes in place to record, investigate and carry out remedial actions to prevent a recurrence should an incident occur.
- j) **Induction** - ensuring workers understand their general responsibilities for work health and safety and the specific responsibilities for safety relating to their job descriptions.
- k) **Return to Work programs** - actively promoting return to work programs for injured workers.

Responsibilities

- *Leadership Team*
 - Promote a safety culture that is inclusive, supportive, and free from harassment, discrimination and bullying.
- *Workers and Councillors*
 - Take reasonable care of their own safety and others.
 - Contribute to building and maintaining a physically and mentally healthy work environment by caring for one another and always putting safety first.
 - Engage in meaningful, respectful, and open consultation about health and safety matters to achieve Council's strategic outcomes.
 - Consult on and cooperate with health and safety investigations, activities and objectives.

Definitions

- **Council** means Rous County Council.
- **WHS Legislation** means the *Work Health Safety Act 2011 (NSW)* and the *Work Health Safety Regulation 2017 (NSW)* as amended from time to time.
- **WHS Management System** means the set of plans, policies, procedures and programs utilised by Council to systematically manage health and safety.
- **Worker(s)** has the meaning prescribed under the WHS Legislation and includes Council staff, contractors, volunteers and trainees.

Contact officer

General Manager

Related documents

Policies

Code of Conduct

Procedures

Work Health and Safety procedures (various)

Health and Wellbeing procedure

Legislation

Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)

Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth)

Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)

Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011 (Cth)

Work Health and Safety Regulation 2025 (NSW)

Local Government (State) Award

Other

AS/NZS ISO 45001 - Occupational health and safety management systems

Code of Practice: First Aid in the Workplace (NSW)

Code of Practice: Hazardous Manual Tasks (NSW)

Code of Practice: Managing psychosocial hazards at work (NSW)

Code of Practice: Work health and safety consultation, cooperation and coordination (NSW)

Safe Work Instructions

Safe Work Method Statements

WHS Management System

File No.: F20/324-01		Next review date: 2 years	
Version	Purpose and description	Date adopted by Council	Resolution No.
1.0	To establish Council's expectations and commitment to worker and workplace health and safety	20/02/2019	7/19
2.0	Updated to align with AS/NZS ISO 45001 – Occupational health and safety management systems	20/10/2021	53/21
3.0	Reviewed policy – adopted with no changes to the previous version	18/10/2023	50/23
4.0	Reviewed policy – updated to include Hazardous Manual Tasks program, outlined Rous' Psychosocial hazard reduction strategy	15/10/2025	50/25