



# Child and Youth Safety and Wellbeing Policy

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## 1. Purpose

The Child and Youth Safety and Wellbeing Policy outlines our commitment to making our workplace and our work child safe.

It informs all workers of their obligations under the [Child and Youth Safe Organisations Framework](#) in relation to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

## 2. Principles

The NRE Tas [How We Work](#) framework outlines the principles for how we work at NRE Tas, how we interact with each other and our stakeholders and community, and how we make decisions while at work. These principles are embedded in this policy.

Principle	What it means when NRE Tas engages with children and young people
We put Tasmania at the heart of everything we do	We are committed to working positively with our community. It is important that when children and young people interact with our organisation they feel safe and are free from harm. We care about children and young people's safety and wellbeing and have zero tolerance for child abuse and harm.
We act with integrity	We embrace, support and encourage diversity and inclusion. We will demonstrate respect for all people and all cultures and treat everyone fairly. We will listen to the voices of the children and young people in our community. We will provide an environment that ensures Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's right to cultural safety is respected. We all have a responsibility to speak up if we have a concern about the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person.
We pursue the extraordinary	We are committed to continuous improvement in implementing the child and youth safe standards and making our organisation safer for children and young people.
We work together	This is a shared responsibility which requires strong leadership and sustained, collective effort and action from our entire workforce. We will work together to ensure children and young people interacting with NRE Tas are free from harm.

### 3. Statement of Commitment

At NRE Tas we care about children and young people's safety and wellbeing. We have zero tolerance of child abuse and harm. We will treat seriously all allegations and safety concerns, in line with our policies and procedures, and in compliance with the [Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023](#).

We are committed to building a positive and proactive child safe culture to support child safety and wellbeing.

We will be responsive to the needs of all children and young people, including the cultural safety and needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disability, and LGBTIQ+ children.

We will ensure that child safety and wellbeing is embedded in our organisational culture, reflected in our policies and procedures, and understood and practiced at all levels of our work.

Being a child safe organisation is an ongoing process that will require us all to work together to keep children and young people safe.

### 4. Scope

This Policy applies to:

- all workers undertaking work for NRE Tas. Workers include employees, volunteers, officers, contractors, consultants, board members, students and trainees.
- all activities in NRE Tas which involve, result in, or relate to contact with children and young people.

### 5. The Child and Youth Safe Organisations Framework

The Child and Youth Safe Organisations Framework (the Framework) was established through the *Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023*.

The four pillars of the Framework are:

- the Child and Youth Safe Standards,
- the Reportable Conduct Scheme,
- the Independent Regulator, and
- information sharing provisions.

The Child and Youth Safe Standards (the Standards) are 10 standards that outline how we can develop a culture with child safety and wellbeing at its centre.

In putting the Standards into practice, we will also give effect to the Universal Principle for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Safety. The Universal Principle says organisations must provide an environment that ensures that the right to Cultural Safety of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children and young people is respected. The Universal Principle applies to all 10 Standards.

### The Child and Youth Safe Standards

- Standard 1 Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance, and culture.
- Standard 2 Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.



- Standard 3 Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
- Standard 4 Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
- Standard 5 People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
- Standard 6 Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.
- Standard 7 Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
- Standard 8 Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
- Standard 9 Implementation of the Child and Youth Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.
- Standard 10 Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

## Reportable Conduct Scheme

The Reportable Conduct Scheme is about creating a culture where organisations that engage with children and young people investigate concerns about conduct related to a child or young person in a thorough, transparent, safe and child-centred way.

The Reportable Conduct Scheme is specifically aimed at providing independent oversight of how organisations respond to concerns about child-related harm by workers.

The Head of Agency is required to notify the Independent Regulator of concerns raised about conduct (an allegation or a conviction) related to a child or young person involving a worker, undertake an investigation, and notify the Independent Regulator of the conduct and outcome of the investigation.

The Head of Agency or delegate must report any reportable conduct within 3 days of becoming aware of it, even if the alleged conduct or the conviction is historical in nature.

Reportable conduct includes criminal and non-criminal behaviour including (but not limited to):

- significant neglect
- physical violence
- a sexual offence
- sexual misconduct
- grooming
- causing significant emotional or psychological harm
- a relevant [offence](#), such as failing to report child abuse.

The Reportable Conduct Scheme covers conduct alleged (or found through the recording of a conviction) to have occurred:

- at work
- outside of work
- before the worker was employed at the organisation
- before the Scheme commenced.

