



Work Health and Safety Policy

1. Purpose

The WA Country Health Service (WACHS) has a legislated obligation under the [Work Health Safety Act 2020](#) (the Act) to provide a safe place of work for its workers.

The WACHS [Statement of Commitment](#) and the Act, together with the [Work Health and Safety \(General\) Regulations 2022](#) (WA), provide the legislative context for health and safety within Western Australian workplaces.

The [Work Health and Safety Consultation, Cooperation and Coordination – Code of Practice](#) outlines further responsibilities for public sector employers to take specific actions to ensure compliance with the Act and the Work Health and Safety (WHS) Regulations.

2. Policy

WACHS is committed to providing a safe workplace to achieve high standards in health and safety for its workers, contractors, visitors, students and volunteers.

All areas of WACHS are to comply with, or exceed, WHS legal requirements, developing and implementing safety management systems and work practices that reflect its commitment to health and safety.

WACHS promotes health and safety activities and encourages the election of Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) and/or formation of health and safety committees in metropolitan and regional workplaces, in accordance with legislative obligations.

Information about health and safety is communicated regularly and often to ensure that all staff have access to current and relevant information about health and safety, particularly as it applies to their roles and the healthcare environment.

WACHS applies a consultative approach to safety risk reporting and investigation in order to promote a positive safety culture, in which a team-based approach is adopted to the resolution of problems and prevention of recurrences.

WACHS partners with various health agencies to further the understanding, implementation and development of effective safety, health and risk management.

The policy is supported by the Department of Health's [Work Health and Safety Management Policy](#), which outlines the governance model for the effective management of work health and safety across WACHS.

The policy is supported by a number of additional policies, procedures and guidelines that provide practical guidance regarding the management of work health and safety within WACHS.

2.1 Work Health and Safety Management Framework

The WACHS Work Health and Safety Management Framework outlines key principles and strategies for WHS achievement and improvement under each of the elements, as follows:

We ensure that our **Management Commitment** is demonstrated through:

- Statement of Commitment
- WHS Policy
- Safety leadership by Executive
- Prioritisation of WHS tasks
- Implementation of safety improvements
- Measurement of safety performance.

We ensure effective Work Health and Safety **Planning** which includes:

- Strategic priorities which incorporate safety objectives
- Assessments
- Safety being included in regional planning
- Safety assessment being included in capital and minor works
- Contractor safety being managed
- Legal compliance obligations being identified.

We demonstrate effective **Consultation and Reporting** by ensuring:

- WHS Committees are established and HSRs are elected
- Consultation is undertaken on decisions affecting safety
- Reporting to regional and WACHS Executive is undertaken
- WorkSafe improvement notice resolution occurs
- Due diligence reports are prepared and communicated.

We ensure effective **Hazard Management** through:

- Hazard identification
- Workplace inspections
- Hazardous substance management
- Risk assessment and controls
- Hazard management process being reviewed
- Ensuring incidents are reported and investigated.

We ensure suitable and appropriate **Training and Supervision** through:

- Due Diligence training for Executives
- WHS for Managers program
- WHS awareness for all staff in induction
- Staff training needs / worker development
- Training / supervision by staff with relevant skills
- Ensuring staff can use equipment safely.

We aim to continually improve through **Monitoring and Evaluation** including:

- Management reporting / review
- WHS performance in the Annual Report
- Safety risk / lost time injury trends analysis
- Assessments / audits
- Policy and training program reviews.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

WACHS as the employer

The WHS Act requires that **employers** so far as is practicable, provide and maintain a working environment in which the workers of the employer are not exposed to hazards and in particular:

- provide and maintain workplaces, plant and systems or work such that, so far as is practicable, workers are not exposed to hazards
- provide information, instruction, and training to, and supervision of, the workers as is necessary to enable them to perform their work in a manner that they are not exposed to hazards
- consult and cooperate with HSRs, and other workers at the workplace, regarding work health and safety at the workplace, and
- where it is not practicable to avoid the presence of hazards at the workplace, provide the workers with adequate personal protective clothing and equipment as is practicable to protect them against those hazards, without any cost to the workers
- make arrangements for ensuring, so far as is practicable that the use, cleaning, maintenance, transportation and disposal of plant; and the use, handling, processing, storage, transportation and disposal of substances, at the workplace is carried out in a manner such that the workers are not exposed to hazards.

