

1. Purpose

To promote appropriate behaviour in the workplace, and to ensure acts of bullying and violence will not be tolerated.

Greater Dandenong City Council (GDCC) is committed to protecting the health, safety and wellbeing of all staff and will provide as far as is practicable, a safe workplace which is free from Bullying and Violent behaviour. Bullying and Occupational Violence will not be tolerated. It is not an acceptable part of Council's work culture and can harm a person's health and wellbeing.

2. Scope

To provide a safe work environment for all staff, contractors, volunteers and visitors.

3. Definitions

Bullying: Workplace Bullying is repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed toward an employee, or group of employees, that creates a risk to health and safety. Please refer to Council's *Appropriate Workplace Behaviours Policy* for a full definition and examples of "bullying".

Workplace Violence: Workplace Violence is defined as any incident where an employee is physically attacked or threatened in the workplace. Please refer to Council's *Appropriate Workplace Behaviours Policy* for a full definition and examples of "violence".

Health and Safety Representative (HSR): An employee elected by the Designated Work Group (DWG) to represent them on matters relating to OHS.

4. Responsibilities

For general OHS responsibilities refer to the GDCC OHS Responsibility Procedure.

Team Leader Risk Management & OHS is responsible for:

- ensuring the Procedure is implemented and reviewed, as required.

Managers are responsible for:

- implementing the Procedure in their area of responsibility;
- monitoring work conditions and ensuring, as far as practicable, a safe working environment which may include 'modification of the working environment'.

5. Procedure

Council's *Appropriate Workplace Behaviours Policy* details Council's expectations in relation to appropriate standards of workplace behaviour including what constitutes bullying and violence in the Workplace (located in The Source > Your Council > About Us > Council Documents > Appropriate Workplace Behaviours link).

All reports of possible bullying and violence in the workplace will be treated seriously and considered in accordance with Council's *Workplace Behavioural Concerns Resolution Policy and Guidelines*.

This policy outlines the manner by which Council will consider, investigate and assist in an effort to resolve workplace behavioural concerns, including bullying and violence in the workplace (located in The Source > Your Council > About Us > Council Documents > Appropriate Workplace Behaviours link).

All reports will be dealt with discreetly and confidentially.

To ensure all matters in relation to identifying Bullying and Violence in the Workplace are handled in an appropriate and timely manner, employees are directed to the *Appropriate Workplace Behaviours Policy* (located in The Source > Your Council > About Us > Council Documents > Appropriate Workplace Behaviours link).

Once it has been determined that the matter may be of a Bullying or Violence nature, the matter will be handled through the *Workplace Behavioural Concerns Resolution Policy & Guidelines* (also located in The Source > Your Council > About Us > Council Documents > Appropriate Workplace Behaviours link).

This will also require the affected person(s) to submit an incident report in Council's injury & illness management system by completing the online Incident Near Miss & Hazard Report form <https://quicksafe.elumina.com.au/external/?key=GDCC369>. This is to ensure that a proper process is undertaken subject to any WorkCover Claim.

The report will be dealt with discreetly and confidentially at the direction of the affected person(s).

Resolving issues at Greater Dandenong City Council

What to do if you are being Bullied:

- Do not ignore the Bullying – ignoring the behaviour could be taken as tacit consent
- Refer to the *Appropriate Workplace Behaviours Policy* to understand your options in dealing with the situation. You can always get help with this, as set out below, before making an official report or complaint
- This may include making a report or a complaint under the *Workplace Behavioural Concerns Resolution Policy & Guidelines*;

Seeking Assistance

In accordance with the Appropriate Workplace Behaviours Policy and the Workplace Behavioural Concerns Resolution Policy & Guidelines advice may be sought from, or complaints lodged with, any of the following:

- *Team Leader Organisational Development (designated EO Officer);*
- *Department Manager;*
- *Any Director;*
- *Your designated Health & Safety Representative*;*
- *A Union Representative;*
- *A Contact Officer/Representative**

* Where it is not feasible to seek advice and support or lodge a complaint with your designated Health and Safety Representative you may choose to speak to any other Health and Safety Representative as listed on The Source and on notice boards.

** EEO Contact Representatives cannot offer advice about your complaint. Their role is to provide confidential, impartial information and support to staff who have inquiries or would like to explore their options on Bullying related matters.

An employee who wishes to have an independent, confidential discussion on how to respond to situations involving Workplace Bullying or Violence is encouraged to utilise the services of Council's Employee Assistance Program (EAP). To access the Employee Assistance Program, please refer to the EAP page on The Source > Health, Safety and Wellbeing > Employee Assistance Program or contact Converge International on (free call) 1300 687 327.

Complaints:

Council will handle complaints about Workplace Bullying and Violence through the *Workplace Behavioural Concerns Resolution Policy & Guidelines*:

All reports of Bullying or Violence will be treated seriously and will be investigated thoroughly, promptly and confidentially through the *Workplace Behavioural Concerns Resolution Policy & Guidelines*.

Lodging a Formal Complaint to the Authorities:

This procedure does not prevent Council staff from lodging a complaint with the Victorian WorkCover Authority or, in cases involving Serious Bullying or Threatening or Violent behaviour, from reporting any incident to Victoria Police or the Fair Work Commission.

Council encourages staff who refer a matter to an external agency to report the matter internally to any of the people listed in the *Seeking Assistance* section above.

Appeals:

Please refer to the *Workplace Behavioural Concerns Resolution Policy & Guidelines* for further information.

More Information:

If you have a query about this procedure or need more information please contact the Team Leader Risk & OHS Unit on 8571 5177.

If required, information or assistance can be obtained from Worksafe Victoria at:

Ground Floor
222 Exhibition Street
Melbourne 3000
Phone: (03) 9641 1555
Fax: (03) 9641 1222

6. References

- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- *Occupational Health & Safety Regulations 2017*

7. Related Documents

OHS Policy
 Crimes Amendment (Bullying) Act 2011
 GDCC Staff Code of Conduct
 GDCC Councillor's Code of Conduct
 Local Government Act 1989 (Victoria)
 WorkSafe Victoria's publication Workplace Bullying – a guide for employers (March 2020)
 GDCC Appropriate Workplace Behaviours Policy
 GDCC Workplace Behavioural Concerns Resolution Policy & Guidelines
 GDCC Role Statements
 EBA 2018
 Fair Work Act
 OHS Consultation, Communication and Issue Resolution Procedure
 OHS Responsibility Procedure

8. Document History

Version Number	Issue Date	Approved	Description of Change
0.1			1st Draft from Risk & OHS Unit. Previous version of Procedure was under old document control process: COS0047 Version "G" Effective: February 2004, Last Review: March 2017
0.2		09.02.2021	Accepted by the OHS Policy Sub-Committee
0.3		15.03.2021	14 Day Employee Consultation
1.0	Apr 2021	Apr 2021	Approved by the OHS Oversight Team