Information outlining how to report child and youth concern(s) and disclosure of information is provided in the NRE Tas [Reporting and Investigating Reportable Conduct Procedure](#).



## Independent Regulator

An independent regulatory body that provides for independent oversight and supports organisations to understand how to comply with the Framework by providing support and advice and monitoring compliance.

The Independent Regulator has specific powers under the Act, including the power to:

- monitor the department's investigation into reportable conduct,
- request information or documents to enable it to monitor the department's investigation into reportable conduct or for the purpose of conducting its own investigation, and
- share reportable conduct information with organisations, Tasmanian and interstate police bodies, the Registrar of the *Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013* and other regulators.

## Information sharing and record keeping

Inquiries into child abuse in organisational settings have showed there can be serious consequences when information does not flow effectively between relevant groups. It is very important that information is securely shared in a timely manner to protect children and young people from harm. Organisations may hold some information that, when pieced together with information from other sources, creates a more complete picture of conduct or risk of harm to children and young people. Information sharing can minimise these risks.

All information received will be kept and managed as per the retention and disposal schedule outlined in the Office of the State Archivist [Royal Commission Toolkit](#) and the *Personal Information Protection Act 2004*. NRE Tas will ensure that any personal information will not be used or disclosed, other than as required under the *Personal Information Protection Act 2004*, the [information sharing rights](#) under the Framework or as permitted to do so under another law.

## 6. Education and awareness

It is important to ensure that all workers understand that the safety of children and young people is the responsibility of everyone. Workers will be provided with appropriate training and support to ensure that they understand our commitment and obligations to the safety of children and young people. NRE Tas aims to ensure that everyone knows how to identify risks of harm to children and young people and how to report concerns and disclosure of information related to child safety. All workers should complete online child safety training every two years.

We will actively promote information relating to the child safe practices to all workers, and we will continue working to strengthen our child safe practices to ensure child safety is embedded in our organisational processes, practices and culture.

## 7. Risk assessment and management

We are committed to preventing harm to children and young people, identifying risks early and removing and reducing these risks.

A risk management approach needs to be taken where work activities involve potential contact with, or impacts on, children and young people. Namely, identification and assessment of child and youth related risks must be conducted by the business area and strategies put in place to manage identified risks using the NRE Tas Risk Management Procedure (SPR-300).

The NRE Tas Working with Vulnerable People Policy and Procedure should be referred to for guidance on worker screening and compliance.



Each work area has a responsibility to establish, maintain and monitor their child and youth related risks and put in place effective management strategies to minimise the risks.

When it is established that a risk assessment is required, business areas can complete a separate risk assessment or existing risk assessments can be updated to include child and youth safety-related risks and management strategies.

## 8. Child safe professional conduct

All NRE Tas staff must act in accordance with the State Service Principles and Code of Conduct and the NRE Tas Workplace Behaviour Policy.

All NRE Tas workers must also:

- Comply with relevant legislation including [Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023](#) and [Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013](#), and with this policy
- Treat children, young people and their families with respect, fairness, professionalism and courtesy.
- Take all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse (including completing all induction and child safety training required)
- Professionally introduce themselves as a representative of the Department to children and young people and their parent/guardian.
- Wherever possible, ensure another adult is present when working with children and young people, or where there is a likelihood of children and young people being present.
- Ensure the department's communications and social media present children and young people in a dignified and respectful manner and do not reveal identifying information about a child.
- Always maintain professional boundaries with children and young people and not pursue contact with children and young people outside of the work environment if that contact has arisen in the course of their duties.
- Always provide direct supervision to their own children if they are brought into the workplace.
- Immediately report any failure to comply with this policy to their Manager or People and Culture, and any concerns or allegations of child harm using the NRE Tas [Reporting and Investigating Reportable Conduct Procedure](#).
- Immediately disclose to the department all charges, convictions and other outcomes of an offence that relate to child harm, including those that occurred before or during association with the department.

All NRE Tas workers must not:

- Engage in Reportable Conduct as defined in [section 7](#) of the *Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023*.
- Engage in the inappropriate use of electronic communication and social media, including
  - Exchange telephone number(s), email address(es) or social media details with a child they have engaged with in a professional capacity, without a professional reason.
  - Use personal or private social media to post pictures or videos of a child they have engaged with in a professional capacity without a professional reason.



