|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Applies to: | All Intereach workers. For the purpose of this document the term “Workers: applies to all employees, volunteers, contractors, students, FDC Educators and Board Members. |
| Definitions: | Refer to the Schedule of the WHS Act for Definitions: officer, supervisor, worker, contractor, sub-contractor, and volunteer.  |
| Version: | 6.0 | Date approved: | 08/02/2023 | Next review date: | 08/02/2026 |

## Policy Statement

At Intereach, our Work Health & Safety (WHS) Policy is based on the physical and psychological wellbeing of people employed at work or people affected by our work is a major priority.

Intereach is committed to:

* providing and maintaining a safe and healthy work environment;
* complying with Work Health and Safety legislation, relevant codes of practice and compliance codes;
* ensuring a safe organisational culture for participants including but not limited to: children and young people, people with a disability and older people.
* engaging workers in a consultation process for decision-making where there is an impact on workplace health and safety;
* eliminating and minimising hazards and associated risks, as far as is reasonably practicable;
* developing and maintaining a culture that encourages all workers to manage health and safety risks actively; and,
* monitor, review and continuously improve health safety and wellbeing management.

## Objective

This policy outlines how Intereach meets its obligations under state and federal legislation related to the health and safety of employees, family day care educators (sub-contractors), contractors, volunteers, participants, and visitors in Intereach environments.

## Definitions

* *Chain of responsibility* is connected to the responsible person, defined as the officer under the WHS Act.
* *Code of practice* (code of compliance) is a practical guide to complying with the legal duties under the Work Health and Safety (WHS) Act and Regulations.
* *Cultural safety* is defined as an environment that is safe for people: where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity, who they are and what they need. It is about shared respect, meaning, knowledge and experience of learning, living and working together with dignity and truly listening.
* *Officer* is a person who makes decisions that affect the whole or a substantial part of the company or significantly affect the company's financial standing. Whether decisions can be said to affect the whole, or a substantial part, of a business or undertaking will depend on the facts of each case. In general, such decisions are:
	+ higher level decisions that are organisational and strategic in nature rather than operational decisions concerned with day-to-day work or project management;
	+ must involve more than just carrying out administrative functions, following orders, implementing policy, or responding to requests for information or advice;
	+ do not necessarily have to be significant financial decisions;
	+ do not have to involve WHS issues specifically; and,
	+ a person will not be an officer simply because they make, or participate in making, decisions about WHS issues.

Therefore, an *Officer* is a person who is:

* + actively involved in the decision-making process; and,
	+ occupies a role that directly contributes to, promotes, or affects the decision will be an officer under the model WHS Act. Refer to [Interpretive Guide: Officer Duty. Work Safe Australia](https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/system/files/documents/1812/officer-duty-interpretive-guide.pdf).
* *Prevention plans* identify the psychological hazards (e.g., bullying, harassment, aggression or violence, exposure to trauma and excessive workload) and controls. The prevention plan must include the steps (controls) to intervene, prevent or eliminate the psychological hazard (where reasonably practical by using the hierarchy of risk controls) across the organisation and include the consultation processes. The implementation of controls for phycological hazards must be more than information, education and training and include other factors such as:
	1. workplace design and environmental conditions,
	2. system of work,
	3. guidance and supervision, and,
	4. workplace interaction or behaviours at the workplace.
* *Reasonably practicable is*about a duty to ensure health and safety means that which is, or was at a particular time, reasonably able to be done to ensure health and safety, considering all relevant matters. Including the likelihood of the hazard or the risk concerned with occurring or eventuating.
* Psychological hazards are defined but are not limited to:
* aggression or violence;
* bullying;
* exposure to traumatic content or events;
* high job demands;
* sexual harassment.

Note there can be other forms of psychological hazards (e.g., environmental factors such as noise, remote and isolated work)

* Psychological injury describes the extreme psychological health outcome for the worker at the workplace. This includes anxiety, depression, headaches, vicarious trauma, compassion fatigue and burnout due to high work demands or a lack of job support. Note there can be other forms of harm from exposure to psychosocial hazards, such as psychological strain, cognitive effects, musculoskeletal pain and disorders, cardiovascular disorders, immune effects, and other forms of strain.
* *Workers*, defined under the WHS Act, include employees, volunteers, contractors, sub-contractors, and participants under Intereach’s care.
* *Workers' facilities* for workers, including toilets, drinking water, washing and eating facilities. These facilities must be in good working order, clean, safe and accessible.
* *Workplace* is where work is carried out for a business or undertaking and includes any place where a worker goes, or is likely to be, while at work. The workplace includes home visits, homecare for children, or driving a vehicle while working.

