

# Wongaburra Society

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POLICY – CLIENT PROTECTION POLICY S1-ACP-011	
APPLICATION:	ALL STAFF
VERIFIED BY:	CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

## Policy Statement

To provide Wongaburra staff, volunteers and contractors with a clear definition of the Legislative and Insurance Requirements within the Client Protection Policy.

To guide appropriate Education and Training for all staff and volunteers in the Protection of all persons serviced by Wongaburra and the Reporting requirements imposed on staff and volunteers in case of reports or suspicion of abuse (SIRS).

## Policy

The facility supports the rights of all service users to be treated with dignity and respect.

Wongaburra Society ensures that all staff and volunteers are regularly trained (at least annually) in the identification and reporting of suspicions of abuse and neglect, as per SIRS as well as other relevant Wongaburra Policies, Procedures and Protocols.

Staff and volunteers are required to read and understand the SIRS Policy and sign a declaration that they have read the policy and understood their obligations towards mandatory reporting.

Contractors to Wongaburra are issued with the Wongaburra Client Protection Policy and Wongaburra receives signed acknowledgement of receipt of same.

Wongaburra Society complies with the legislative and insurance requirements of the identification, reporting, recording, storage and management of all claims of suspicions of abuse or neglect, as documented in SIRS.

## Procedures

Management will ensure that suspicions or claims of abuse and neglect are followed up as per the policy and procedures in place within the Serious Incident Response

Scheme (SIRS) policy, condition of service, condition of employment, and as per the Discipline and Dismissal Procedures.

Wongaburra Society's Human Resources Recruitment Procedures follow-up strategies include the following:

- All employees and/or volunteers must complete an application form which requests details of relevant past experience, positions held, details of two relevant professional referees (no family members or friends) and permission to contact them;
- All short-listed candidates must undertake a formal interview which includes an analysis of past experience working with children, the elderly or vulnerable people;
- At least two referees are contacted to provide information relating to the suitability of the position applied for;
- Both referees will be checked and spoken to, using a set of questions and queries, approved by the CEO and HR Manager. The questions will seek to establish the applicant's suitability for the role or position and the conversation will be documented and retained on file.
- A Police check which complies with legislative requirements will be requested and received prior to the Employee or Volunteer commencing their proposed role. The check must show that the individual is not precluded from working in aged care, home care or disability support;
- Each and every relevant stakeholder is required to have a formal satisfactory police check every 3 years;
- An annual Statutory Declaration from all staff as an addition to the police check, to the effect that no legal outcomes have occurred since the date of the current police check;
- No applicant who has previous convictions, made known to us, relating to the use of undue force, violence or sexual abuse of persons will be considered for employment or volunteer work at or with Wongaburra;
- The Protocol for SIRS (reproduced and attached to this document) is used as a training document and is reviewed at least annually by management;
- Where Wongaburra Society has identified that an applicant has previously committed an offence related to vulnerable persons or the community in general, they cannot, under any circumstances, be considered for employment or engagement with Wongaburra Society.

**Other:**

- All contractors are to be given the Client Protection Policy (with Protocol for Reporting Elder Abuse) at their annual Contractor Service Agreement, are to sign

for acceptance of and acknowledgement of their responsibilities within that Policy.

- Human Resources Manager is to check compliance of police checks with all contractors and relevant stakeholders.
- Support Service Manager is to check all contractor's police check requirements and ensure these are current.
- In line with the requirements of the Aged Care Act, the Australian Aged Care Quality & Safety Commission and the Department of Health, Wongaburra keeps a computerised and hard copy 'Consolidated Register of SIRS' and makes it available upon request by the Department of Health and / or by the Australian Aged Care Quality & Safety Commission for purposes of Quality Reviews / Assessment Contacts / Review Audits / Site Audits.
- Every Wongaburra Society staff member is provided annual mandatory training in relation to Serious Incident Response Scheme (SIRS) and their obligation to report and manage same.

## **Training and Education**

- Upon initiating employment with Wongaburra, staff are provided with online modules in relation to:
  - Mandatory Manual Handling;
  - Mandatory SIRS management;
  - Mandatory Food Safety;
- Employees are given a physical copy of:
  - Workplace Health and Safety Policy Document;
  - Wongaburra Society's SIRS Policy;
  - Infection Control Policy;
  - Emergency Procedures and Fire Evacuation Protocols;
  - Position Descriptions;
  - Staff Handbook;
- On-site practical training is provided regarding:
  - Manual Handling;
  - Fire Response Procedure;
  - Infection Control.

All new staff will be issued with a copy of this policy and receive formal training in:

1. The content and application of this policy
2. Reporting procedures and the associated legal requirements.

Mandatory refresher training based on current “best practice” and changes to legislation is provided on a regular basis.

## Reporting Procedure

Wongaburra Society actively encourages the reporting of all forms of abuse and neglect, as per SIRS Policy.

Wongaburra Society is committed to building an environment where either a victim or employee/volunteer feels able to report such abuse.

Employees and/or volunteers must **immediately** report reasonable suspicions of abuse and neglect to the senior management of Wongaburra Society:

- Nurse In Charge on-site (RN or EN)
- Charge Nurse of Nursing Home or Hostel (where appropriate)

Registered Nurse or Charge Nurse must investigate all reportable SIRS incidents immediately and must conduct a thorough physical examination of the client and involved staff (those harmed).

Reasonable Suspicion means fair and practical reason to believe an incident involving abuse has occurred based on either verbal communication, observation (of the incident or visible marks of abuse) and/or change in client behaviour, which cannot be explained by other established medical or psychological reason.

The details of those reporting abuse will be kept private and confidential.

A documented reporting process with escalating procedures has been established, as per SIRS Policy and Protocols.

The escalating procedures will be as follows:

- The automatic suspension alleged perpetrator from all work or other duties within Wongaburra Society while under investigation by Wongaburra Society or by the police;
- If there is a reasonable suspicion that a client has been or is suffering abuse, the legal representative of the client or consumer, Police and Organisations insurer will be contacted immediately.
- The Police will also be notified if a client discloses an incident of abuse that has occurred somewhere other than Wongaburra Society premises.
- If a disclosure of abuse is made, the person who receives the disclosure will maintain appropriate support to the one making the disclosure by referring to employee assistance program.
- Lawful confidentiality will be maintained, incident details will only be disclosed to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission and the investigating authority.

## Relevant Legislation

- Aged Care Act 1997
  - Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Act 2018
  - Quality of Care Principles 2014
  - Accountability Principles 2014
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (QLD)
- Medicines and Poisons Act 2019
- Therapeutic Goods Act 2019 (QLD)
- Privacy Act 1988
  - Australian Privacy Principles

## Workplace participant acknowledgement

I acknowledge:

- I received, read and will comply with the following Wongaburra Society Policy;
  - Client Protection Policy,
  - SIRS Policy,
  - Privacy Policy,
  - Social Media Policy,
  - Work Health and Safety Policy
  - Infection Control Policy, and
  - Conditions of Employment and Condition of Service.
- that there may be disciplinary consequences as per Discipline and Dismissal Procedures if I fail to comply, which may result in the termination of my employment.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_