- Use any computers, mobile phones, video cameras, cameras or social media to exploit or harass children or young people, or access child exploitation material through any medium.
- Use language or behaviour towards children and young people that is inappropriate, harassing, physically or emotionally abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate.
- Drink alcohol or take illicit drugs while working with children, or provide children or young people with alcohol, drugs or tobacco (including on field trips, excursions, or any other offsite work).
- Show children or young people pictures or images of an inappropriate or adult nature, or discuss topics of an adult or sexualised nature, including telling adult jokes.
- Have a romantic or sexual relationship with a young person where the employee has been in a position of authority with the young person, for two years after the young person turns 18 or the employee's position of authority, care or protection has ended, whichever is later.

## 9. Compliance

A failure to report a breach or suspected breach of this policy may be taken to be a breach of the policy.

A breach of this policy may be a breach of the State Service Code of Conduct and may result in disciplinary action.

A proven breach of the Code of Conduct could result in sanctions such as a reprimand, a fine, reduction in salary, reassignment of duties or termination of employment.

## 10. Responsibility

Roles	Responsibility
All workers, including volunteers, board members, contractors and consultants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● actively support and abide by this Policy, the Reporting and Investigating Reportable Conduct Procedure and related legislation</li> <li>● support and participate in building and maintaining the department's child safe culture, including completing all induction and child safety training</li> <li>● identify and mitigate risks to children and young people's safety and wellbeing</li> <li>● hold and maintain a current Tasmanian registration to work with vulnerable people if applicable, and workers must notify their manager and People and Culture if the status of their registration changes including suspension and cancellation</li> <li>● immediately disclose to the department all charges, convictions and other outcomes of an offence that relate to child harm, including those that occurred before or during association with the department</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>report all concerns of child harm (whether observed, reasonably suspected or disclosed).</li> </ul>
Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>champion zero tolerance of child harm</li> <li>ensure systems, policies and procedures are in place to prevent, identify and respond to harm of children and young people</li> <li>promote and ensure compliance with child and youth safe legislation, policies and procedures</li> <li>effective implementation of this policy, including raising awareness, provision of information, participating in training and ongoing education, and facilitating worker participation in training and ongoing education</li> <li>support workers to develop their understanding of their obligations and responsibilities</li> <li>seek feedback on our practices to support continuous improvement</li> <li>report all concerns of child harm</li> <li>respect the rights of the parties involved.</li> </ul>
People and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide advice and support to workers and managers about this policy.</li> <li>ensure induction training for all new workers includes advice, education and training on responsibilities for child and youth safety and reportable conduct.</li> <li>ensure training and education resources and opportunities are provided to all staff on regular basis.</li> <li>ownership, regular review and updating of this policy.</li> </ul>

## 11. Definitions

Term	Definition
Child	A person under the age of 18 years
Youth	A person between 16 years to 18 years
Child harm	Includes all forms of physical, serious emotional, psychological and sexual abuse, neglect or harm and reportable conduct behaviour towards children and young people
Contact with children and young people	Includes physical contact, face-to-face, written, oral or electronic communication, online and social platforms
Independent Regulator	An independent regulatory body that oversees the Framework, and ensures organisations have the support, advice, and education they need to meet the Child and Youth Safe Standards
Worker	A person who has attained the age of 18 years, who carries out work in any capacity for the department. This includes as an employee, volunteer, contractor, subcontractor, consultant, director, member of a management committee, office holder or officer
Position of Authority	Any person who can exercise power, control, or influence over a child or young person through their role at NRE Tas. This includes,





	but is not limited to, individuals who provide instruction, supervise, or manage young people (e.g., a school-based trainee)
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## 12. Supporting documents

[NRE Tas Reporting and Investigating Reportable Conduct Procedure](#)

[Child and Youth Safe Organisations Framework](#)

[Reportable Conduct Scheme](#)

[Support Services](#)

[Volunteer Information](#)

## 13. Related legislation

[Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023](#)

[State Service Act 2000](#)

[Employment Direction No 5 – Procedures for the investigation and determination of whether an employee has breached the Code of Conduct](#)

[Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013](#)

[Personal Information Protection Act 2004](#)

[Public Interest Disclosure Act 2002](#)

[Right to Information Act 2009](#)

## 14. Review

This Policy will be reviewed in three (3) years.

## 15. Approval

Approved by Executive Committee
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## 16. Version history

Date	Version	Action	Description/ comments
6 April 25	4.0	Approved	Expanded information on inappropriate use of electronic communication and social media
20 March 25	3.0	Approved	Included definition of “position of authority”
10 October 24	2.0	Approved	Updated professional conduct and compliance
24 April 24	1.0	Approved	New policy





## 17. Contact

For further information, please contact:

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