Domestic and Family Violence Workplace Safety Checklist

The checklist and information below provides guidance for principals and managers in assessing and reducing the risks to an employee experiencing domestic and family violence and others within the school/workplace.

It has been designed to be completed by a principal or manager, in collaboration with the staff member affected and can be used to inform the *Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) Workplace Safety Plan.*

Principals and managers have a responsibility to put in place measures to ensure the safety of staff, students and others in the workplace. Staff members also have a duty of care to their colleagues, students and others to identify and report safety risks and to implement practices to reduce risk.

Where possible and, where permitted by the employee, it may be necessary to involve other employees in safety planning. Efforts should be made to keep the employee’s information restricted to staff with specific responsibilities. General safety messages or reminders about workplace security practices should be able to be communicated without requiring release of specific information.

***DFV Workplace Safety Considerations***

Each workplace, each role and each person’s individual circumstances will differ. This checklist will assist principals, managers and affected staff in identifying the most suitable workplace supports and safety measures. It is recommended that specific actions be documented in the *DFV Workplace Safety Plan* and shared with relevant staff, with permission*.*

Consideration should be given to the following:

****  Retain key contact information for police, emergency service providers and specialist domestic violence services

**** the immediate physical safety needs of the employee are paramount. Once the safety issues have been addressed, encourage the staff member to access employee assistance counselling and advice from specialist domestic and family violence services

**** the nature of the employee’s role, including whether they work alone or in isolated locations within the building or grounds

**** the nature of the workplace and its security, including the employee’s access to and from the workplace and car parking

**** the capacity of the workplace to respond to emergencies – there may be a requirement to increase rehearsals for evacuations and lock downs

**** the possible need for a safe area

**** the employee’s work times, such as whether there is greater vulnerability to harassment or attack, after hours or early in the morning or at quieter or busier times of the day

**** access to the workplace by members of the public

***Possible actions to support employee safety at work***

**** provision of contact information for police and DVConnect for crisis services and for counselling services to staff member

**** obtain a copy of the employee’s Domestic Violence Order, where one exists. Confirm whether the workplace is listed as a restricted area, and discuss need for this, if not listed.

**** outline the steps the work area has committed to undertake once aware of an incident/potential incident, and how the work area will record incidents and disclose information on a “need to know” basis in order to protect confidentiality while ensuring staff, student, volunteer and contractor safety

**** remind staff to use all standard security measures and rehearse lock down and evacuation practices,

provision of locked entries/exits or provision of cards, keys or security codes to access staff-only areas

**** use of reception desks and a sign-in procedure

**** installation of door chimes or other means to notify workers when someone enters the workplace;

**** installation of personal or fixed alarms (either audible or silent)

**** use of video surveillance, including posting signs to inform people of the surveillance

**** provision of regular security patrols and regular alarm checks

**** staff training in how to question strangers or intruders about the appropriateness of their presence in a non-confrontational manner and how not to reveal information to others such as location and movements of the employee

**** provision of safe parking spaces (well-lit, close to the entrance and secure if possible), including escorting the staff member to their car or transport

**** ensuring there are clear sightlines (examine landscaping, layout and buildings that might restrict view)

**** changing the employee’s contact details, if possible and removing from databases

**** screen abusive phone calls, retain records of these calls where possible and report this to the police

**** institute a clear reporting process for incidents of violence of threats

**** have an emergency plan with processes for contacting the police when workers observe threatening behaviour

**** provide mobile phones or other communication or monitoring/tracking devices

**** shorten or vary start and finish times for the employee, if required

**** relocate the employee to a more secure area of the school or workplace

**** if there is a concern of stalking, this should be reported immediately to the police.

**** identify with employee whether they need short or long term leave to address issues arising from the abuse/violence (financial, medical, legal, child care, accommodation)

**** identify whether there is a need for the employee to work temporarily from another school/work location

**** identify whether there is a need to consider transferring or relocating the employee permanently for their safety

**** should the employee experiencing domestic and/or family violence be located on the same site, as the staff member engaging in the violent or abusive behaviour, examine relocation and transfer options for the person using the violent/abusive behaviour.

If a Domestic Violence Order exists that precludes the two staff working in proximity, there will be a need to ensure this is complied with.

***Employee Considerations***

**** advise your principal/manager, security and relevant others about your situation and work collaboratively to develop a *DFV Workplace Safety Plan.*

**** Establish with your principal/manager who will require information about your circumstances to ensure your safety and the safety of others and agree on the level of information and detail that is needed for others, such as colleagues, front office, security etc

**** provide your school/workplace with a copy of any Domestic Violence Orders that are in place

**** if you are receiving abusive communications (phone calls, emails, texts etc), advise your principal/manager and the police

**** If you believe you are being stalked or followed, advise your principal/manager and the police immediately

**** Provide a photo or description of the person and details about their car to the school/workplace

**** Provide your principal/manager with as much information as you can about the person who has committed violence and abuse.

* Are there concerns this person might present at the workplace? Are they likely to be a safety risk to others?
* Is there a history of violence?
* Does the person have access to any type of weapon or firearm? If so, advise the police and the workplace.

Within Queensland, DVConnect offers the following counselling and information services:

* Womensline: Ph: 1800 811 811 (24/7 telephone service)
* Mensline: Ph: 1800 600 636 (9am-midnight, 7 days)
* Sexual Assault Line: Ph: 1800 010 120 (8.30am – 11.30pm, 7 days)

Or contact the national 24/7 1800RESPECT (Ph: 1800 737 732) telephone service for support and information on Domestic and Family Violence and Sexual Assault

General and 24/7 crisis counselling can also be accessed through the Catholic Schooling Authority’s Employee Assistance Provider.