



# Responding to Domestic and Family Violence Policy

## Scope

This policy applies to Brook RED Community Members, Nominated Support People, Board Members, employees, volunteers, and students on placement.

## Purpose

This policy informs how Brook RED will respond to instances where someone discloses that they are affected by *domestic and family violence*.

## Principles

Brook RED firmly believes that any occurrences of domestic and family violence are unacceptable. We recognise the severe adverse impact on health and wellbeing that domestic violence has on those in our community and we are committed to responding in a way that promotes compassion, empathy, and self-determination. Brook RED also recognises the gendered nature of domestic and family violence where women are disproportionately affected by this issue and consider intersectionality in our approach when working with those affected by domestic and family violence.

## Policy

Brook RED will uphold a workplace culture and environment that promotes non-violent, equitable, and respectful gender relations. Brook RED will take all reports of domestic and family violence seriously and will respond to Community Members and employees who disclose being affected by the issue. Brook RED will ensure that appropriate supports and supervision are in place for Line Managers to have these conversations with Team Members around what to do when someone discloses that they are affected by domestic and family violence.

Brook RED will take appropriate steps to support Community Members around the impacts of domestic and family violence by:

- Ensuring staff are equipped to have conversations around this issue through appropriate training and education on the topic
- Offering psychoeducation on the matter where appropriate
- Upholding least-restrictive practice and self-determination principles in instances where someone discloses that they are affected
- Make warm referrals to appropriate services for specialised supports to those affected

In instances where an employee discloses to a line manager that they are affected by domestic and family violence, Brook RED will:

- Listen to and believe the employee and give them complete control over how they manage their situation, including their choice to access support options available to them
- Make reasonable adjustments to working conditions where possible
- Make employees aware of available paid and unpaid leave options

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- Provide options for counselling or other appropriate supports
- Support employees to put a Workplace Safety Plan in place

It is important that the privacy of people experiencing domestic and family violence is strictly maintained, and that disclosures of domestic and family violence are only provided to appropriate people (such as management) as required, and only with the consent of the person experiencing the violence.

In addition, it is important that information pertaining to a disclosure of domestic and family violence is kept strictly confidential and is not recorded on the person's file without their permission (with the exception of employees recording domestic and family violence leave). If an employee chooses to record information about their domestic and family violence experience, it is important that only information that relates to the workplace is documented, as this information could be used if a domestic and family violence issue is brought before the courts.

Domestic and family violence incidents involving children may need to be reported to a relevant authority, in line with relevant legislation. This should be undertaken in consultation with the employee experiencing violence as well as a specialist family violence service.

Responding to employees who use or may use violence and abuse need to be handled appropriately and sensitively. Holding employees accountable for their behaviour is fundamental and misconduct may have direct consequences. Actions to address this may include monitoring the situation, referral to support services, making temporary adjustments to workplace or operations, and/or disciplinary action.

## Definitions of Terms Used

### Domestic and Family Violence

The Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act (2012) defines domestic and family violence as often an overt or subtle expression of a power imbalance, resulting in one person living in fear of another, and usually involves an ongoing pattern of abuse over a period of time. Domestic and family violence can have serious impacts on people who experience it, including physical, emotional, and psychological harm, and can result in death. Domestic and family violence can take many forms ranging from physical, emotional, and sexual assault through to financial control, isolation from family and friends, threats of self-harm or harm to pets or loved ones, constant monitoring of whereabouts, or stalking.

## References

Brook RED Code of Conduct  
Brook RED Employee Leave Policy  
Brook RED Least Restrictive Practice Policy  
Brook RED Person Centred Practice Policy

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Domestic and Family Violence Workplace Policy Guide – Queensland Government

## Document Control and Record of Changes

<b>Version</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>	<b>Approved by</b>	<b>Summary of Change</b>	<b>Date of Next Review</b>
Version 01	December 2023	Eschleigh Balzamo	Introduction of new policy	June 2024

The General Manager has overall responsibility for this policy. If there are any questions regarding this policy, please direct these to the Business Services Manager or General Manager.