## Responsibilities

Intereach requires those responsible for any activities at Intereach workplaces to comply with relevant legislation, applicable codes of practice, compliance codes and standards following the legislative chain of responsibility.

It is the responsibility of the Officers, as defined above, to demonstrate due diligence by:

* having up-to-date knowledge of work health and safety matters, including the risks and hazards associated with the organisation's operation;
* provide suitable resources to achieve work health and safety objectives; including training as appropriate to the worker’s role;
* considering safety incidents;
* monitoring, reviewing, and improving safety performance;
* ensuring legal compliance, and,
* verifying the implementation of (psychological and physical) risk controls.

It is the responsibility of Managers (Senior and Program Managers) and Supervisors to:

* ensure that areas under their control are maintained and managed in a healthy and safe condition and that the principles of WHS guide the behaviour of all persons within the workplace;
* implement this policy and the WHS work practices;
* provide workers with information, instruction, training, and supervision required to carry out their roles;
* provide leadership in health and safety;
* consult with workers regarding health and safety by this policy;
* ensure health and safety inductions and training are completed;
* take all measures, as far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure the workplace is safe;
* apply WHS risk management to identify, eliminate or reduce health and safety (psychological and physical) risks within their control;
* investigate, report, and follow up on any injuries, incidents or hazards that occur;
* ensure relevant information about incidents and health and safety matters is communicated to relevant personnel;
* under legislation requirements, report incidents to external authorities (e.g., Community Transport, Aged Care, Family Day Care, OOSH (Out Of School Hours) and Family Services) in a set time limit.

It is the responsibility of any workers carrying out work for Intereach to:

* take care of their health and safety, ensure that their acts or omissions do not affect the health and safety of others (including colleagues, service users, visitors, and contractors);
* comply with any reasonable instruction that is given concerning safety;
* participate in relevant health and safety induction and training;
* participate in work health and safety initiatives, consultation, and discussions;
* carry out duties in a responsible and safe manner, including follow safe working practices;
* report all hazards and incidents; and,
* eliminate or reduce health and safety risks within their control.

## Policy

### 5.1 Intereach Duty of Care

Under WHS legislation, every worker has duties, which include the duty of care, in the workplace. Where reasonably practical Intereach will:

* ensure the identification of controls associated with psychosocial hazards;
* ensure the health and safety of other people are not put at risk from work carried out as part of the business conduct;
* ensure the maintenance of a work environment without risks to health and safety;
* ensure the provision of information, training, instruction, or supervision necessary to protect all persons from risks to their health and safety arising from work carried out as part of the business conduct or undertaking;
* ensure the provision and maintenance of safe systems of work;
* ensure the safe use, handling and storage of plants, structures, and substances;
* ensure the health of workers and the conditions at the workplace are monitored to prevent illness or injury of workers arising from the conduct of the business or undertaking; and,
* ensure the provision of adequate facilities for the welfare of workers in carrying out work for the business or undertaking, including providing access to those facilities e.g., drinking water, toilets etc.

### 5.2 WHS Management System

Intereach must establish and maintaining an appropriate work health and safety management system.

The success of our WHS management system depends on the following:

* the commitment of all persons to achieving the framework and policy objectives;
* planning work activities, with consideration given to WHS;
* effectively undertaking the risk management process; and,
* communication and consultation between our workers, participants, visitors, and contractors.

A key document within the WHS Management system is the WHS Management Framework which outlines how our health and safety processes are:

* planned;
* implemented;
* measured and evaluated, and
* managed and reviewed.

### 5.3 Monitoring of Work Health and Safety

The WHS program will review organisational or individual program’s WHS performance. Performance and compliance will be strengthened by:

* annual review of organisational risks, including workplace health and safety and psychological risks;
* annual review of legislation and codes of practice, and ensure compliance with industry standards;
* annual review of the well-being of workers through corporate surveys and reflective tools;
* annual auditing program by the WHS team;
* annual review of worker compliance with licences and statutory checks;
* independent auditing of Intereach safety management system every three years, where possible; and,
* consultation with workers.

