

Work Health & Safety (WHS) Policy

For Australian Small & Medium Enterprises

Template Version 1.0 | December 2024

Important Notice

This template is provided as a general guide only and should be customised to your specific workplace. WHS legislation varies by state/territory. We recommend having this policy reviewed by a WHS professional to ensure compliance with your specific requirements.

1. Policy Statement

[Company Name] is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all workers, contractors, visitors, and others who may be affected by our work. The health, safety, and wellbeing of our people is a core value and a priority in everything we do.

We believe that:

- All injuries and work-related illnesses are preventable
- Working safely is a condition of employment
- Safety is everyone's responsibility
- A safe workplace is a productive workplace

2. Commitment

[Company Name] is committed to:

- Providing a safe and healthy work environment
- Eliminating or minimising risks to health and safety
- Complying with all applicable WHS legislation, regulations, and codes of practice
- Providing safe plant, equipment, and systems of work
- Ensuring safe use, handling, storage, and transport of substances
- Providing adequate facilities for the welfare of workers
- Providing information, instruction, training, and supervision
- Consulting with workers on WHS matters
- Maintaining adequate insurance and workers compensation coverage
- Continually improving our WHS performance

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees at all levels
- All contractors, subcontractors, and labour hire workers
- Visitors to our workplaces
- All work activities, whether at our premises or other locations
- Any person whose health and safety may be affected by our work

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Officers and Senior Management

Officers must exercise due diligence to ensure [Company Name] meets its WHS duties. This includes:

- Acquiring and keeping up to date knowledge of WHS matters
- Understanding the nature of operations and associated hazards/risks
- Ensuring appropriate resources and processes for WHS
- Ensuring processes to eliminate or minimise risks
- Ensuring processes to receive and respond to WHS information
- Ensuring compliance with WHS duties

4.2 Managers and Supervisors

- Implement WHS policies and procedures in their area
- Identify, assess, and control hazards
- Ensure workers are trained and competent
- Conduct regular workplace inspections
- Investigate incidents and implement corrective actions
- Consult with workers on WHS matters
- Lead by example

4.3 Workers

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety
- Take reasonable care not to adversely affect others' health and safety
- Comply with reasonable instructions
- Cooperate with WHS policies and procedures
- Report hazards, incidents, and injuries
- Use equipment and PPE as instructed
- Not intentionally or recklessly interfere with safety provisions

4.4 Contractors

- Comply with [Company Name] WHS requirements
- Maintain their own WHS systems and insurance
- Report hazards and incidents
- Work safely and not create risks for others

5. Risk Management

[Company Name] will systematically identify hazards, assess risks, and implement controls. We follow the hierarchy of controls:

- Elimination – remove the hazard
- Substitution – use something less hazardous
- Isolation – separate people from hazards
- Engineering controls – modify equipment or environment
- Administrative controls – change procedures and practices
- Personal Protective Equipment – as a last resort

6. Consultation

[Company Name] will consult with workers on WHS matters that may affect them, including:

- Identifying hazards and assessing risks
- Making decisions about risk controls
- Proposing changes to the workplace, work practices, or equipment
- Making decisions about worker welfare facilities
- Making decisions about consultation procedures

Consultation may occur through Health and Safety Representatives, Health and Safety Committees, or direct engagement with workers.

7. Training

[Company Name] will provide:

- WHS induction for all new workers
- Job-specific safety training
- Training on safe work procedures
- Training for supervisors and managers
- Refresher training as required
- Specialised training for high-risk activities

8. Incident Management

[Company Name] will:

- Require reporting of all incidents, injuries, and near misses
- Investigate incidents to identify causes
- Implement corrective actions to prevent recurrence
- Report notifiable incidents to the regulator
- Support injured workers with return to work

9. Emergency Preparedness

[Company Name] will:

- Develop and maintain emergency procedures
- Provide emergency equipment and training
- Conduct regular emergency drills
- Review emergency procedures regularly

10. Health and Wellbeing

[Company Name] is committed to supporting worker health and wellbeing through:

- Promoting a healthy work environment
- Addressing psychosocial hazards
- Providing Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- Supporting work-life balance
- Preventing bullying and harassment

11. Monitoring and Review

[Company Name] will monitor WHS performance through:

- Tracking incident data and trends
- Conducting workplace inspections
- Internal and external audits
- Reviewing compliance with legislation
- Seeking worker feedback

This policy and our WHS management system will be reviewed at least annually.

12. Objectives

[Company Name] has established the following WHS objectives:

- Zero serious injuries and fatalities

- Continuous reduction in injury frequency and severity
- Full compliance with WHS legislation
- Timely reporting and investigation of all incidents
- Active worker participation in WHS
- Completion of required training

Management Endorsement

This policy is endorsed by [Company Name] senior management. We are committed to its implementation and to providing the necessary resources to achieve our WHS objectives.

Director/CEO Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Employee Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have read and understood [Company Name]'s Work Health & Safety Policy. I understand my responsibilities and commit to working safely and complying with all WHS requirements.

Employee Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____