

Occupational Health and Safety

COUNCIL POLICY NO. 033

1. POLICY

Gannawarra Shire Council is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment for all employees, volunteers, contractors, and visitors. This policy outlines Council's responsibilities and approach to Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) to prevent workplace injuries and illnesses and ensure compliance with relevant legislation.

Objectives:

- Prevent work related accidents, injuries, and illnesses.
- Maintain a safe working environment for all employees, volunteers, contractors, and visitors.
- Promote health and well-being through safe work practices.
- Provide clear procedures and instructions to ensure safe work systems.
- Ensure compliance with legislative requirements and current industry standards
- Provide necessary training, supervision, and resources to maintain a safe workplace.

Commitment:

Gannawarra Shire Council acknowledges its legal obligations under the *Victorian Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* and other legislation. Management and supervisors play a key role in ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of all individuals within the organisation. To fulfil this commitment, Council will:

- Identify, assess and control workplace hazards through proactive risk management.
- Ensure compliance with all relevant OHS legislation, standards and best practices.
- Maintain safe work systems, including emergency response plans.
- Provide and maintain safe plant, vehicles, equipment, and substances.
- Ensure safe handling, storage, and transport of hazardous materials.
- Provide appropriate facilities to support employee welfare.
- Deliver comprehensive OHS training and supervision.
- Consult with employees, volunteers, contractors, and visitors to enhance workplace safety.
- Allocate sufficient resources, including financial and human resources, to support OHS initiatives.
- Regularly review and improve OHS policies and procedures through audits and inspections.
- Establish measurable OHS objectives and targets to ensure continued improvement in eliminating workplace risks.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

Chief Executive Officer

- Has ultimate responsibility for the implementation and review of the Gannawarra Shire Council OHS Management System.

Managers and Supervisors

- Are responsible for the effective implementation and regular review of the OHS Management System and Policy.
- Must observe, implement and fulfil responsibilities under the Acts and Regulations which apply to OHS, and comply with Australian Standards and approved Codes of Practice.
- Must ensure that the agreed procedures for regular consultation between management and those designated and elected OHS responsibilities are followed.
- Are responsible for ensuring that the OHS Management System is effectively implemented, and aligned with Gannawarra Shire Council objectives.
- Must ensure that all significant risks associated with hazards in their operation are identified, controlled, registered and reviewed in consultation with employees and other affected persons.
- Must ensure all incidents within their area of control are reported, investigated and that corrective actions are implemented.

Employees and Volunteers

- Must take reasonable care of their own health and that of others in the workplace.
- Are responsible for the proper use and maintenance of their allocated Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Have a duty to actively participate in OHS related programs.
- Must comply with relevant OHS policies, procedures and programs.
- Must not bypass or misuse systems, plant, vehicles, equipment or substances provided for OHS purposes.
- Must report incidents and any unsafe conditions that come to their attention.

Occupational Health and Safety Committee

- To be consulted regarding OHS Management System, including policy, procedure and program review and implementation.

Contractors

- Must complete and submit all required pre - qualification documentation via the Rapid Contractor System.
- Must follow health and safety directions from designated officers.
- Must ensure any place of work under their control is maintained in a condition that is safe and without risk to health.
- Must provide and maintain a safe working environment for employees and sub-contractors, including adequate welfare facilities.
- Must ensure that any person affected by their work are not exposed to risks to health and safety.
- Must comply with all relevant Acts, Regulations, Codes of Practice and relevant Council policies.

3. INCIDENT REPORTING & RESPONSE

- All workplace incidents, injuries, and hazards must be reported to a Safety Representative, Supervisor and/or Manager within twelve hours.
- Serious incidents must be reported to WorkSafe, the Chief Executive Officer, Manager People Culture, relevant director and Governance Officer immediately, in accordance with legal requirements.
- Incident investigations will be conducted to determine root causes and implement corrective measures.
- Council will maintain records of all incidents and ensure corrective actions are tracked.

4. CONSULTATION & COMMUNICATION

Council values open communication and consultation regarding workplace safety. This will be achieved through:

- Consultation with the OHS Committee on policies and procedures.
- Active participation in risk assessments and workplace safety initiatives.
- Encouraging employees and volunteers to provide feedback on safety manners.

5. GENERAL SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

All Gannawarra Shire Council employees, volunteers, contractors, and visitors are responsible for maintaining a safe work environment by:

- Following safe work practices and procedures.
- Reporting any suspected health or safety risks to their manager or safety representative.
- Using and maintaining PPE as required.
- Reporting all incidents, injuries, and near misses as soon as possible.

Ensuring that any work-related notifiable incident is reported to WorkSafe, the Chief Executive Officer, Manager People Culture, relevant director and Governance Officer immediately.

6. POLICY REVIEW

Council will review the Occupational Health and Safety policy as required but always within twelve months after a general election of the Council.

At the time of review, this policy was compliant with the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

7. FURTHER INFORMATION

Members of the public may inspect all Council policies online at www.gannawarra.vic.gov.au.

Any enquiries in relation to this policy should be directed to the Manager People Culture or Governance Officer on (03) 5450 9333.