



Family Violence Policy

Enquiries to:	Centre Manager
Applies to:	All kaiako, relievers, parents/Whānau, guardians and children
Purpose:	Support Kaiako/employees who are victims of family violence!
Date Developed:	July 2021
Review Date:	July 2021
Date Approved:	
Next Review Date:	August 2022

References: Domestic Violence - Victims Protection Act 2019, Licensing Criteria for Centre-based ECE services – GMA7, Employment Relations Act, Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment, Human Rights Commission, Health and Safety at work Act.

The purpose of this operational policy is to support staff experiencing domestic violence

Rationale

We take our responsibilities to support staff experiencing domestic violence seriously and compassionately. Staff at our centre will be supported in a confidential and compassionate manner.

We define family violence as physical, sexual or psychological.

Issue Outline

It is estimated that more than half a million New Zealanders are victims of family violence. As a licensed early childhood education provider, we are continuously focussed on providing the safest, healthiest place for young children. We are mindful that we are also in a position to support parents and our staff through periods of difficulty. This policy is one way we can achieve this.

Detail

We will provide employees who are affected by domestic violence with up to ten days of paid leave. This is very similar to the way we provide sick leave and bereavement leave to our staff.

Our staff are entitled to family violence leave, including those on fixed-term agreements or casual contracts (where sick and/or bereavement leave is an agreed provision) as well as permanent employees.

All discussions and information around leave will be kept confidential, unless there is an immediate risk to someone's safety.

We recognise staff affected by domestic violence may need to take time off work to:

- attend court

- seek medical attention
- go to counselling
- relocate or seek alternative accommodation
- go to an appointment with the bank
- meet with their children's preschool / school
- seek any other support needed during a time of crisis.

Staff who have perpetrated family violence may need time off to attend court or stop violence programmes. We will provide you with the opportunity to have time off or flexible hours to allow you to seek help to stop using violence.

Domestic violence

Leave

Our staff can take up to ten days of paid domestic violence leave per year if they are affected by domestic violence, in addition to annual leave and sick leave, once they have completed six month's continuous service. Additional leave (paid or unpaid), if required, may be available at the Centre Manager's discretion.

Employees who have been affected by domestic violence can take paid domestic violence leave if:

- they have six months' current continuous employment with the same employer, or
- they have worked for the employer for six months for:
 - an average of 10 hours per week, and
 - at least one hour in every week or 40 hours in every month.

We may ask for supporting information from the police, government departments, a health professional or a family violence support service. This will be at the discretion of the Centre Manager.

The website www.employment.govt.nz search for domestic violence leave for further details regarding applying for leave.

For employees supporting someone affected by family violence

Unpaid leave will be available for employees who are supporting someone affected by family violence, eg to go with them to court, to hospital or to mind children, at the discretion of the Centre Manager

For employees who have perpetrated family violence

Unpaid leave will be available for perpetrators who are committed to rehabilitation, at the discretion of the Centre Manager.

Short-term safety measures

A workplace safety plan will be developed between the staff member who is concerned about their safety at work due to domestic violence and the Centre Manager.

The staff member is entitled to request short-term flexible working arrangements, including:

- flexibility in work hours and days of work
- flexibility in duties at work.

Short-term flexible working requests will be considered urgently (within 10 working days or sooner).

The plan might also cover areas like:

- stopping the perpetrator from contacting the victim at work
- re-routing pay slips and changing bank accounts

- designating a person to monitor attendance and follow up in the event of unplanned absences, including an appropriate emergency contact or potential code word to use in the event of danger.

Long-term safety measures

- An employee who is affected by family violence is entitled to request a permanent change to their working hours or days of work.

Alignment with Other Policies

This policy aligns with:

- our Health and Safety at Work Act responsibilities
- our Employment Relations Act responsibilities.

Impacts of Policy on Staff, Parents, Children

Staff are supported, especially those with experience of domestic violence.

Alignment with the Centre Philosophy

This policy ensures a safe environment, a crucial part of creating and maintaining the well-being of children in our care.

Implications and/or Risks

Following this policy significantly reduces the risk of this centre being fined for not meeting criteria, losing trust with parents because of illness or accident issues and maintaining public credibility.

Implementation

This will be arranged using this policy and www.employment.govt.nz with the employee and the Centre manager/Board member.

Review

Review annually or when there is a significant change in the area of the policy topic.

Supporting website www.employment.govt.nz/leave-and-holidays/domestic-violence-leave

Board of Trustees consulted	Yes/No	Kaiako consulted	Yes/No
Parents consulted	Yes/No	Designation_____	Date:_____
Approved by_____			