

Consumer Safety Policy and Procedure

Version 7.0

Policy Number	POL-111
Policy Name	Consumer Safety Policy and Procedure
Policy Area	Operations
Policy Owner	Chief Operations Officer

Introduction

RW is committed to ensuring that consumer safety is upheld. This policy applies to all staff and clients of the Richmond Wellbeing. It should be read in conjunction with the organisation's Policy on Occupational Safety and Health.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that activities and the environment of the organisation are safe for consumers. Safety is considered in terms of physical, social, psychological, and cultural dimensions. This policy aims to ensure that consumers are protected from financial, sexual and physical abuse.

Scope

This policy and procedure applies to all employees, volunteers, contractors and clients of Richmond Wellbeing.

Policy Statement

Richmond Wellbeing is committed to ensuring that all of its consumers are adequately protected so as to minimise the risk of abuse, illness, accident or injury by maintaining safe living environments, and promoting proper security, safety and health practices.

PROCEDURE

- All staff will receive appropriate information about, and training in, relevant health and safety standards and practices.
- Prior to employment, all staff must obtain a police clearance at their own expense.
- All reasonable steps will be taken to assess the safety and security of the residential sites and make appropriate changes.
- All reasonable and practicable steps shall be taken to minimise the risk of injury to consumers.
- Residential sites will be appropriately furnished and equipped to minimise discomfort or risk of injury to consumers.
- All equipment, procedures and resources will be designed to promote the safety of consumers. For example, mobile phones, security devices, debriefing, adequate staffing levels, an Occupational Safety and Health policy and committee, critical incident reports and a grievance procedure.
- Staff working alone will have access to another staff member or on-call system at all times in their work settings.
- Fire and smoke detection devices at residential sites will be installed and regularly maintained.
- Appropriate evacuation procedures will be implemented and practiced, and regular training will be implemented to ensure staff and consumers understand them.
- The preparation, handling and storage of food are consistent with the relevant health guidelines (appendix 1).
- Consumers are provided with a safe and reliable means of transportation when needed.
- Consumers, families and support persons have access to a confidential process by which they can regularly feedback their perceptions of safety of the environment provided by the organisation. Processes may include suggestion boxes, satisfaction surveys and the complaints process.
- The organisation will monitor its performance in regard to the above criteria through audits and makes use of data collected to improve performance as part of a quality improvement process.
- Basic safety checks such as smoke alarms and vehicles, and evacuation drills, will be carried out at prescribed intervals by Site Coordinators/Managers (according to the Occupational Safety and Health Policy) and documented.

Staff Rotation

Richmond Wellbeing's available funding limits its ability to regularly rotate direct staff to avoid one staff member being assigned to an individual consumer. Where possible, consumers are linked to two support workers.

Richmond Wellbeing's risk mitigation strategies in this area include:

- A robust consumer complaint and feedback systems
- Where possible linking consumers to two or more support workers
- Ensure other staff members are available for consumer support if required
- The provision of a consumer information pack for all consumers and carers

Recreation

Staff have a responsibility to undertake reasonable steps to uphold consumers' safety and protection from injury. When staff and consumers participate in recreational activities off site, it is important for both staff and consumers to protect themselves against the elements.

- Staff will keep a container of sunscreen (30+) in vehicles owned by the organisation, and make it available for consumers and staff to use.
- During water activities staff are to encourage consumers to wear T-shirts and sunscreen to protect themselves from sunburn.
- Staff need to ascertain the degree of swimming competency of each consumer when swimming.
- Staff will encourage consumers to drink sufficient fluids when they are on outings.
- When on group outings, staff will bring a mobile phone in order to have a means of summoning help.
- Consumers will be advised that if they are under the influence of any non-prescribed drugs and/or alcohol that they will not be permitted to go on outings.
- If a consumer's behaviour puts themselves or others at risk, and they do not cease this behaviour, staff have the right to end the outing and return with consumers to the service.

Chemicals

All household chemicals on site should be:

- Appropriately stored (i.e. not with food). If possible, store chemicals in the laundry, store room or shed.
- Chemicals should not be stored in containers other than their original container.
- Chemicals other than household chemicals need to be stored according to the instructions listed by the manufacturer.

If poisoning occurs, contact the Poison Information Centre on 13 1126.

Breach of Policy

Where a consumer believes their rights may have been breached, or a staff member becomes aware of a potential breach of the consumer's rights, consumers should be encouraged to raise these issues using the organisation's Consumer Complaints and Disputes Policy

APPENDIX 1: Food Handling Guidelines

The Clean – Cook – Cover – Chill food-handling guidelines

Clean

- ❖ Only handle food with clean hands.

Always wash hands:

Before handling food,
After handling raw meat and poultry,
After going to the toilet,
After gardening.

... Clean hands are hands that are washed, and then dried on a clean towel....

- ❖ Wash knives and utensils, and scrub chopping boards between preparation of raw and cooked foods.

Cook

- ❖ Defrost frozen foods in the fridge before cooking, not on your bench top.
- ❖ Cool hot foods, covered, for no more than 30 minutes before putting in the fridge.
- ❖ Reheat leftovers until steaming hot throughout and do not reheat them more than once.
- ❖ Chicken, meat patties and sausages need to be cooked thoroughly.

Cover

- ❖ Cover foods before storing in the cupboard or fridge.
- ❖ Store raw and cooked foods separately.

Chill

- ❖ Keep food either very cold or very hot – bacteria that cause food-borne illness thrive at room temperatures.
- ❖ Always use an esky with ice or a frozen pad to keep picnic foods safe.

... Remember to check the use-by dates – if in doubt, throw it out....¹

¹ These guidelines are based on the “Keep Food safe This Summer” campaign by the New Zealand Foodsafe Partnership 2001.

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Related Documents

POL-37 Feedback and Complaints Resolution Policy and Procedure

Risk Management Framework

Supporting Information

Disability Services Act (1993)

Australia New Zealand Food Safety Standards

Standard 8.16 of the Disability Services Standards (1993)

MH NGO Standard 2 Safety

National Mental Health Standards 2010

National Standards for Mental Health Services

QIC Health and Community Services Standards

Standard 2 of the National Standards for Mental Health Services (1997)

UN Principles on the Protection of People with a Mental Illness and Improvement in Mental Health Care

Review Timeframe and Responsibility

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