

# Domestic and Family Violence Leave and Support Procedure

## Section 1 - Purpose and scope

### Purpose

(1) The purpose of this procedure is to outline the broad range of support the University offers to Staff experiencing Domestic and Family Violence and to detail how supervisors, managers and [HR Services](#) can assist.

(2) The University is committed to confidentially supporting Staff experiencing Domestic and Family Violence to continue to participate in the workplace and maintain their employment.

(3) The University aims to create a supportive work environment where Staff are comfortable in requesting assistance for Domestic and Family Violence related concerns.

### Scope

(4) This procedure applies to members of University Staff (as defined in clause 7 below). Specific parts of this Procedure may only apply to Staff who are covered by the University's Enterprise Agreement.

## Section 2 - Definitions

(5) 'Domestic and Family Violence' means a person in a family or domestic situation being subjected to patterns of behaviour that may include physical assault, sexual assault, verbal abuse, social isolation, economic deprivation, emotional abuse, threats and intimidation, harassment and/or stalking.

(6) 'HR Services' means Staff such as the relevant HR Business Partner, Workplace Health and Safety Manager or Workplace Relations Manager.

(7) 'Staff' means all persons employed by the University including but not limited to: full time employees; part-time employees; fixed-term employees; casual employees; adjunct, visiting and conjoint employees.

(8) 'Supervisor' means immediate Supervisor but can extend to more senior management in the work unit as appropriate.

## Section 3 - Domestic and family violence leave

(9) Domestic and Family Violence leave is available as follows:

- a. 15 days per annum for full-time Staff who are employed under the University's Enterprise Agreement;
- b. 15 days per annum on a pro rata basis for part-time Staff who are employed under the University's Enterprise Agreement; and
- c. 5 days unpaid leave for casual Staff.

(10) Full-time and part time Staff who have an entitlement to paid Domestic and Family Violence Leave will be paid their ordinary rate of pay when taking Domestic and Family Violence leave.

(11) Domestic and Family Violence leave does not accrue from year to year.

(12) A Staff member who has exhausted their entitlement to Domestic and Family Violence leave may access available personal leave or carers leave as additional Domestic and Family Violence leave.

(13) The University may request evidence to support an application for Domestic and Family Violence leave. Evidence can be in the form of an agreed document issued by the Police, a Court, a doctor, a domestic violence support service or lawyer, or other appropriate document.

(14) Wherever possible the Staff member should discuss their intention to apply for Domestic and Family Violence leave with their direct Supervisor so that appropriate safety arrangements, including leave, can be made.

(15) At the Staff member's election a direct request for leave may be made to HR Services.

(16) The Staff member should be prepared to discuss such matters as how much leave is requested and provide supporting evidence of the circumstances necessitating the leave.

(17) The Director, Human Resources will consider applications for Domestic and Family Violence Leave that are made directly to HR Services.

(18) Domestic and Family Violence Leave may be required to, in circumstances relating to Domestic or Family Violence, care for family members, attend doctor's appointments, attend court, make arrangements for children, and seek alternative accommodation, counselling or other appointments as appropriate.

## Section 4 - Support

(19) A Staff member may contact their Supervisor or HR Services to request specific support as outlined below. If a request is made to a Supervisor, the Supervisor may confidentially liaise with their more senior line management or HR Services representatives for advice on coordinating support.

(20) Staff approached by a colleague raising issues of Domestic and Family Violence are encouraged to refer their colleague to their Supervisor, HR Services, this Procedure, related support materials available on the HR Services website and the [Employee Assistance Program](#).

### Types of support

(21) Depending on the circumstances, Staff experiencing Domestic and Family Violence may have access to a range of support measures, in addition to paid Domestic and Family Violence leave, including but not limited to:

- a. other potential leave entitlements, including personal, special and annual leave;
- b. temporary change to duties;
- c. the Employee Assistance Program (see below);
- d. changes to work telephone, email address or work location;
- e. blocking of particular email contacts or telephone callers;
- f. removing the Staff member's contact details from public access, including on the University website; and
- g. temporary flexible working arrangements.

(22) Staff, who are affected by Domestic and Family Violence, may request flexible work arrangements including part-time employment and flexible start/finish times and/or shift patterns.

(23) Flexible working arrangements will vary dependent on the circumstances of the Staff member. Generally they will be for a defined period and regularly reviewed.

(24) Records of agreed flexible working arrangements established to address circumstances of Domestic and Family Violence will be kept confidential.

### **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)**

(25) Staff may also access the [Employee Assistance Program](#) (EAP) which is a free counselling service through Assure Programs.

(26) To arrange an appointment or for further information about the program, please contact Assure Programs on 1800808374 or visit [www.assureprograms.com.au](http://www.assureprograms.com.au) to request an appointment.

(27) Staff may also be referred to external support services as appropriate.

## **Section 5 - Prioritising safety**

(28) When a Staff member requests support, their Supervisor, in conjunction with HR Services Staff, should discuss with them whether a safety plan needs to be developed to assist the Staff member to perform their duties safely and productively.

(29) A safety plan must have the Staff member's agreement and consent.

(30) In developing a safety plan the following may be considered:

- a. the plan should be reviewed with the Staff member on a regular basis;
- b. the Staff member's emergency contact details must be kept up to date;
- c. all reasonable attempts should be made to ensure Staff maintain their normal working hours and working conditions (including contacts) to minimise the impact on the individual;
- d. in certain circumstances however change to work location, email address and or telephone number may be appropriate;
- e. co-operation with legal orders (e.g. Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders) may be required;
- f. the plan may require consultation with other areas within the University such as Security and IT - this will be coordinated by HR Services Staff on a strictly confidential, need to know basis and consideration should be given to how much information is provided (see section 6 below); and
- g. action to be taken if the Staff member does not arrive at work.

(31) In applying for such measures, the Staff member may be required to provide supporting documentation of the kind listed in clause 13 of this procedure.

## **Section 6 - Confidentiality**

(32) Any request for leave or support by a Staff member as a result of Domestic and Family Violence will be dealt with on a strictly confidential basis. The reasons for the leave or support will not be discussed with anyone outside HR Services or direct line management unless there is a legal obligation to do so, or as agreed by the affected Staff member for the purposes of providing support or security.

(33) All documentation relating to matters dealt with under these procedures will be filed confidentially.

# Section 7 - Resources

(34) Immediate Emergency Response - Police and Ambulance 000

(35) On Campus Emergency Response - Freecall Security 1800043357 from any campus phone, or (02) 66593091. This phone is manned 24 hours, 7 days per week.

(36) Local services - [Lismore](#), Gold Coast

(37) [DV Connect 24hr Womensline and Mensline Qld](#)

(38) 1800 RESPECT - 1800 737 732 - Sexual Assault, Family and Domestic Violence counselling phone and webchat (Free 24/7) 1800respect.org.au

(39) [Domestic and Family Violence Support](#) (University webpage)

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Historic
<b>Effective Date</b>	8th May 2019
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<b>Approval Date</b>	7th May 2019
<b>Expiry Date</b>	13th September 2023
<b>Responsible Executive</b>	Kim Franks Vice President (People and Culture)
<b>Head of Work Unit</b>	Kath Drew Director, Human Resources
<b>Enquiries Contact</b>	HR Services