

Policy name	Staff Safety in the Workplace
Policy date	February 2026
Authorisation	Executive Housing & Property
Policy owner	Executive General Manager, Housing Operations
Policy type	Mission Australia Housing Operational Policy
Policy setting	Housing Compliance and Reporting

1 Purpose

1.1 Overview

- 1.1.1 MAH recognises that working off-site and with individual service users, can bring additional risks to work activity and has developed this document to protect staff, so far as is reasonably practicable, from associated workplace risks.
- 1.1.2 This policy document has been designed to be wide-ranging to assist managers and staff in minimising workplace risk.
- 1.1.3 MAH cares about the safety of all staff, tenants and agents. The focus of this policy is on staff safety and well-being.

1.2 Coverage

- 1.2.1 This document is a national policy and covers Mission Australia Housing (MAH), and its entities. All references to Mission Australia Housing, MAH and Housing means MAH and its entities unless specifically stated otherwise.
- 1.2.2 This policy applies to all forms of housing provided by MAH including social, affordable and transitional housing.
- 1.2.3 This policy applies to housing provided by MAH in the jurisdictions of New South Wales (NSW), Tasmania (TAS), Victoria (VIC), Queensland (QLD), Western Australia (WA) and the Northern Territory (NT). Where jurisdiction-based variations exist in policies and procedures, these will be identified in the document

1.3 Information on procedures and other related policies

- 1.3.1 This policy focuses on why certain things need to be done to protect you, our staff, clients, colleagues and agents of MAH.
- 1.3.2 This policy is one of several interlinked policies that support MAH's delivery of housing services. To assist you, these are identified where relevant in this policy and the supporting procedures.

2 Scope

2.1 Parts of Mission Australia that this policy covers

- 2.1.1 This policy applies to all MAH employees.
- 2.1.2 This policy also applies to agents of MAH, such as maintenance contractors.

2.2 Definitions

- 2.2.1 Key terms used in this policy are defined in the following table.

Term	Definition
Agent	Any third party who carries out functions on behalf of MAH or a tenant of MAH. Agents include but are not limited to contractors, advocates, and other tenants.
Lone Worker	A lone worker is anyone working without the direct and immediate support of managers or colleagues. A lone worker carries increased workplace risks, as any dangers are encountered alone.
MAH Sites	Sites include office locations and any similar areas where staff may work or organise work.
Tenant	Under state-based residential tenancy and rooming accommodation legislation, a tenant is a person who has entered explicitly into a lease agreement. The term is used more broadly in this policy to refer to tenants and residents under rooming accommodation agreements, unless explicitly distinguished.
Workplace Risks	Workplace risks can include by not limited to, the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visiting tenants in their homes • Interactions with aggressive tenants, household members or visitors both in their homes or in the office • Tenants experiencing illness that may be contagious • Attack from domestic animals • Injury from materials within and surrounding buildings and properties • Motor vehicle accidents and/or damage • A medical emergency such as fainting or heart attack

3 Policy

3.1 Guiding principles

- 3.1.1 MAH takes a risk management approach to manage the health and safety of all persons in the workplace.
- 3.1.2 The safety of tenants, staff, contractors and the community are promoted through the property and tenancy management processes of MAH.
- 3.1.3 MAH will provide information, instruction, and supervision to improve a workers understanding of workplace hazards, including safe work practices such as lone working.
- 3.1.4 All MAH staff have an individual responsibility never to put themselves, their colleagues, tenants or members of the public at unnecessary risk. It is an individual and shared responsibility to ensure that staff are supported and utilise their expertise in making informed appraisals and tailoring responses to individual situations.

3.2 Risk Management

- 3.2.1 MAH refers to the Mission Australia (MA) risk management methodology stated in the **MA Risk Management Procedure**. Briefly, the risk management process is to:
 - identify all hazards that a person at the workplace may be exposed to;
 - assess the risk of injury or harm to a person resulting from all hazards;
 - consider how the risk may be reduced and implement such mechanisms to eliminate, or if elimination is not reasonably practicable, control that risk; and
 - enter risk management information and any incidents into Riskware.
- 3.2.2 MAH sites will identify any risks or workplace hazards associated with working on/off-site and implement strategies to mitigate risks. MAH sites will document risks assessments in the MA Risk and Incident System
- 3.2.3 All MAH staff are required to be familiar with MA's risk and incident system and associated work safe policies and procedures.
- 3.2.4 MAH sites are required to assess and identify individual tenant-related risks and develop and document relevant control strategies for those risks.
- 3.2.5 All MAH staff are required to be responsible for, and familiar with, the risk plans of tenants in their portfolio. MAH staff need to know how to access the risk plans of the tenants of their broader service team when necessary.

