

Employee Domestic and Family Violence Support Procedure



1 Purpose

To outline the support available for Employees who experience, or are affected by, Domestic and Family Violence.

2 Scope

This Procedure must be read in conjunction with the Employee Equity and Diversity Policy, Code of Conduct Policy and Employee Health and Wellbeing Procedure.

This Procedure applies to all Employees.

3 Procedure Overview

This Procedure outlines the support, recommended processes and entitlements available for Employees who experience, or are affected by, Domestic and Family Violence.

4 Procedures

4.1 Management commitment

The Procedure aims to ensure that those Employees who experience, or are affected by, Domestic and Family Violence are responded to appropriately, quickly, positively and in confidence.

The University recognises that it is important to make Employees aware of Domestic and Family Violence, and to ensure all Employees are equipped with appropriate support, knowledge and skills to respond appropriately. Information about the types of Domestic and Family Violence is on the White Ribbon 'Understanding Domestic and Family Violence' website. Guidelines have been developed to increase knowledge, support and guidance in recognising, responding and referring Employees who experience, or are affected by, Domestic and Family Violence.

4.2 Employee obligation

Employees have an obligation to comply with safety, privacy, Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying legislation and to promote and understand the benefits and importance of positive health and wellbeing. All Employees have an obligation to conduct themselves in accordance with the University's Code of Conduct Policy. Employees found to have breached these obligations may be subject to the University's disciplinary Procedures.

4.3 Responding to Employees

Employees who experience, or are affected by, Domestic and Family Violence may seek support through the following mechanisms.

4.3.1 Leave arrangements

Employees who experience Domestic and Family Violence may access:

- Domestic and Family Violence leave and/or special leave for the purposes of:
 - attending medical/counselling appointments;
 - attending legal proceedings or seeking legal advice;
 - seeking safe housing;
 - organising alternate care or education arrangements for children;
 - rebuilding support networks for children, family or others; or
 - any other activity relating to managing issues of Domestic or Family Violence; and/or
 - annual leave and long-service leave where appropriate.

An Employee experiencing Domestic and Family Violence may take the Domestic and Family Violence leave as special leave.

Applications for leave should be made in accordance with the Leave of Absence Procedure and the Other Leave Types Schedule.

An Employee who supports a member of their immediate family or a member of their household experiencing Domestic and Family Violence, may take personal/carer's leave to provide necessary support such as accompanying the person to court or hospital, or to mind children.

4.3.2 Flexible working arrangements

An Employee may also request flexible working arrangements, subject to operational requirements and reasonable business grounds, if they experience Domestic and Family Violence. This may also be extended to Employees if they are required to provide care and support to a member of their immediate family or a member of their household who is experiencing, or is affected by, Domestic and Family Violence. These changes may include, but are not limited to, changes to hours of work, varying start and finishing times, temporary change

in duties, or temporary changes to work location.

An Employee may be required to provide supporting documentation or evidence when requesting access to leave or other flexible working arrangements. This documentation or evidence could be an agreed document issued by the police service in the relevant geographic location, a court, a medical practitioner, a family violence support service or the Employee's lawyer.

4.3.3 Individual support and support services

Employees who experience, or are affected by, Domestic and Family Violence are encouraged to advise their Supervisor or the People Portfolio to enable appropriate safety measures to be put in place, and options such as leave and flexible working arrangements to be considered. The safety of Employees at work is paramount and measures to ensure Employee safety will depend on the Employee's circumstances. This can include, but is not limited to:

- appropriate temporary accommodation close to the respective University campus;
- a temporary mobile telephone; and/or
- appropriate technology with immediate emergency services notifications.

A Domestic and Family Violence Risk Assessment Checklist is available to Employees who experience, or are affected by, Domestic and Family Violence to assess their risks and required support levels. The checklist is provided on the People Portfolio website and Employees can confidentially discuss this checklist with their Supervisor or the People Portfolio. This checklist should be used as a guide only as each situation will differ depending on individual circumstances.

An Employee may request, in consultation with their Supervisor or the Chief People Officer, changes to their business related contact details including, but not limited to, position, section, office, location, phone, extension, email. Consideration can also be given to removing personal and business related details from public access on the University website.

Individuals concerned for their immediate safety on campus should contact the University emergency number extension 2222.

The Employee Assistance Program is a confidential counselling service to assist Employees and members of their immediate family with a wide range of personal or work related concerns.

In addition to the above, multiple Domestic and Family Violence community resources are available to Employees or members of their immediate family from the People Portfolio website.

4.4 Professional development

All Employees have a responsibility to increase their awareness of, and know the signs to recognise, respond and refer issues related to, Domestic and Family Violence. The University will provide training for Supervisors and Employees to heighten this awareness and ensure information is provided about the Procedure and appropriate ways to respond to issues of Domestic and Family Violence.