The duties of WACHS to its workers also apply to contractors engaged to undertake work for WACHS as if they were workers.

Senior Managers and Executive Leads

The **Senior Managers and Executive Leads** provide executive level leadership for work health and safety:

- actively pursue opportunities to increase work health and safety performance within areas of responsibility.
- ensure:
 - safety risks are identified, assessed and managed and that controls are documented
 - that safety implications are assessed when adjusting the way that work is performed and that any significant changes are referred through consultative forums e.g., Work Health and Safety Committees
 - staff within their area of responsibility meet their WHS training requirements
 - that WHS reporting, and analysis is included as a regular item on agendas for WACHS Executive meetings and forums.
- oversee:
 - safety risk reporting to identify trends in safety risks at an organisational level.
 - the WHS performance of line managers in their areas of responsibility.
- support line managers in implementing safety and health measures, and in resolving safety and health issues within their areas of responsibility.

Regional Work Health Safety and Security Managers

The **Regional Work Health Safety and Security Managers** provide regional leadership for work health and safety undertake strategic analysis of regional WHS, injury management and security services, issues and trends in consultation with regional executive management team.

Line Managers

The **Line Managers** at all levels within WACHS are responsible for ensuring the safety, health and wellbeing of all workers under their control. They must ensure that they are familiar with policies, procedures, processes and practices relating to work health and safety within WACHS.

These responsibilities include:

- assessing health and safety risks associated with work performed and ensuring that staff are provided with adequate training, supervision, equipment and support to complete their duties safely
- investigating the workplace and actively identifying workplace safety and health risks, assessing those risks, and applying risk controls
- using the WACHS Safety Risk Report Form (SRRF) to record action taken in response to reported work health and safety risks and issues
- notifying the worker reporting the work health and safety risk of the outcome of the investigation and the action to be taken
- ensuring that staff complete Core Essential Training programs designed to protect their health and safety e.g., Emergency Code Awareness, Manual Handling and Aggression Management
- consulting with workers and their safety and health representatives about safety and health matters
- familiarising themselves with their responsibilities for completing workplace inspections and maintain a record of inspections conducted
- confirming that all workers have been provided with work health and safety induction and relevant training to enable them to undertake their work safely
- keeping records of all work health and safety risk events that may become subject of a claim, complaint, grievance or resolution
- making a report to the Regional Work Health and Safety Consultant and Regional Injury Management Coordinator as soon as possible where a safety risk event results in a workers' compensation claim
- completing WHS for Managers training.

Regional WHS Consultants

The **Regional WHS Consultants** are responsible for:

- coordination of work health and safety matters for their region
- managing the establishment of health and safety committees including election and training of HSRs
- undertaking regular safety inspections, audits and risk assessments of regional sites and promote compliance with legislative and accreditation requirements
- assisting with the coordination and delivery of WHS
- recording and monitoring safety incidents within the safety information management system and maintaining accurate records
- fulfilling regional performance data collection, collation and analysis and the preparation of management reports
- evaluating and recommend strategies for resolution of WorkSafe Improvement Notices
- providing expert advice to the region on work health and safety matters.

Note: These responsibilities are to be read in conjunction with the relevant Job Description Form (JDF) as amended from time to time.