3.3 Lone Working

- 3.3.1 Lone working is a specific risk to MAH staff, as staff are required to visit empty and tenanted properties during their working day.
- 3.3.2 MAH will regularly review the lone worker risk assessments and safety procedures and will consider the following:
- Significant changes in the workplace
 - Whether the policy and procedures have been effective
 - Whether the lone workers have identified other issues
- 3.3.3 MAH staff will complete lone working training as part of their induction.
- 3.3.4 MAH Staff should read the **Property Inspections Procedure and User Guide** and follow the instruction when planning on going out and inspection properties.
- 3.3.5 MAH Staff should ensure the following:
- Mobile phone should be fully charged and check it is in working order prior to carrying out external visits
 - Keep a record of all visits and addresses in the Outlook Calendar and ensure that at least the Team Leader can view all the details in your calendar
 - Visits are only permitted during designated work hours
 - MAH ID badge is to be worn at all times when out visiting
 - Keep all personal information and valuables secure. Do not take unnecessary personal or valuable items with you when visiting.
 - Personal information about other tenants should not be taken with you on the visit.
 - Provide their line manager with expected times that they will be returning to the office after any planned visits.
- 3.3.6 MAH will issue and use safety card devices (or similar devices or apps) to help protect staff in the course of their duties.
- 3.3.7 If a staff member has a safety card, this should be used in the first instance. The safety card guidelines should be followed when using a safety card.
- 3.3.8 If a staff member does not have a safety card and is in a position to phone for help, the code word is *'Come into the Office for an appointment'*. If the staff member receiving the call hears these words from a staff member on a visit, they must assume the staff member is in danger and:

- Find out where they are using whatever method they can
- Call the emergency service on 000 (Police)
- Direct the police to the location of the staff member

3.3.9 If a staff member who is visiting a tenant or applicant and fails to make contact with the office 20 minutes past the estimated time of return then the Team Leader will:

- Call the staff member. If there is no response, a second call will be made after 10 minutes.
- If there is still no response, the Team Leader will contact the police and provide the last known location of the staff member and the address of any other properties the staff member may have visited.

3.4 Tenant Risk Assessments

3.4.1 MAH will conduct individual risks assessments for all MAH service users, where possible and appropriate. The purpose of conducting individual risk assessments is to pro-actively identify, assess and control risks that may be associated with service users.

3.4.2 MAH staff will review the tenancy file and notes in the Tenancy Management System before the inspection. MAH staff will look to see if there is a risk rating, alert or any recent activity to be concerned about. Tenants with a high-risk rating will need to be a two-person visit.

4 Responsibilities

4.1 All staff are responsible for:

- Reading and understanding **Staff Safety in the Workplace policy**. To ask questions if they do not understand any aspect of the policy.
- Report all hazards and risks that they are exposed to and to report all injuries and safety incidents.
- Actively participate in staff safety activities and training and, jointly with Managers, ensure a safe working environment for everyone.
- Recommending improvements to this policy and any related guidelines and procedures.

4.2 Team Leaders/Regional Manager are responsible for:

- Making adequate provisions to address safety concerns for all staff, especially lone workers.
- Ensuring guidelines for staff safety are in place and followed by staff and, where required, clearly define roles and responsibilities for staff.

- Ensuring assessments have been carried out and staff are referencing and updating on tenants assessments before visits.
- Ensuring effective systems are in place to monitor staff movements and respond as necessary.
- Incorporating this policy and guidelines into staff inductions and training.
- Ensuring staff are aware of and have access to this policy and related guidelines.
- Escalating feedback about this policy and guidelines to the policy owner and/or policy developer

4.3 The Operations Manager and State Manager is responsible for:

- Ensuring there is a process for implementing and monitoring actions as a result from staff feedback and involvement.
- Ensuring systems are implemented for ongoing review of the effectiveness of the policy and staff compliance.
- Recommending changes to be made to this policy and procedure.
- Ensuring MAH complies with this policy and procedure.