



POLICY & CODE – WORKCOVER COMPLIANCE

CONTEXT:

The TANVIC group of agencies is an entity adding value and providing a necessary service to the Education Community of Victoria. TANVIC member agencies ensure they act professionally and remain informed regarding the provisions allowing them to facilitate the employment/placement of casual relief teachers in Victorian schools.

All TANVIC member agencies observe the TANVIC Code of Ethics, Code of Conduct and Professional Standards of Conduct statements.

LEGISLATION:

Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004 (the Act)

The Act replaces the Occupational Health and Safety Act 1985 with most sections of the Act coming into operation on 01 July 2005 and all sections in operation by July 2006.

A copy of the Act can be found at www.dms.dpc.vic.gov.au. A hard copy summary of the Act, intended as a general guide, is held for reference by each TANVIC member agency.

POLICY STATEMENT:

TANVIC is cognizant of its obligations to meet compliance requirements under the Act in respect of casual relief teachers it employs/places in Victorian schools. TANVIC will as an entity, and as individual agencies, endeavor at all times to remain informed of its obligations and to observe them appropriately in practice.

CODE OF PRACTICE:

AGENCIES UNDERTAKE TO:

1. know and understand their obligations
2. identify risks/hazards
3. address risks/hazards
4. monitor workplaces



POLICY & CODE – WORKCOVER COMPLIANCE

1. KNOW AND UNDERSTAND OBLIGATIONS

- a. Duty of Care rests jointly with the agency & and schools
- b. Consult with employees about work safety issues.
“Employers must consult with employees so far as is ‘reasonably practicable’ considering the circumstances. Circumstances may include;
 - *size/structure of business*
 - *nature of work*
 - *nature & urgency of the particular decision or action*
 - *work arrangements, e.g. shift work & remote workers*
 - *characteristics of employees including languages, literacy or disabilities”.*
- c. inspect worksites

2. IDENTIFY RISKS/HAZARDS

Main risks and hazards identified by Department of Education & Training [DE&T] are in the areas of;

- d. teacher morale & stress
- e. teacher health & disease
- f. environment & facilities including
 - building ventilation
 - noise levels
 - sanitation & waste collection
 - swimming/wading/splash pools
 - tree maintenance
 - fire protection & prevention
 - soil & environment contamination
- g. building repairs, renovation & maintenance
 - building services maintenance
 - a. air conditioning and water treatment equipment
 - b. heating & ventilation systems
 - c. sanitary services
 - d. sewerage traps & treatment systems



POLICY & CODE – WORKCOVER COMPLIANCE

3. ADDRESS RISKS & HAZARDS

TANVIC member agencies individually address this area in a number of ways as is seen by them as most appropriate, and include:

- Documented **Job Safety Assessment** in respect of each client school. *[A practical means for an agency to do this is to present the school with a questionnaire and have them sign a declaration or provide a copy of their own assessment].*
- **Declaration of Safe Workplace** in respect of each school as per attached proforma. *[This is a practical and appropriate means of meeting workplace inspection requirements].*
- Member agency **contracts/agreements** with their casual relief teachers having a clause requiring them to report any perceived or actual risk, hazards or unsafe practices they identify within any school they work to both the School Principal and their relevant TANVIC member agency. *[All reports to be followed up by the relevant agency directly with the school].*
- Casual Relief Teachers be provided on **induction to the agency** with relevant information about the Act including hazards/risks that might encountered and advising of their duty to report such to both the school and agency.
- Member Agencies requesting **schools to make available an Induction Folder** for information of new casual relief teachers which contains a range of information including map of school grounds and buildings, list of key staff to be called upon for assistance, any OHS issues currently facing school (building/maintenance works etc.) and any other relevant information relating to the Act.

4. MONITOR WORKPLACES

The degree of risk exposure to casual relief teachers is generally agreed to be minimal in the school environment. However, an annual Declaration of Safe Workplace will provide a measure of risk minimization as well placing a direct obligation on schools to ensure a safe workplace is maintained.

Where risk situations are identified agencies are expected to:

- consult directly with schools to address/resolve issues
- monitor employee health & workplace conditions
- provide appropriate information and, if required, training
- advise WorkCover of any situations which have been unable to be satisfactorily addressed/resolved and seek their guidance/assistance



POLICY & CODE – WORKCOVER COMPLIANCE

DECLARATION OF SAFE WORKPLACE

Iin my capacity as Principal of

.....
(name of school)

confirm that a workplace inspection is conducted at this school regularly and frequently and that such inspection is carried out to ensure this school is, so far as is reasonably practicable, a safe workplace in accordance with requirements of the *Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004*.

I agree to provide access to appropriate OH&S advice, including access to the elected Health & Safety Representative for our school, to all casual relief teachers allocated by to this school as may be requested by them from time to time.
(name of agency)

I request bring to my attention in writing, as soon as is
(name of agency)

practicable, any matters of an OH&S nature that may have come to their attention in relation to any perceived or actual unsafe situation, risk or hazard present, or likely to arise, at this school that may threaten the health and wellbeing of a casual relief teacher allocated by them to this school. I will consider all such correspondence and provide advice accordingly to
(name of agency)

Signature: Date:

This declaration is deemed to remain in effect from date of signing until advised by the school to the contrary or there is a change of Principal.