



# Work Health and Safety (WH&S) Policy and Procedure

## Scope

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

## Purpose

To promote a safe workplace and to provide the information, training, and supervision necessary to minimise risks to health and safety.

## Principles

Brook RED values people and wishes to create an environment of dignity and respect. We are committed to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy working environment. Hazards or risks to health and safety will be eliminated or minimised, as far as is reasonably practicable, so as to prevent injury, illnesses, and dangerous incidents.

We are committed to complying with the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, the Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011, codes of practice, and other safety guidance material.

Management will:

- Ensure the business complies with all legislation relating to health and safety
- Eliminate or minimise all workplace hazards and risks wherever reasonably practicable
- Provide information, instruction, and training to enable all workers to work safely
- Supervise workers to ensure work activities are performed safely
- Consult with and involve workers on matters relating to health, safety, and wellbeing
- Provide appropriate safety equipment and *Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)*
- Provide a suitable injury management and return to work program

Workers will:

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety
- Encourage other workers to work in a healthy and safe manner
- Follow safe work procedures, instructions, and rules
- Use any provided Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and be properly trained to use it
- Participate in safety training
- Report health and safety hazards
- Report all injuries and incidents
- Use safety equipment and personal protective equipment as instructed

Senior workers are responsible for completing the Site Inspection Tool every six months to ensure we are regularly checking the safety at our sites.

Our goal is to provide a safe and healthy work environment that is free from workplace injury and illness. This will only be achieved through the participation, co-operation, and commitment of everyone in the workplace.

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## Procedure

### Asbestos

None of our Brook RED sites contain asbestos. Where we work in spaces known to contain asbestos, there must be an asbestos management plan and asbestos register in place.

### Assessing Risk

When a risk is identified it should be assessed using the Brook RED Risk Management Policy and Procedure.

### Blood and Body Fluids Spills

The following procedure should be used if there is a blood or body fluid spill:

- Put on appropriate PPE (gloves and mask)
- Wipe up spill with absorbent material or scrape up using the dust pans
- Place contaminated absorbent material into plastic bag for disposal
- Clean the area with disinfectant using disposable cloth
- Disinfect scrapers (or throw away and purchase new ones if required)
- Wash hands
- Use the Caution Wet Floor sign to inform others
- Request the advice of management if unsure

### Communicable Diseases

Brook RED will comply with all directions from a public health authority and/or recognised medical authority in relation to communicable diseases. Brook RED will consider that Queensland Health and the Australian Government are the sources of credible and up-to-date information regarding communicable diseases and responses to them.

We will support and assist our employees, Community Members, and others relevant, to minimise their exposure to communicable diseases during their work or accessing of services at Brook RED.

### Drugs and Alcohol

We are committed to maintaining a positive and productive workplace that is recovery oriented, as such no alcohol or drugs may be consumed or permitted on property. If, in the opinion of Brook RED staff, someone is affected by alcohol and/or other drugs as such that they are unfit to attend safely, we will ask them to leave. If we are working in their home, we will terminate the appointment or take that person to hospital as appropriate.

### Electrical Safety

Electrical appliances and safety switches are tested and tagged annually by authorised electrical personnel. All electrical equipment must be protected from damage, used safely, and checked regularly.

### Evacuation/Emergency Response

An Evacuation Plan has been developed and this is displayed throughout our sites. In an emergency DIAL 000 for Fire, Police, and Ambulance. Once emergency services have been

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notified, staff must attempt to contact the General Manager. If the General Manager is unavailable, staff must use the Contact Hierarchy for Emergencies found in the Responding to Incidents Policy and Procedure.

## Fire Safety

Brook RED has a Fire and Evacuation Plan and a copy of this plan along with all other relevant documents is kept at each site and electronically. Each site has an Evacuation Coordinator and the Fire and Evacuation Plan is reviewed annually. Procedures comply with Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008. All fire emergency equipment, such as alarms and fire extinguishers, are tested by an approved provider annually. All staff complete fire and evacuation training at intake. All employees, Community Members, and visitors must sign in and sign out of Brook RED buildings.

