

Domestic and Family Violence Procedure (Staff)

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This procedure supports the [Domestic and Family Violence Support Policy](#) by providing processes and information about:

- a. how staff who experience domestic and family violence will be supported, and
- b. addressing the impacts of domestic and family violence in the workplace.

Scope

(2) This procedure applies to all University staff.

Section 2 - Policy

(3) Refer to the [Domestic and Family Violence Support Policy](#).

Section 3 - Procedures

Introduction

(4) A staff member's experiences of domestic and family violence can impact negatively on their sense of safety, self-esteem and confidence, and can have severe health consequences.

(5) Charles Sturt University (the University) seeks to promote a healthy, equitable and inclusive culture. This includes fostering a work environment in which staff feel secure in their workplace and in requesting support and flexibility to manage legal, medical, domestic or other matters related to domestic and family violence.

(6) A staff member who is supported to stay in employment while dealing with domestic and family violence is more likely to maintain financial and emotional independence, which is critical to breaking the cycle of violence and control.

Support arrangements and processes

Managers and supervisors

(7) Managers and supervisors will promote a safe working environment by:

- a. providing for the safety of staff and others while on university property, as outlined in the 'Safety' heading of this procedure
- b. offering assistance and support when a staff member who is experiencing domestic and family violence asks for help
- c. referring the staff member to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and its specialist family and domestic violence helpline for professional advice and counselling
- d. contacting the Division of People and Culture (DPC) for advice on the process, if needed

- e. respecting the right of the staff member to make their own decisions regarding their personal affairs and avoiding judgement
- f. assisting the staff member by approving reasonable leave and/or adjusting working arrangements such as work schedule or location
- g. maintaining communication with the staff member during any significant absence
- h. maintaining confidentiality in relation to the domestic and family violence situation and the staff member's whereabouts, and only sharing information with those who have a genuine need to know
- i. seeking support and advice if necessary to manage psychosocial hazards for themselves or other affected employees, including from DPC or via the EAP
- j. initiating disciplinary procedures against staff members who threaten or commit acts of domestic and family violence at work or who misuse university resources for such purposes.

Division of People and Culture

(8) The Division of People and Culture (DPC) will promote a safe work environment by:

- a. developing and implementing awareness raising strategies for managers, supervisors and staff about this procedure and the availability of support for staff experiencing domestic and family violence
- b. maintaining an up-to-date list of domestic and family violence services for referral purposes
- c. providing advice to managers and supervisors on the procedure for supporting staff members who experience domestic and family violence, and for other staff who may be affected
- d. facilitating approved leave and adjustment of working arrangements
- e. providing advice to managers and supervisors about implementing the disciplinary procedure for staff members who threaten or commit acts of domestic and family violence at work or who misuse university resources for such purposes, and
- f. maintaining confidentiality concerning domestic and family violence cases to the extent permitted by law.

Disclosure

(9) Disclosure of concerns related to domestic and family violence may be made by:

- a. a staff member experiencing domestic and family violence
- b. a staff member who is caring for a family member experiencing domestic and family violence, or
- c. a staff member who is concerned about a colleague or about safety in the workplace because they are aware of a domestic and family violence situation.

(10) A staff member who has a concern related to domestic and family violence may contact an appropriate line manager or DPC representative to explore options for support and/or safety measures on campus.

Confidentiality

(11) All information about a staff member's personal circumstances in terms of domestic and family violence will be kept confidential to the extent possible and will not be placed on their employee file.

(12) Other staff members should be informed of domestic and family violence circumstances on a need-to-know basis only. Where possible, the need to notify others will be discussed first with the staff member experiencing domestic and family violence.

(13) It may not be possible to maintain strict confidentiality in circumstances where:

- a. there is a need to act to protect the safety of staff or others on campus or while working from home

- b. there are concerns about children or vulnerable adults, or
- c. action is being taken to enforce a court protection order.

Safety

(14) When a disclosure concerning domestic and family violence is made, the manager/DPC representative will work with the staff member who raised the concern to put in place strategies to minimise the risk to their health and safety while at work. Any personal safety measures adopted should be agreed to by the staff member concerned. The manager, DPC representative or Director, Security and Resilience (CSO) will need to assess whether others in the workplace or using the premises may also be at risk.

(15) Measures for increasing individual safety in the workplace in the context of domestic and family violence may include but are not limited to:

- a. when appropriate, and after gaining consent from the staff member experiencing family and domestic violence, advising co-workers
- b. setting up procedures for alerting Security and/or the police
- c. temporary relocation of the staff member to a more secure area
- d. options for voluntary transfer or permanent relocation to another position or campus
- e. change of work schedule
- f. escort for entry to and exit from the building
- g. managing harassment via university technologies, systems and communication methods (e.g. phone, email or other)
- h. changing the staff member's contact details and/or removing them from public directories
- i. if a court protection order exists, asking the staff member to consider including the relevant university campus on the order, and
- j. keeping a photograph of the perpetrator and/or a copy of any existing court protection orders in a confidential, on-site location and providing copies to Security staff.

(16) If there is an immediate threat of harm to any individual due to domestic or family violence, the police and/or Security must be contacted immediately. Any incidence of violence must be documented as soon as possible and, within 24 hours, via the university incident reporting system.

(17) Any staff members involved in or witnessing the violent incident should be referred to the University's [EAP](#).

(18) In the case where a reported domestic and family violence situation is occurring between two members of staff, the University will explore any reasonable changes to working arrangements necessary to protect the safety of both parties.

Leave and flexibility

(19) A staff member who is experiencing domestic and family violence can apply for flexible working arrangements or appropriate leave in order to address the impacts of the violence, including obtaining assistance, attending court, or making necessary arrangements to create a safe situation.

(20) The [Leave Manual](#) sets out the leave available for a staff member experiencing domestic and family violence or supporting an immediate family member, which may include applying for family and domestic violence leave, special leave, leave without pay, or drawing on accrued leave.

(21) When applying for leave or flexible working arrangements because of domestic and family violence, the staff member may be requested to provide evidence to verify that they (or their family member) are experiencing domestic

and family violence.

(22) Where, due to an emergency, it is not possible to provide advance notice of the intention to take leave, the staff member should notify their manager of their circumstances and anticipated length of absence as soon as reasonably practicable.

(23) Where extended leave is deemed appropriate, the staff member and manager should agree on a return to work plan and the means by which communication with the University will be maintained during the staff member's absence.

Supporting staff performance during personal hardship

(24) Where domestic or family violence has an ongoing impact on a staff member's performance or attendance, the manager must seek advice from DPC. DPC will provide advice and resources to ensure that performance issues are managed in a trauma-informed, person-centred manner.

Referral

(25) A staff member who discloses that they are experiencing or are impacted by domestic and family violence will be referred to the University's [EAP](#) family and domestic violence specialist helpline for support and assistance.

(26) External sources of information and support that may be helpful are listed on the [current staff website](#) (staff login required).

Section 4 - Guidelines

(27) Nil.

Section 5 - Glossary

(28) This procedure uses terms defined in the [Domestic and Family Violence Support Policy](#).

Status and Details

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