

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEAVE & SUPPORT POLICY**

BETWEEN

[Registered Company Name] (the Employer)

AND

[Employee Name & Surname] (the Employee)

**POLICY PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to support you if you are impacted by domestic violence so that you can take the necessary time away from work to attend court, meet with appropriate services, or relocate, without too much financial consequence.

**WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

We use the definition of “domestic violence” which is found in the Domestic Violence Act 1995.  For the purpose of this policy, domestic violence includes physical, sexual, economic and psychological abuse.

Domestic violence can be carried out by anyone with whom you are in a domestic or close relationship with - this includes a partner or ex-partner, boyfriend or girlfriend, carer, parent, older child, sibling, friend, flatmate or family member (they don't have to be living with you).

**WHY DO WE HAVE THIS POLICY?**

We are committed to doing all we reasonably can to support employees who are affected by domestic violence.

 If you are affected by domestic violence you may feel hesitant about confiding in us.  At [Registered Company Name] all discussions and information around leave will be kept confidential, unless there is an immediate risk to your safety or another team member’s safety in the workplace.

We will work through a fair process with you and where possible, [Registered Company Name] will protect your privacy.

**WHAT YOU ARE ENTITLED TO**

At [Registered Company Name] we acknowledge that domestic violence is a huge concern in New Zealand. Sometimes you may be affected by this, through no fault of your own, and it may impact on your work attendance or performance.

To be eligible for domestic violence leave and short-term flexible work arrangements you have to:

* Have been employed continuously with us for 6 months; and
* Have worked an average of 10 hours a week and no less than 1 hour every week or no less than 40 hours in every month.

This is what you are eligible to request:

* Up to 10 days of domestic violence leave during each 12-month period, which can be taken as consecutive, single days, or partial days.

**NB:**  leave does not accumulate each 12-month period.  What this means is you cannot ‘bank’ any unused domestic violence leave not used during the year.

* A short-term variation to your working arrangements (for up to two months).  The variation can include changes to hours of work, location and duties of work.

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & SUPPORT LEAVE**

Ideally discuss your situation with your employer in the first instance if you are impacted by domestic violence in your life.  If you are not comfortable talking to your employer, you can use another person to act as your support.

We recognise that employees affected by domestic violence may need to take time off work for several reasons, for example including:

* attend court
* seek medical attention
* go to counselling
* relocate or seek alternative accommodation
* go to an appointment with the bank
* meet with their children’s school
* seek any other support needed during a time of crisis.

If you wish to access Domestic Violence & Support leave, we can support you to fill out the Leave Application Form (Refer attached Form 1 - Leave Application Form).

We may request proof of domestic violence, which is most likely in the form of a document from the police, a government department, a health professional, a family violence support service.   If we do, we will ask you for this within 3 days of you making a request.

All requests for domestic violence leave will be considered with urgency which we will respond to within 10 working days.

**SHORT TERM FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS**

Ideally discuss your situation with your employer in the first instance if you are impacted by domestic violence in your life.  If you are not comfortable talking to your employer, you can use another person to act as your support.

A written request using for short term flexible working arrangements can either be filled in yourself, or by working with us (Refer attached Form 2 – Short Term Flexible Working Arrangements Form).  The written request needs to include details about the changes

* including hours of work
* days of work
* change in the location of your work,
* changes to work telephone number or email address

All requests for short-term changes to an employee’s hours at work will be considered with urgency which we will respond to within 10 working days.

We may request proof of domestic violence, which is most likely in the form of a document from the police, a government department, a health professional, a family violence support service.   If we do, we will ask you for this within 3 days of you making a request.

If you believe that we have unreasonably refused your request for short term flexibility in your work arrangements, you have six months to raise this dispute with your employer.

**OTHER LEAVE & SUPPORT**

If a safety plan is needed for you in our workplace, please come and talk to us and we will work with you to develop a plan.  We may need to include our HR Advisor and/or an external agency for support and advice.

If you are supporting a person who is affected by domestic violence you may take annual leave, or unpaid leave to go with them to court, to hospital, or to mind children.

If you are a person that uses violence in your family, and you want help, below is a list of agencies that may be able to offer you help.  We may also be able to provide you with unpaid time off to go to these appointments.

**SUPPORT SERVICES**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Service** | **What they do** | **How to contact them** |
| Workplace Support  Programme  *e.g. EAP Services* | Free counselling service available to all employees | We will refer you to our HR provider to arrange |
| Women’s Refuge | Provides for urgent shelter, safety and advice.  Will also find shelter for males. | 0800 REFUGE |
| White Ribbon | Provides for education to help prevent domestic violence | www.whiteribbon.org.nz |
| National Network of Stopping Violence Services | Provides for a network of resources for both victims and abusers of violence | www.nnsvs.org.nz |
| Family Violence is No OK | Provides a range of materials and information to stop violence | [0800 456 450](tel:0800456450) |
| Citizens Advice Bureau | Provides free, impartial, and confidential service of information, assistance and referrals to people within the community | 0800 FOR CAB  (0800 367 222) |
| Family Violence Prevention | This website has articles on Family Violence and a wide range of resources and information about Family Violence | www.endabuse.org |
| Family Court | The Family Court aims, wherever possible, to help people sort out their own problems by way of counselling, conciliation and mediation.  The website contains legal information, factsheets and guides, and contact details for Family courts throughout Aotearoa. | www.justice.govt.nz/family/publications/pamphlets/ default.asp |

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

Role: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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

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