## First Aid

First aid is the immediate treatment or care given to a person suffering from an injury or illness until more advanced care is provided or the person recovers. Brook RED endeavours to ensure all staff are trained in First Aid and CPR. Brook RED has in place the following first aid procedures:

- The provision of appropriately stocked first aid kits within the workplace and in all vehicles
- Clear signage with the location of the first aid kits
- Keep a copy of First Aid/CPR qualifications in HR files

## Hazardous Substances

Hazardous substances are chemicals, organic matter, and other substances, which pose a health risk when people are exposed to them. These may include glues, paints, solvents, corrosives, adhesives, thinners, cleaning solutions, chemicals, flammable material, and Dangerous Goods. Dangerous Goods are hazardous substances that are also explosive or flammable in nature with storage required that is fit for purpose.

At Brook RED sites, hazardous chemicals are not required to be included in a register. This is because the chemicals we use are consumer products packed primarily for use by a household consumer and used in the workplace in quantities and in a way that is consistent with household use and incidental to the nature of work carried out.

If we were to use chemicals in an industrial manner we would include them in a Hazardous Substances Register and have a current Safety Data Sheet (SDS). Quantities of hazardous substances stored for use shall be kept to a minimum.

## Infection Control

Stopping the spread of infection is everyone's responsibility and includes:

- Regular cleaning/disinfecting as appropriate
- Practicing good hand hygiene
- Following respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette
- Wearing PPE where required
- Correctly cleaning and managing spills

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- Correctly handling food, waste, and linen

## Manual Handling

Manual handling is any task that requires you to push, pull, lift, carry, move, hold or lower any object, person, or animal. Although fairly minimal at Brook RED, manual handling is required from time to time such as moving furniture from one room to another. Employees are encouraged to do this with correct ergonomics and with specific regard to their safety. If an employee feels that a manual handling task poses a risk to them, they should notify management who will make other arrangements.

## Medical Conditions

People visiting Brook RED are responsible for informing staff if they have a medical condition. We foster a culture of acceptance and we will not discriminate based on medical condition. We will work with the person to put a plan in place in order to help us better understand the person's needs so that we can support them appropriately.

## Mobility Assistance

Wherever possible, Brook RED centres and activities are wheelchair and other mobility aid accessible. While we understand the challenges that some people may face with their personal mobility, we will not lift, pull, push, carry, hold, move, or restrain people as these activities pose an unreasonable risk to our Community Members, Board Members, employees, volunteers, and students on placement. Should people request support with mobility we will identify and make referral to appropriate services.

## Psychosocial Hazards

As a community mental health service, Brook RED is aware of the potential for exposure to psychological stressors in the workplace. Brook RED is committed to preventing and minimising the impact of such stressors wherever possible. Management regularly consults with staff regarding *Psychosocial Hazards* and maintains a register to identify hazards, assess and control risks, and review control measures. Results from this process inform our policy/procedure development and decision making framework.

Brook RED acknowledges that all staff have had previous mental health challenges and we take the management of psychosocial hazards in the workplace very seriously to promote wellness and build resilience. Staff will inform management if they are experiencing any symptoms of psychological stress and we will work with the person and their Line Manager to identify how these can be addressed and/or minimised.

## Return to Work

Brook RED has workers' compensation and return to work processes to ensure that employees receive appropriate treatment and benefits including assistance in returning to their normal duties after a workplace injury or illness.

