

CHILDREN IN THE WORKPLACE PROCEDURE

SCOPE

All staff, herein collectively referred to as 'you' for the purpose of this procedure.

PROCEDURE STATEMENT

Various childcare options may be available to staff either through the University ('us', 'our' or 'we') or in the wider community. These include childcare centres, occasional care centres, babysitting, family day care, school holiday programs and before and after school programs.

Despite the range of childcare, leave, and home-based work options available, staff may occasionally, in unforeseen situations, need to bring children to their workplace until other arrangements can be made, thus allowing staff to meet workplace demands. However, when children are introduced to environments which are not designed to cater to them, issues of safety, supervision, productivity and legal liability arise.

We recognise that family responsibilities are matters which are not confined to social or private realms of life but are the concern of the community as a whole. As well as protecting the interests of children on campus and outlining the responsibilities for their care, the following procedures affirm the existing positive practices within Monash and recognise that provision for staff with family responsibilities is a fundamental prerequisite for achieving equality of employment opportunity.

1. Requests to bring children into workplaces

- 1.1 Provision for a sick child should normally be made within the context of carer's leave, compassionate leave, annual leave and/or special leave. Children who have or are suspected to have a contagious disease/illness must not be brought into the workplace.
- 1.2 If you wish to bring children into your workplace, you may submit your request to your supervisor for approval, specifying the length of time and any relevant frequency. Requests should always be made in advance, unless exceptional circumstances prevent this. Where reasonable, such requests will be treated sympathetically and with flexibility and sensitivity by supervisors. However, requests which could place a child in danger or cause undue stress or interference to other staff or cause damage to the work environment will not be approved.
- 1.3 Factors to be taken into account in considering requests to bring children into the workplace include:
 - age of the child;
 - the workplace environment, including location, size and potential hazards;
 - the degree of potential interference with other staff in the workplace; and
 - the feasibility of home-based work as an alternative.
- 1.4 You may bring a child into the workplace for the purposes of breast/bottle feeding provided you comply with this procedure and the breastfeeding procedure.

2. Responsibilities of staff bringing children into workplaces

- 2.1 A child brought into a workplace must be under the direct supervision of an accompanying parent or caregiver at all times, and responsibility for all aspects of that child's behaviour will rest with that parent or caregiver. The accompanying parent or caregiver must ensure that other users of the workplace are not unreasonably inconvenienced by the child. Where a child is disruptive, the workplace supervisor will determine whether permission for the child to remain is to be withdrawn.

3. Hazardous areas

- 3.1 Whether or not with an adult, a child is not permitted to enter or remain in areas where there are safety hazards, including:
- laboratories;
 - dark rooms;
 - workshops;
 - plant rooms;
 - food preparation areas;
 - construction areas;
 - printing or maintenance workshops;
 - areas where chemicals are stored;
 - areas where machinery is used; or
 - any other areas designated to be hazardous by the Zone Occupational Health and Safety Committee.
- 3.2 Subject to the above, you may be permitted to bring children into libraries, student union facilities, staff offices or other non-teaching areas.

4. Dispute resolution

- 4.1 Monitoring, intervention and resolution of any problems or disputes rests with you and your supervisor. If the matter is unresolved, the relevant HR Business Partner may be involved to conciliate the matter, in consultation with the relevant supervisor or head of department or administrative unit and thereafter be dealt with via appropriate University procedures.

5. Breach of procedure

- 5.1 We treat any breach of our policies or procedures seriously. We encourage reporting of concerns about non-compliance and manage compliance in accordance with the applicable Enterprise Agreement or contract terms.

DEFINITIONS

HR Business Partner	A key member of the Monash HR Business Partnering community and provides strategic advice, guidance and solutions that underpin key client goals, HR strategy and organisational vision to a particular client group.
Sick child	A child too ill to attend school or a childcare centre.
Supervisor	The person who is responsible for the supervision of staff member(s) and in most cases this will be the immediate line manager.

GOVERNANCE

Parent policy	Equal opportunity
Supporting Schedules	
Associated procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Breastfeeding• Pre-natal and parental leave
Legislation mandating compliance	
Category	Human Resources
Approval	Chief Human Resources Officer as delegate of the Chief Operating Officer - 16 September 2016
Endorsement	Director, Workplace Relations - 16 September 2016
Procedure owner	Director, Talent, Equity and Development
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Content enquiries	ask.monash or phone Monash HR on (03) 990 20400