

Child Safe Policy

Policy Particulars

Reference	BCS	Version	4
Drafted by	Manager Audit & Risk	Approved on	27 July 2022
Responsible person	General Manager Corporate Governance	Scheduled review date	July 2025
Authorising Authority	Board of Directors	Endorsing Authority	Audit & Risk Subcommittee

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure children's safety and wellbeing across all areas of CVGT Employment ("CVGT") and give effect to the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and Victorian Child Safe Standards.

Scope

This policy applies to all activities in the organisation which involve, result in, or relate to, contact with children and to all persons who conduct work for CVGT in a paid or unpaid capacity.

This policy applies to Board directors, officers and staff (including full time, part time, casual employees) of CVGT. It is also applied in the management of contractors, volunteers and consultants of CVGT.

Policy

CVGT is committed to establishing and maintaining a child safe and child friendly environment that promotes and protects the interests and safety of all children and young people who interact with our services.

CVGT has a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and is committed to promoting and maintaining a culture that does not permit or tolerate child abuse, neglect, exploitation or discrimination.

CVGT's priority is to ensure the welfare and safety of every child who interacts with our services through the promotion and implementation of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and Victorian Child Safe Standards (refer to Schedule 1), and other contractual and legislative requirements, including compliance with the requirements of Working with Children legislation.



CVGT will take all reasonable steps to implement the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and Victorian Child Safe Standards and ensure that:

- all employees understand and implement the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations;
- all children and employees are supported and respected regardless of their abilities, sex, gender, or social, economic or cultural background;
- the opinions of children are considered and used to develop child protection policies;
- families and communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing;
- employees are informed of their obligations to act ethically towards children and young people;
- employees are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe;
- children and young people are respected and valued, and their diverse needs considered, paying particular attention to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disability, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, and same-sex attracted, intersex, non-binary and gender diverse children and families
- physical and online environments are underpinned by safety and wellbeing considerations while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed;
- children and young people are assisted with access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that are culturally safe, accessible and easy to understand;
- children and young people are informed about their rights and participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously at all times; and
- child safety and wellbeing within families and communities is promoted, where appropriate.

The Victorian Principles for Child Safe Standards are in addition to the National Principles for Child Safe Standards (refer to Schedule 2). To ensure that all sites deliver services consistently, the Victorian Principles for Child Safety are applied to practice in New South Wales and Tasmanian locations.

CVGT employees engaged in a child safe position (that is, a position that has been identified as having contact with a child as a normal part of work activities) are:

- responsible for the care and protection of children involved with our services;
- expected to treat all children with respect and act in accordance with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, Employee Code of Conduct and CVGT Values;
- required to undergo appropriate pre-employment screening and recruitment practices and obtain and maintain a Working with Children Check (WWCC) in order to be engaged in a position that delivers services to children; and
- responsible for reporting information about suspected child abuse.



Related Documents

The Child Safe Policy should be read in conjunction with the Employee Code of Conduct and the following associated documents, which include but are not limited to:

- Child Safe Procedure
- Protected Disclosure Policy
- Complaints and Feedback Policy

Breach of policy

A breach of this policy is grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Failure to comply with relevant state, territory and Commonwealth legislation may result in penalties to CVGT and/or the employee.

Authorisation

This document has been authorised by the Executive Management Team and the Board of Directors.

Elizabeth Corbett
Chair, Board of Directors
CVGT Australia Limited
23 February 2022

Definitions

Child means every human being below 18 years of age, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Child abuse means all forms of physical abuse, emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse and exploitation, neglect or negligent treatment, commercial (e.g. for financial gain) or other exploitation of a child and includes any actions that results in actual or potential harm to a child.

Child exploitation means the act of using a minor child for profit, labor, sexual gratification, or some other purpose for personal or financial advantage.

Child protection means an activity or initiative designed to protect children from any form of harm, particularly that arising from child exploitation and abuse.

Child-related work is any work-related activity (whether the work is paid, unpaid, supervised or unsupervised) which usually involves direct contact (physical, face-to-face, verbal, written or electronic contact) with a child. It excludes any infrequent direct contact with children that is incidental to the work.

Child safe position is a position that has been identified as having contact with a child as a normal part of work activities (that is, it is child-related work), and therefore is required to obtain and maintain a WWCC in order to be engaged in that position.



Neglect means the failure by a parent or caregiver to provide a child (where they are in a position to do so) with the conditions that are culturally accepted as being essential for the physical and emotional development and wellbeing of the child.

Working with Children means being engaged in an activity with a child where the contact would reasonably be expected as a normal part of the activity and the contact is not incidental to the activity. This includes volunteering or other unpaid work.

Working with Children Check (WWCC) is an assessment of whether a person poses an unacceptable risk to children. As part of this process, the applicant's criminal history, child protection information and other information is checked. A Working with Children Check may also be known under other names, such as a Working with Vulnerable People Check, a Blue Card, Working with Children Clearance, Ochre Card, etc.

Young people means persons between 15 and 24 years of age, in accordance with the United Nations definition of the youth age group.

Version History

<A brief description of any revisions to the policy>

Version	Latest review date	Revision Date	Summary of changes
1	28 October 2019	October 2021	Approved and adopted by the Board
2	4 November 2020	November 2021	Updated to reflect the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework in accordance with Deed requirements
3	23 February 2022	February 2025	Reviewed and updated to new document template format and updated to reflect new Victorian Child Safe Standards
4	July 2022	July 2025	Document has been updated to new template for policies Schedule 2 has been added to reflect the Victorian Child Safe Standards in comparison to the National Standards

SCHEDULE 1

NATIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR CHILD SAFE ORGANISATIONS

The National Principles outline ten elements that are fundamental to making an organisation safe for children and young people:

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations	
1	Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
2	Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
3	Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
4	Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
5	People working with children and young people to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
6	Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.
7	Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
8	Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
9	Implementing of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.
10	Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

SCHEDULE 2

VICTORIAN CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

The Victorian Principles outline eleven elements that are fundamental to making an organisation safe for children and young people:

Victorian Principles for Child Safe Organisations	
1	Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued
2	Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture
3	Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
4	Families and communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing
5	Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice
6	People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice
7	Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused
8	Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training
9	Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed
10	Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved
11	Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people