Central Office WHS team

The **Central Office WHS team** includes the Executive Director of People, Capability and Culture, the Director Work Health Safety and Wellbeing, the Work Health and Safety Manager, Senior Injury Management Consultant and Injury Management Consultants, the Staff Health Unit and the Security team. The role of the Central Office WHS team is to:

- provide:
 - leadership in the progress of work health and safety management across WACHS
 - effective supporting tools and resources for regional WHS teams
 - expert advice where required on WHS matters.
- facilitate:
 - the completion and reporting of the WHS Action Plan
 - the Regional WHS network
 - WACHS-wide reform of Work health and safety systems and processes.
- maintain policies, procedures and guidelines relating to work health and safety within WACHS
- act as a subject matter expert in the development of training programs and other staff learning materials relating to work health and safety
- ensure external compliance reporting requirements are met e.g., WA Health Annual Report.

Work Health Safety Committees

Consistent with the WHS Act, the roles and responsibilities of **WHS Committees** are to:

- facilitate consultation and cooperation between the employer and workers in initiating, developing, and implementing measures designed to ensure the safety and health of its workers
- keep itself informed as to standards relating to WHS recommended or prevailing in workplaces of a comparable nature and to review, and make recommendations to the employer on, rules and procedures at the workplace relating to the safety and health of the workers
- recommend to the employer and workers the establishment, maintenance, and monitoring of programmes, measures and procedures at the workplace relating to the safety and health of the workers
- keep in a readily accessible place and form information provided by the employer regarding the hazards that arise or may arise at the workplace
- consider, and make recommendations to the employer about any changes or intended changes to or at the workplace that may affect the safety or health of workers at the workplace
- consider matters referred to the committee by an HSR
- perform other functions as per the regulations or requested to be undertaken by the employer.

Health and Safety Representatives

The **Health and Safety Representatives (HSR)** are members of staff elected to perform the functions of HSRs in accordance with the WHS Act.

The position is voluntary, however, there is a requirement for training to be undertaken and for time to be allocated for the safety and health representative to meet their

responsibilities which includes to:

- inspect the workplace:
 - at times agreed with the employer; or if the workplace has not been inspected in the preceding 30 days, upon giving reasonable notice
 - immediately in the event of an accident, a dangerous occurrence, or where there is risk of imminent and severe injury or harm to the health of, any person, to carry out any appropriate investigation in respect of the matter.
- report hazards or potential hazards that comes to their notice
- refer relevant matters to the Health and Safety Committee
- consult and cooperate on all matters relating to the safety or health of people in the workplace
- consult with other staff on matters concerning the safety or health of people in the workplace.

A HSR may accompany an inspector during an investigation.

A HSR incurs no civil liability arising from their performance of, or their failure to perform, any function of a safety and health representative under the WHS Act.

Workers

The WHS Act requires that **workers** take reasonable care to ensure their own safety and health at work and to avoid adversely affecting the health or safety of any other person through any act or omission at work.

A worker must:

- use protective clothing and equipment provided, or provided for, by the worker in the manner in which he or she has been properly instructed to use it
- take reasonable care for their own safety and health at work
- avoid adversely affecting the safety and health of others at work
- follow all instructions and safe working procedures established to protect their safety and that of others
- wear personal protective equipment as required and avoid misuse or damage to any equipment provided in the interests of health or safety
- report all identified hazards and accidents/incidents in the workplace to their line manager.

A worker must cooperate with the employer in fulfilling its obligations under the WHS Act and WHS Regulations.

All staff are required to work within policies and guidelines to make sure that WACHS is a safe, equitable and positive place to be.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

4.1 Monitoring

Monitoring of this policy will be undertaken by WACHS WHS Central Office, it is to be measured by:

implementation and documentation of the management practices
findings from management reviews and

audits of compliance with relevant legislative, policy and procedure requirement.

4.2 Evaluation

Evaluation of this policy is to be carried out by the Work Health and Safety Manager, Central Office, who will report to the Executive Director People, Capability and Culture.

The report will look at issues and longitudinal data over the entire policy cycle including relevant KPIs, compliance with requirements and reviews.

5. Compliance

This policy is a mandatory requirement under the [Work Health Safety Act 2020](#).

