

Domestic & Family Violence Policy

Policy No:	HR-005
Adopted By:	Chief Executive Officer
Date Adopted:	18 June 2025
Review Date:	June 2028
Version No:	3
Responsible Officer:	HR Manager

Purpose

Murweh Shire Council (Council) is strongly committed to providing a healthy and safe working environment for all employees. It is recognised that employees sometimes face difficult situations in their work and personal life, such as domestic and family violence (DFV), that may affect their attendance or performance at work.

Fostering a workplace culture where employees affected by DFV are supported in the workplace, contributes to a healthy and safe working environment for all.

Council leaders, managers, supervisors and employees are committed to ensuring a supportive and safe workplace to employees affected by DFV by providing appropriate safety and support measures.

Commencement of Policy

This Policy will commence on adoption by Chief Executive Officer (CEO). It replaces all other Domestic & Family Violence policies of Council (whether written or not).

Application

This policy applies to employees engaged directly by Council. Where Council is a client e.g. engages a temporary agency worker, the worker must contact their direct employer to discuss what support is available to workers subjected to DFV.

All employees have a responsibility to model the public sector ethics values, which include behaving in a way that promotes a work environment free from any form of violence and supporting those who are affected by DFV.

Policy

Council recognises that employees sometimes face situations of domestic or family violence in their personal life that may affect their attendance or performance at work. Council recognises that any person can be affected by domestic and family violence and that the impact is not restricted only to private life and that its impacts can extend to the workplace or learning environment. Therefore, Council is committed to providing support to employees who are impacted by domestic and family violence. Domestic and family violence is an extremely sensitive issue that affects individuals, families, and communities.

DFV occurs when one person's close relative (as defined in the "Definitions" section within this Policy) uses violence and abuse to maintain power and control over the other person. This can include behaviour that is physically, sexually, emotionally, psychologically or economically abusive, threatening, coercive or aimed at controlling or dominating the other person causing them harm or fear. DFV can affect people of all cultures, religions, ages, genders, sexual orientations, educational backgrounds and income levels.

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DFV is unacceptable in any setting, including the workplace. Any Council employee who perpetrates violence and abuse from the workplace, including by telephone, fax, mail, email, internet or social media may be subject to disciplinary action.

Council will commit to the following principles and protocols. It is appreciated that each case should be dealt on a case-by-case basis and council reserves the right to ensure flexibility in supporting employees. The Domestic and Family Violence Guideline, which supports this Policy, will form procedural fairness in this supporting this policy.

An employee experiencing domestic and family violence may raise the issue with their immediate director/manager/supervisor or directly with the Manager Human Resources. The supervisor/manager may seek advice from the Manager Human Resources on the employee's behalf.

Confidentiality

Council employees have the right to choose whether, when and to whom they disclose information about being affected by DFV. This policy does not override any legal obligations to disclose information.

Information disclosed by an employee in relation to DFV will be kept confidential, except to the extent that disclosure is required or permitted by law.

Support

Council will ensure that employees have adequate access to information and support options available to assist them if affected by DFV. These arrangements will be reviewed at regular intervals to ensure they remain appropriate.

An employee experiencing family domestic violence will be encouraged to contact Councils Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and/or other local resources. The EAP includes professionals trained specifically in family domestic violence.

Leave and Payment of Leave

A Council employee, (including part-time and casual employees) who is affected by DFV may access up to 10 days paid DFV leave, available up front in a 12-month period, it is not a requirement to build it up over time. Paid DFV leave will not be deducted from the employee's other types of leave such as Annual, Long Service or Personal/Sick Leave.

Full-time and part-time employees can take paid family and domestic violence leave at their full pay rate for the hours they would have worked if they were not on leave.

Casual employees will be paid at their full pay rate for the hours they were rostered to work in the period they took leave

Flexible work and other support arrangements

In order to provide support to an employee experiencing domestic violence and to provide a safe work environment to all employees, Council will consider any reasonable request from an employee experiencing family domestic violence (e.g. work location, span of hours).

Domestic and Family Violence Guideline

The Domestic and Family Violence Guideline provides further procedural and protocols in supporting employees experiencing Domestic and Family Violence.

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Audit and Review

This policy shall be reviewed every **three years** or as required due to changes to in legislation.

Responsibilities

Leaders/managers/supervisors will:

1. Model Murweh Shire Council Code of Conduct and public sector ethics and values, including behaviour in a way that promotes a work environment free from any form of violence;
2. actively participate in DFV related learning and development activities to effectively communicate and manage any domestic violence arising in the workplace;
3. encourage employees to actively participate in DFV related learning and development activities;
4. sensitively communicate with employees affected by DFV;
5. take prompt and appropriate action to address any reports of employees affected by DFV;
6. ensure appropriate levels of support are provided to employees affected by DFV; and
7. ensure appropriate management of work performance and monitoring of attendance issues.

Employees will:

1. model the Murweh Shire Council Code of Conduct and public sector ethics and values, including behaving in a way that promotes a work environment free from any form of violence;
2. actively participate in DFV related learning and development activities;
3. sensitively communicate with colleagues affected by DFV.

Definitions

"**Domestic and Family Violence / DFV**" has the same meaning as domestic violence as defined in the *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012 (Section 8)*.

'**Close relative**' for the purposes of this policy is defined by the Fair Work Ombudsman as an employee's:

- spouse or former spouse
- de facto partner or former de facto partner
- child
- parent
- grandparent
- grandchild
- sibling
- a child, parent, grandparent, grandchild or sibling of an employee's current or former spouse or de facto partner, or
- a person related to the employee according to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander kinship rules.

"**Employee**" Any member of MSC staff, Councillors, Volunteers, Work Experience, Contractors who are employed, including all full time, part time, casual and temporary employees.

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References

- *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012*
- *Local Government Act 2009*
- *Industrial Relations Act 2016 (Qld)*
- *Murweh Shire Council Operational Certified Agreement 2022*
- *Murweh Shire Council Officers Certified Agreement 2022*
- *Murweh Shire Council Code of Conduct*

Version Control

Version No.	Date	Approved	Amendment
1.0	14 December 2017	CEO	Council Resolution
2.0	10 January 2021	CEO	Removal of Counselling Support Services - EAP
3.0	25 March 2022	CEO	Update to wording

Approval

Chief Executive Officer		Bruce Scott	
Date:	18/03/2025	Signature:	