



Working with Clients Off-Site Procedure

Major changes to this document: Rebrand.

1. What is the aim of this procedure?

The aim of this procedure is to ensure the safety of Multicultural Australia staff who regularly transport clients, carry out home visits and/or work with clients in off-site locations.

2. Who is ultimately responsible for ensuring that this procedure is followed and reviewed?

All staff are responsible for ensuring that they follow this procedure when working with clients in off-site locations.

Line Managers are responsible for ensuring that staff in their work area are familiar with staff safety procedures and for ensuring compliance.

The Human Resources Team Leader is responsible for ensuring that this procedure is reviewed in collaboration with relevant staff in the review process.

3. When does this procedure/process begin?

This procedure begins when a staff member begins planning occasions that will involve leaving the Multicultural Australia office for client related activities.

4. What are the tasks and activities?

4.1 Assess the risks

Before leaving the office, staff should ensure that they are aware of any known risks relating to the client(s) they are working with and/or the location that they will be working in. This may involve collating relevant information about clients and their situation from electronic files and from colleagues.

An 'alert system' has been established to ensure that case files contain details on essential client needs and safety concerns, e.g., client has diabetes (exposure and disposal of needles), wheelchair access required, or child protection and domestic violence issues.

4.2 Manage the Risks

Having reviewed the available information, if there is any likelihood, or previous history of problems with a client, this should be discussed with the line manager and, where appropriate, a second staff member should be assigned to accompany the worker. Examples of when this may be appropriate include when the client(s) is known to have a history of aggression, serious mental health concerns, potential domestic violence situations and/or child protection concerns.

4.2.1 Communication

Staff working off-site **must** enter the following information in their Outlook Calendar to ensure that prompt action can be taken should an incident occur:

- Name of client;
- Suburb of visit;
- Staff contact number (if different to Multicultural Australia mobile number).

Where staff are delayed, e.g. due to traffic problems or needing to spend more time with a client than anticipated, they **must** contact the office to provide their line manager with an updated time of return.

Multicultural Australia provides staff (excluding CSWs) with a mobile phone to ensure that they are able to keep in contact with the office and to summon help if required when working out of the office. Each staff member is responsible for ensuring that they know how to use their mobile phone, that the phone is fully charged and that it is pre-programmed with relevant emergency numbers before leaving the office. Emergency phone numbers are on speed dial:

- Reception is on speed dial 1.
- Line Manager speed dial 2.
- Emergency Phone speed dial 3.

4.2.2 During home visits, staff will:

- Dress and behave appropriately for the environment, for example do not wear shoes that you cannot move quickly in if necessary.
- Park close to the house with the vehicle in a position that will allow for easy departure should the need arise. Keep your car keys easily accessible, i.e. not in the bottom of a bag.
- Where visits are in the evening, make an initial visit to unknown premises in daylight hours to assess the location and ensure to park in a well lit area and carry a torch.
- Listen for any sounds of disturbance and check for anything unusual when approaching the house.
- Stand back a little from the door to give the other person space and present less of a target.
- Give your name and present your Multicultural Australia name badge.
- Do not enter the property unless invited to do so and only if it appears safe to do so.
- On entering, be aware of the locations of exits to be able to leave quickly if necessary. Where possible, sit in a chair closest to the exit. Ensure that your mobile phone is switched on and fully functioning at all times, i.e. not on 'silent'.
- Leave immediately if a situation arises which appears uncontrollable and attempts to defuse the situation have failed.
- If unable to leave, try to distract the attention of the other person and leave as soon as an opportunity arises.

4.2.3 When transporting clients staff will:

- Request that a second person accompany them if the client has a history of aggression towards staff, or if there is some other indication of risk.
- Seat the client in the rear seat, next to another staff member, if there is an indication of risk.
- Move into the slow lane and if it is safe to do so, pull over and call for assistance if under threat.

4.2.4 Information and Training

Line Managers should highlight the importance of staff safety and discuss appropriate methods and processes to ensure workplace safety in team meetings and/or support and supervision meetings. Multicultural Australia will provide information and training to all staff in how to ensure their own personal safety and how to get out of difficult situations if they arise.

4.2.5 Incident Reporting

Following an incident of inappropriate or aggressive behaviour, staff will:

- Take time to acknowledge their exposure to aggression and the impact this has had. This may include discussing the incident with their line manager, workplace health and safety representative, or another person who can provide support and assistance
- Record details of the incident using the [Client-Related Critical Incident Report](#) form and, if appropriate, the [Safety Incident Report Form](#), and provide any information necessary to enable a thorough investigation of the incident.
- Consult with their manager about future contact/interactions with the client.
- Communicate to the aggressor the inappropriateness of his/her actions, Multicultural Australia's policy that inappropriate behaviour towards staff will not be tolerated, future expected behaviours and arrangements for future work with the client. Depending on the nature and severity of the incident, it may be appropriate that this communication with the aggressor be carried out by another member of staff and/or a senior member of staff.
- Engage a debrief where staff are significantly affected to ensure both incident closure and that follow up actions are appropriately implemented. Debriefs to include Line Management and possibly Human Resources Team Leader.

5. What are the outputs or measures for this procedure?

- Staff working off-site are aware of potential risks to their safety and know how to manage those risks effectively.
- Line Managers are aware of any potential risks to staff safety and are confident that these risks are being managed effectively.
- Any incidents that occur are promptly reported and investigated and, where necessary, additional measures are implemented to further reduce the risks to staff.

6. Related documents

- [Staff Safety Policy](#)
- [Notifying of Work Movements Procedure](#)
- [Safety Incident Report Form](#)
- [Client-Related Critical Incident Procedure](#) and [Report Form](#)
- Workplace Health and Safety Act (Qld) 2011
- Workplace Health and Safety Regulation (Qld) 2011