Brook RED management will:

- Ensure that our organisation has a current workers' compensation insurance policy
- Submit all wages information and pay premiums by the due dates
- Notify WorkCover Queensland of any workplace injuries

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- Make suitable duties available to injured workers
- Work with WorkCover Queensland, the injured worker, their doctor, and other healthcare providers to develop an effective return to work program
- Not dismiss an injured worker solely or mainly because of their injury within 12 months of the injury or illness occurring
- Monitor worker's compensations insurance policy details and advise WorkCover Queensland of any significant changes to details regarding business activities or estimated wages
- Monitor and review incident reporting and return to work program on a regular basis to ensure we still provide effective assistance to any injured workers in returning them to their normal workplace duties

If an employee is injured at work, they can follow the procedure below:

1. Complete General Incident Form
2. Notify Management
3. Submit WorkCover claim
4. Receive claim outcome
5. Complete Return To Work Form with Line Manager

## Slips, Trips, and Falls

Brook RED endeavours to prevent/minimise slips, trips, and falls by following these guidelines:

- Avoid walking on slippery floors
- Keep floors free of water and grease
- Clean floors regularly
- Post warning signs around spills or wet floors
- Clean up spills immediately
- Use floor cleaning products to remove oil and grease
- Use storage areas for equipment and be alert to the dangers of leaving boxes, rubbish, bags and furniture in walkways, entrances, and exits
- Where there is a readily remediated hazard (such as a banana peel on the floor), staff and community are encouraged to remove it promptly. Where a hazard is identified and cannot be readily remediated (such as a sink hole in the floor), notify others of the risk and inform management as soon as is practicable
- Staff are not permitted to use ladders other than a standard step ladder with a maximum of three steps. The step ladder must be undamaged, not overloaded, and placed on an even surface before use
- Tuck long cords away, use cable ties, or other cable management systems
- Secure rugs or mats

## Smoking

Brook RED recognises the dangers of active and passive smoking and is committed to providing a safe workplace for all. In the interest of healthy role-modelling, employees are requested not to smoke within 100metres of the centres and/or within eyesight of the centres. If delivering services in a mobile or community based context, staff that smoke are expected to have a conversation with their Line Manager about minimising the impact of their smoking. Employees will not perform any of their job duties where people are smoking. Employees will

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not work in vehicles, buildings, or homes where smoking is undertaken. Brook RED will provide support to employees or Community Members who wish to cease smoking and request support to do this.

## Storage of Medication

Brook RED acknowledges that RED House Guests may need to store their medication during their stay and are provided with a lockable storage box for this purpose. RED House Guests have personal responsibility for their own medications and must ensure that medication is appropriately and safely maintained.

## Sun Safety

From time-to-time Brook RED social programs involve outside activities. The following procedures should be used:

- Provision of sunscreen for Community Members, Nominated Support People, employees, volunteers, and students on placement
- Staff encourage use of sunscreen and hats
- Provision of water or access to water

## Tasks

Certain tasks that require training to ensure safety, such as mowing the lawn and using the barbeque, will require specific training and induction.

Brook RED staff can only perform tasks within their scope of duties. We do not specialise in landscaping and maintenance, therefore any activities that require power tools, specialised chemicals, or working at heights requires explicit permission in writing from management.

## Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

When delivering services in hospital settings, Brook RED will comply with contract requirements and relevant directives from the Hospital and Health Service in relation to vaccine-preventable diseases (VPD).

We will support and assist our employees to engage in the process of VPD compliance where required and appropriate to their role.

## Vehicles

All vehicles will be used in a manner that promotes the safety of all. Please see the Brook RED Vehicle Use Policy.

## Visiting or Working Within Hospitals

When visiting or working within hospitals, Brook RED acts in accordance with the guidelines set out by the facility. Outreach at mental health wards is conducted in common areas, meaning that Brook RED representatives are not permitted in patient's rooms. From time to time, we visit Community Members in medical hospitals, in this instance Brook RED representatives enter rooms/wards upon consent of the person and behave in a way that respects the person's privacy and personal space.

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## Visiting People's Homes/Outreach

Staff must complete a safety check over the phone prior to attending their home if it is the first time meeting with the person. If there are any safety concerns, a Safety Management Plan is made and together a decision can be made whether to meet off site or at the person's home. Wherever possible, the initial visit will be made with two staff. When visiting homes staff will notify their team of the location and their estimated time of return and will carry a mobile telephone.