Failure to comply with the WHS Act may constitute a breach of the WA Health Code of Conduct (Code). The Code is part of the [Integrity Policy Framework](#) issued pursuant to Section 26 of the [Health Services Act 2016](#) and is binding on all WACHS staff which for this purpose includes employees, trainees, apprentices, work experience students, volunteers, outworkers, contractors or sub-contractors, employees of a contractor or sub-contractor and employees of a labour hire company.

WACHS staff are reminded that compliance with all policies and procedures is mandatory.

6. References

WACHS Work Health Safety and Wellbeing Statement of Commitment 2023.

Department of Health's [Work Health and Safety Management Policy](#).

7. Definitions

Term	Definition
Contractor	A person who is engaged to provide a service to WACHS through a contract for services.
Health and Safety Representative (HSR)	A worker who has been properly elected to represent other workers in the interest of safety and health at the workplace for which they were elected.
Line Manager / Supervisor	A person who has responsibility for management and supervision of workers.
Risk	The possibility of an unwanted event occurring measured in terms of the possible consequences and likelihood of the event occurring.
Safety Risk	An event, occurrence, state or condition that has the potential to inflict injury or harm to a person.
Worker	Anyone who performs paid or unpaid work in any capacity for a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU), an employer, business or organisation is considered a worker. Workers include employees, trainees, apprentices, work experience students, volunteers, outworkers, contractors or sub-contractors, employees of a contractor or sub-contractor and employees of a labour hire company.

Term	Definition
Work Health and Safety	Has the same meaning as Occupational Safety and Health.
Work Health and Safety Committee	A Committee comprising of managers and workers that has been established to monitor health and safety issues in a workplace.
Workplace	An area or place, vehicle or vessel whether on land or water, where a worker performs his or her duties on behalf of WACHS and includes but is not limited to hospital premises, laboratories, workshops, training rooms, on-site and off-site facilities and offices.

8. Document Summary

Coverage	WACHS wide
Audience	All staff
Records Management	Non Clinical: Corporate Recordkeeping Compliance Policy
Related Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Health Safety Act 2020 (WA) • Work Health and Safety (General) Regulations 2022 (WA) • Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act 1981 (WA)
Related Mandatory Policies / Frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MP 0117/19 Prevention of Workplace Bullying Policy • MP 0124/19 Code of Conduct Policy • MP 0159/21 Workplace Aggression and Violence Policy • MP 0174/21 Refusal or Withdrawal of Care for a Patient Exhibiting Aggressive or Violent Behaviour Policy • MP 0180/23 Work Health and Safety Management Policy • Risk, Compliance & Audit Framework • Work Health and Safety Framework
Related WACHS Policy Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement of Commitment • Emergency (Disaster) Management Arrangements Policy • Job Hazard Analysis Procedure • Learning and Development Policy • Manual Tasks Policy • Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy • Pre-Employment Health Assessment (PEHA) Policy • Safe Driving Policy • Staff Support Post Critical Incident Guideline • Workers Compensation and Injury Management Procedure • Working in Isolation Policy
Other Related Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of Practice - Occupational safety and health in the Western Australian public sector 2007 • WorkSafe WA Code of Practice: Violence and aggression at work (2022)
Related Forms	WACHS Safety Risk Report Form
Related Training Packages	Nil
Aboriginal Health Impact Statement Declaration (ISD)	ISD Record ID: 2708
National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards	1.29-1.33

Aged Care Quality Standards	Nil
National Standards for Mental Health Services	Nil

9. Document Control

Version	Published date	Current from	Summary of changes
2.01	28 November 2023	11 March 2021	Minor review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Title change from “Occupational Safety and Health Policy”. Legislative updates. Template updated.
2.02	30 May 2025	11 March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> minor amendment to update link to Statement of Commitment
2.03	16 March 2026	11 March 2021	Minor amendments to Document Summary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> hyperlink update to MP 0159/21 addition of WorkSafe Violence and aggression at work Code of Practice addition of Working in Isolation Policy

10. Approval

Policy Owner	Executive Director People Capability Culture
Co-approver	Nil
Contact	Director Work Health Safety Wellbeing
Business Unit	Work Health and Safety
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