4.5 Return to work after leave

Employees who are returning to work after leave following Domestic and Family Violence related situations are encouraged to talk to their Supervisor and/or the People Portfolio.

Supervisors should assess any ongoing safety concerns to the individual Employee and/or those in the work area, in order to facilitate a safe return to work. This can include the development of a Workplace Domestic Violence Plan which will encompass responsibilities of both the Supervisor and the Employee.

4.6 Perpetrating Domestic and Family Violence

The University does not tolerate Domestic and Family Violence and prohibits Domestic and Family Violence being perpetrated in, or from, the workplace. This behaviour may be considered as a breach of the University's Code of Conduct Policy and some breaches may also have consequences for individuals under the criminal law.

Any Employee who threatens, harasses or abuses a family or household member at, or from, the workplace may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the USQ Enterprise Agreement, or relevant employment contract. If an Employee is observed, or suspected of, perpetrating Domestic and Family Violence in, or from, the workplace, Supervisors have a responsibility to undertake appropriate action.

The University encourages perpetrators, or alleged perpetrators, to confidentially disclose allegations of, or court proceedings involving, Domestic and Family Violence orders.

Any University Employee who is a perpetrator of Domestic and Family Violence will normally be supported to access specialist services that are not available after business hours.

Where the perpetrator and their partner are both Employees of the University, consideration will normally be given to alternative work arrangements to ensure the safety of all parties.

4.7 Reporting of concerns by colleagues

Employees are encouraged to report their concerns about colleagues experiencing or perpetrating Domestic and Family Violence to their Supervisor or the People Portfolio.

4.8 Confidentiality and protection

An Employee who discloses that they are currently experiencing, or are affected by, Domestic and Family Violence, or has previously experienced or has been affected by, Domestic and Family Violence will be treated fairly in terms of their employment, career development, or when impacted as a result of that disclosure. An Employee who raises genuine concerns about colleagues experiencing, or affected by, Domestic and Family Violence will also be treated fairly and confidentially.

All Employee-related information relating to Domestic and Family Violence will be treated as confidential and will be located separately from an Employee's personal file, unless authorised by the Employee. Information will only be released if required by Regulatory Compliance Instruments or to maintain the safety of an Employee or any other individual.

5 References

Nil.

6 Schedules

This procedure must be read in conjunction with its subordinate schedules as provided in the table below.

7 Procedure Information

Accountable Officer	Chief People Officer
Responsible Officer	Chief People Officer
Policy Type	University Procedure
Policy Suite	Employee Equity and Diversity Policy
Subordinate Schedules	
Approved Date	12/12/2018
Effective Date	3/4/2019
Review Date	3/4/2022
Relevant Legislation	Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012 (Qld) USQ Enterprise Agreement
Related Policies	Acceptable use of ICT Resources Policy Code of Conduct Policy

Related Procedures	Disciplinary Action for Misconduct or Serious Misconduct Procedure Employee Health and Wellbeing Procedure Leave of Absence Procedure
Related forms, publications and websites	Employee Assistance Program Domestic and Family Violence Guidelines Domestic and Family Violence Return to Work Plan Domestic and Family Violence Risk Assessment Checklist Domestic and Family Violence Risk Management Plan (under development) People Portfolio Website Understanding Domestic and Family Violence
Definitions	Terms defined in the Definitions Dictionary Delegate (noun) Delegate (noun) means the officer, Employee or committee of the University to whom, or to which, a delegation of authority has been made under this Policy. Domestic and Family Violence Domestic and Family Violence behaviour includes, but is not limited to, physical or sexual violence, emotional or psychological abuse, financial abuse or any behaviour that is threatening or coercive or in any other way controls or dominates an individual which causes safety or well-being concerns for that individual. Employee A person employed by the University and whose conditions of employment are covered by the USQ Enterprise Agreement and includes persons employed on a continuing, fixed term or casual basis. Employees also include senior Employees whose conditions of employment are covered by a written agreement or contract with the University. Policy A high level strategic directive that establishes a principle based

approach on a subject. Policy is operationalised through Procedures that give instructions and set out processes to implement a Policy.

[Procedure](#)

An operational instruction that sets out the process to operationalise a Policy.

[Regulatory Compliance Instrument](#)

An external compliance instrument provided by legislation, regulation, standards, statutes or rules, including subordinate instruments.

[University](#)

The term 'University' or 'USQ' means the University of Southern Queensland.

[USQ Enterprise Agreement](#)

University of Southern Queensland Enterprise Agreement 2018-2021.

Definitions that relate to this procedure only

Supervisor

Any person responsible for leading the activities of others. In the context of this Procedure, a Supervisor includes Employees at any classification level or title who have responsibilities for leading, managing or supervising work teams and/or individual Employees.

Keywords

Leave, personal leave, carers leave, special leave, flexible working arrangements, support services, domestic violence, family violence

Record No

16/398PL