Refer to the [WHS Framework](https://intereachltd179.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/r/KnowledgeCentre/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B816acf96-49e9-4fe7-a706-e8a64a1c8cf1%7D&action=default&mobileredirect=true) for more detail.

### 5.4 Psychological Risk and Health

All workers contribute to the identification and management of psychological hazards in their workplace. The WHS team will report psychological hazards and associated risks as required to the state regulator and provide prevention plans to eliminate, intervene, or prevent psychological risks at the workplace in accordance WHS legislation. Refer to the [Mental Health Framework](https://intereachltd179.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/r/KnowledgeCentre/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B94f13940-593c-448d-96e1-c46eb8158e6d%7D&action=default&mobileredirect=true) for more information on how Intereach manages psychological risk and health.

A key part of ensuring an organisational safe culture is taking a consultative, risk-based approach to change management. Refer to the [Change Management Framework](https://intereachltd179.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/r/KnowledgeCentre/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B133c9ee2-1c9e-41aa-9c3f-8c12067f09ee%7D&action=default&mobileredirect=true) for more detail on how Intereach manages change (\*Developing).

### 5.5 Consultation and Communication

Intereach extends the consultative approach to addressing WHS, ensuring that it meets the requirements for consultation under the relevant WHS Act.

The WHS Team will establish an ongoing consultative mechanism with workers on WHS matters through the WHS and Wellbeing Committee. The consultation will be through the representative of different work groups, programs related to separate work areas or workers meetings.

Program managers and team leaders will communicate safety issues at workers’ meetings. At the same time, the WHS team shall consult with the WHS Committee and communicate with different programs on safety issues.

Refer to the *WHS Framework* for more detail.

### 5.6 Training

Managers are responsible for ensuring appropriate health and safety training opportunities are provided to workers and that all mandatory health and safety training is completed and updated. Workers will receive WHS induction training as part of the onboarding process, while managers will be trained in their WHS role and responsibilities as managers.

### 5.7 Managing Injured Workers

The RTW (Return to Work) Coordinators and injured workers will follow the return to work legislation (NSW & Vic), Intereach’s [Managing Injured Workers Guide](https://intereachltd179.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/r/KnowledgeCentre/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7Bc7e7bbcc-abf8-46a0-8f95-f9a47ed33985%7D&action=default&mobileredirect=true), [Return to Work Policy](https://intereachltd179.sharepoint.com/sites/TreeHouse/Tree%20House%20QMS/Policy_ReturntoWork.docx), [Reasonable Workplace Adjustment Policy](https://intereachltd179.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/r/KnowledgeCentre/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B55C2F0B7-F7AB-4302-965F-EA886ED1CE43%7D&file=Policy_ReasonableWorkplaceAdjustment.docx&wdLOR=cD571D276-709B-45CA-B567-E9B5BFF81965&action=default&mobileredirect=true), and other supporting documents to ensure the return of injured workers to the workplace safety with the required adjustment.