## Working from Home/Remotely

Employees regularly working from home or remotely must ensure that their working environment is consistent with our policy. These employees must complete an annual Working From Home Checklist to be reviewed by their Line Manager.

## Definitions of Terms Used

### Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Equipment worn to protect the wearer from hazards such as physical injury, exposure to hazardous materials, and the spread of infection and illness.

### Psychosocial Hazards

The things at work that can harm mental health are known as psychosocial hazards. These hazards can also cause physical harm. Psychosocial hazards include:

- Job demands
- Low job control
- Poor support
- Lack of role clarity
- Poor organisational change management
- Inadequate reward and recognition
- Poor organisational justice
- Traumatic events or material
- Remote or isolated work
- Poor physical environment
- Violence and aggression
- Bullying
- Harassment, including sexual harassment, and
- Conflict or poor workplace relationships and interactions

Psychosocial hazards can come from:

- The design or management of work
- A work environment
- Plant (equipment) at a workplace, or
- Workplace interactions or behaviours.

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## Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

A vaccine preventable disease (VPD) is an illness that can be avoided—or made less severe—through vaccination. Some people may also become immune to VPDs after recovering from the disease naturally.

## References

Brook RED Body Fluid Spill Kit Checklist  
 Brook RED COVID-19 Response  
 Brook RED Fire and Evacuation Plans  
 Brook RED Garden Maintenance  
 Brook RED General Incident Report Form  
 Brook RED Hazardous Chemical Register  
 Brook RED Home Visit Safety Check Form  
 Brook RED Psychosocial Hazards Risk Register  
 Brook RED Risk Management Policy and Procedure  
 Brook RED Responding to Incidents Policy and Procedure  
 Brook RED Return to Work Form  
 Brook RED Safety Information Posters  
 Brook RED Site Inspection Tool  
 Brook RED Site Inspection Calendar  
 Brook RED Using the Barbeque  
 Brook RED Vehicle Use Policy  
 Brook RED Working From Home Checklist  
 Brook RED Your Safety and Supports Form  
 Building Fire Safety Regulation 2008  
 Managing Psychosocial Hazards in the Workplace Codes of Practice  
 Safe Work Australia  
 Vaccination of Workers in Healthcare Settings, Queensland Health 2025  
 Work Health and Safety Act 2011  
 Work Health and Safety Consultation, Cooperation, and Coordination Code of Practice  
 Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011  
 Workplace Health and Safety Queensland

## Document Control and Record of Changes

| Version    | Effective Date | Approved by       | Summary of Change                     | Date of Next Review |
|------------|----------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Version 01 | January 2017   | Eschleigh Balzamo | Introduction of new policy            | January 2018        |
| Version 02 | February 2017  | Eschleigh Balzamo | Addition of new procedure             | January 2018        |
| Version 03 | March 2017     | Eschleigh Balzamo | Addition of forms<br>Change of format | January 2018        |

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|------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|--|----------------|
| Version 04 | May 2017       | Eschleigh Balzamo                   | Change to version control<br>Change of format<br>Addition of content | January 2018   |
| Version 05 | September 2019 | Eschleigh Balzamo                   | Review and update  | January 2021   |
| Version 06 | June 2020      | Eschleigh Balzamo                   | Review and update  | January 2021   |
| Version 07 | June 2021      | Eschleigh Balzamo                   | Review and update  | June 2022      |
| Version 08 | June 2022      | Eschleigh Balzamo                   | Review and update  | June 2023      |
| Version 09 | August 2022    | Eschleigh Balzamo                   | Review and update  | July 2023      |
| Version 10 | August 2023    | Eschleigh Balzamo                   | Review and update  | July 2023      |
| Version 11 | January 2024   | Eschleigh Balzamo                   | Review and update  | August 2025    |
| Version 12 | September 2025 | Blake Barber                        | Review and update  | September 2026 |
| Version 13 | February 2026  | James Landsberg<br>Kristyn Bagguley | Addition of content  | September 2026 |

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.