|  |
| --- |
| 6. Context |
| Standards or other external requirements | [Code Practice: Managing Psychological Hazards at Work. Work Safe Australia](https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-08/model_code_of_practice_-_managing_psychosocial_hazards_at_work_25082022_0.pdf)[Managing Psychological Hazards at Work: Code of Practice (NSW).](https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/resource-library/list-of-all-codes-of-practice/codes-of-practice/managing-psychosocial-hazards-at-work)[Preventing and Managing Work Related Stress. Guide-for Employers (Vic).](https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/resources/preventing-and-managing-work-related-stress-guide-employers-pdf-version)[Interpretive Guide: Officer Duty. Work Safe Australia](https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/system/files/documents/1812/officer-duty-interpretive-guide.pdf) ISO 31000:2019- Risk management principles and guidelines. [Standards: Child Safe (Standard no 1 & 5)](https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-12/g_CSS_GuidetotheStandards.pdf)[Standards: Aged Care Quality (Standard 1-8)](https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/providers/standards) |
| Legislation or other requirements | Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (VIC)Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (VIC).Occupational Health and Safety Amendment Regulations (Psychological Health) 2022 (VIC).Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)Work Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (NSW)Work Health and Safety Amendment Regulations (Psychological Risk; Division 11) 2022 (NSW). |
| Internal documents | [Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Plan](https://intereachltd179.sharepoint.com/sites/TreeHouse/Tree%20House%20QMS/Plan_BusinessContinuityandDisasterRecoveryPlan.docx)[Form Reasonable Workplace Adjustment](https://intereachltd179.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/r/KnowledgeCentre/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B120805a7-acd7-410f-858f-6db0587eb637%7D&action=default&mobileredirect=true)Framework Change Management (\*Developing)[Framework Mental Health](https://intereachltd179.sharepoint.com/sites/TreeHouse/Tree%20House%20QMS/Framework_MentalHealthandWellbeing.docx) [Framework Risk Management](https://intereachltd179.sharepoint.com/sites/QualityTeam2/Shared%20Documents/Document%20Consultation/02_DocumentConsultation_Feb2023/Framework_RiskManagement.docx)[Framework Work Health and Safety](https://intereachltd179.sharepoint.com/sites/TreeHouse/Tree%20House%20QMS/Framework_All_WHS.docx)[Policy Anti Bullying and Harassment](https://intereachltd179.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/r/KnowledgeCentre/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7Bb71979e5-bbe0-48f9-951f-4d8b4bca1c7b%7D&action=default&mobileredirect=true)[Policy Child Safe](https://intereachltd179.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/r/KnowledgeCentre/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B9d112763-560b-4721-98ac-4566dd6651b6%7D&action=default&mobileredirect=true) [Policy Domestic Violence](https://intereachltd179.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/r/KnowledgeCentre/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B3f5637f0-d01b-48ed-9823-9b86a16882d5%7D&action=default&mobileredirect=true)[[Policy Child Safe](https://intereachltd179.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/r/KnowledgeCentre/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B9d112763-560b-4721-98ac-4566dd6651b6%7D&action=default&mobileredirect=true)](https://intereachltd179.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/r/KnowledgeCentre/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B9d112763-560b-4721-98ac-4566dd6651b6%7D&action=default&mobileredirect=true) Policy Excursion[Policy Human Right](https://intereachltd179.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/r/KnowledgeCentre/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B295e3d38-62e0-4e2e-a7ed-978506f211ec%7D&action=default&mobileredirect=true)[Policy Work Check](https://intereachltd179.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/r/KnowledgeCentre/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B25621581-632a-44f6-8de2-5bcbdf950005%7D&action=default&mobileredirect=true) [Personal Risk Assessment Checklist](https://intereachltd179.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/r/KnowledgeCentre/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7Bcf38c029-ddd0-46ad-83a2-b63f8e86f5ba%7D&action=default&mobileredirect=true)[Policy Vehicle](https://intereachltd179.sharepoint.com/sites/TreeHouse/Tree%20House%20QMS/Policy_Vehicle.docx) [Policy Reasonable Workplace Adjustment](https://intereachltd179.sharepoint.com/sites/TreeHouse/Tree%20House%20QMS/Policy_ReasonableWorkplaceAdjustment.docx) [Procedure Incident Response](https://intereachltd179.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/r/KnowledgeCentre/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B8a7a253d-9b88-4d0b-bab1-c7926d21a6b9%7D&action=default&mobileredirect=true) [Procedure Personal Safety and Security](https://intereachltd179.sharepoint.com/sites/TreeHouse/Tree%20House%20QMS/Procedure_WHS_PersonalSafetyandSecurity.docx) [Procedure Workers Compensation Claim Management](https://intereachltd179.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/r/KnowledgeCentre/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B65135798-d52a-45b4-9ae4-ae5c44868e44%7D&action=default&mobileredirect=true)Risk Assessments Library and Template[ACS Home Premises Checklist](https://intereachltd179.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/r/KnowledgeCentre/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B8757a869-60f3-4995-9284-705b80a987a0%7D&action=default&mobileredirect=true)[FDC Home Safety Risk Assessment Audit](https://intereachltd179.sharepoint.com/sites/TreeHouse/Tree%20House%20QMS/ARCHIVE_Tool_FDC_HomeSafetyRiskAssessmentAudit_2023-PDF%20Fillable%20Form%20%20%281%29.pdf) |

|  |
| --- |
| Document control |
| Version | Date Approved | Approved by | Next review date |
| 1.0 | March 2013 | CEO (Chief Executive Officer) | March 2016 |
| 2.0 | April 2014 | WHS Committee | April 2017 |
| 3.0 | December 2016 | Combined Leadership Group | December 2019 |
| 4.0 | October 2017 | Acting CEO (minor amendment) | December 2019 |
| 5.0 | February 2020 | Leadership Group  | February 2023 |
| 6.0 | 8 February 2023 | Quality Governance Group | 8 February 2026 |