



# PARTICIPANT PROTECTION POLICY

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Policy Statement

Our Big Kitchen Pty Ltd (Our Big Kitchen) is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all of its employees, contractors, volunteers and visitors, particularly vulnerable persons such as Children. Our Big Kitchen aims to reduce the risk of Abuse occurring and to ensure that a caring and appropriate response is taken should Abuse occur.

### 1.2 Scope

This Participant Protection Policy applies to all employees, Volunteers, contractors and visitors within or engaged by Our Big Kitchen.

### 1.3 Authority

This Participant Protection Policy was adopted for use by Our Big Kitchen on 14 March 2018. Our Big Kitchen is committed to implementing the Participant Protection Policy and to train employees, contractors and Volunteers in its content and application.

### 1.4 Definitions

**Abuse:** can consist of but is not restricted to the following:

- Physical Abuse, any non-accidental physical injury resulting from practices such as: hitting, punching, kicking (marks from belt buckles, fingers), shaking, burning (irons, cigarettes), biting, pulling out hair, alcohol and/or other drug administration.
- Sexual Abuse, any assault or Abuse of a sexual nature, sexual molestation, indecent exposure, sexual harassment or intimidation.
- Emotional Abuse, the chronic attitude or behaviour of one person which is directed at another person, or, the creation of an emotional environment which erodes a person's self-esteem and social confidence over time. Behaviour may include: insulting, bullying, devaluing, ignoring, rejecting, corrupting, isolating, terrorising or other extreme acts in the vulnerable person's presence.

**Neglect:** The failure to provide for basic needs. Any serious omission or commission which jeopardises or impairs a person's health or development.

**Child/Children:** Any person/s under the age of 18.

**Leader:** Any person (paid or unpaid) over the age of 18 who is responsible for the control and safety of Participants placed in their care whilst holding a formal position in a named Organisation including but not limited to Activity Coordinators, Small Group Leaders, Managers and Volunteers.

**Participant:** Any person (adult or Child), who attends or participates in the named Organisation's activities, objectives or strategic plan.

**Organisation:** Our Big Kitchen, located at 36 Flood Street, Bondi NSW, Australia.

**Volunteer:** Any unpaid person over the age of 16 who is participating in activities at Our Big Kitchen.

**Employee:** Any employee or contractor of Our Big Kitchen.

## **2 Policy Review**

This Participant Protection Policy will be reviewed annually at a Board of Directors' meeting. Any changes recommended by the interested parties should be submitted in writing to the CEO for consideration. Any proposed changes will be submitted to the Board of Directors' meeting for approval before being implemented.

## **3 Obligations**

### **3.1 Responsibility**

The core expectations of any responsible Organisation requires us to treat all people with fairness and dignity and to care for those who are less powerful and in need of nurture and protection.

### **3.2 Legal**

All relevant Organisations within Australia are bound by Federal and State legislation and principles established through common law. Our Big Kitchen is committed to adhering to relevant legislation.

### **3.3 Ethical**

Some actions may not be regarded as Abuse, but are unacceptable behaviour for Our Big Kitchen. These include:

- Inappropriate conversation of a sexual nature.
- Coarse language, especially that of a sexual nature.
- Suggestive gestures or remarks.
- Jokes of a sexual nature.
- Inappropriate touching.
- Inappropriate literature.
- Recording, photographing or filming without prior consent of Participants or Our Big Kitchen management.
- Acts of violence committed by an Employee or Volunteer in the course of an activity.

Each Participant in Our Big Kitchen has the right to:

- Full and effective use of his or her personal, civil, legal and consumer rights;
- Be treated with dignity and respect and to receive services without exploitation, Abuse or Neglect;
- Receive services without discrimination or victimisation;
- Personal privacy;
- Be treated and accepted as an individual and to have his or her individual

preferences considered and treated with respect;

- Continue his or her cultural religious practices without discrimination;
- Freedom of speech;
- Complain and to act to resolve disputes;
- Have access to advocates and to other avenues of redress; and
- Be free from reprisals, or a well-founded fear of reprisal, in any form for acting to free enforce his or her rights.

## **4 Selection and Screening**

### **4.1 Employees and Volunteers**

Employees and Volunteers involved in activities or programs with Children must be carefully selected and screened. Prior to commencing employment, contract or Volunteer services, the following precautions will be taken:

- Prospective employees must provide a resume/CV, including details of two referees and permission to contact them.
- Relevant referees may be checked and spoken to. In addition, Our Big Kitchen may also call an applicant's prior employer to also be checked and spoken to. The questions will seek to establish the applicant's suitability for the role or position.
- All short-listed candidates must undertake a formal interview which includes an analysis of past experience working with Children.
- All Employees and Volunteers are required to have a current Working with Children Check (WWCC) or police check, based on state requirements. Our Big Kitchen will verify the WWCC online and require it to remain current whilst engaged with Our Big Kitchen.
- There can only be two results for a new Working with Children Check – a Clearance or a bar. People with a bar may not Work or Volunteer in Child-related roles.

Where the Organisation has identified that an applicant has previously committed a violent or sexually related offence, they cannot, under any circumstances, be considered for employment or engagement with Our Big Kitchen.

## **5 Training**

All new Employees/Employees, Contractors and Volunteers will be issued with a copy of this policy and may be required to undertake formal training in;

- The content and application of the Organisation's Participant Protection Policy,
- Reporting procedures and the associated legal requirements.

## **6 A Safe Environment**

Incidents of Abuse are unlikely to take place in front of another person and the presence of a witness can assist in clarifying questionable allegations. For these reasons, entry doors to Our Big Kitchen or other utilised spaces, should never be locked.

Adults and Children are expected to respect each other's privacy. Employees will set an example by protecting their own privacy in similar situations. An Employee should not take a Child to the toilet unless authorised to do so.

Employees have the right to ask people who do not have a valid reason to be present in Our Big Kitchen to leave. Police may be contacted if such persons refuse to comply with any reasonable request to leave.

## 7 Reporting Procedures

Our Big Kitchen actively encourages the reporting of all Abuse, including Sexual Abuse.

Our Big Kitchen is committed to building an environment where either a victim or Employee/Volunteer feels able to report such Abuse.

Employees/Volunteers must report Reasonable Suspicions of Abuse to the senior management of Our Big Kitchen immediately.

Volunteers may report Reasonable Suspicions of Abuse to their own organisation which has the right to act as an intermediary between the Volunteer and Our Big Kitchen.

Reasonable Suspicion means fair and practical reason to believe an incident involving Abuse has occurred, based on either verbal communication, hearsay, rumour or observation of behaviour.

Our Big Kitchen will act to resolve complaints fairly and quickly.

An independent person may be appointed by Our Big Kitchen with the specific duty of dealing with any allegations of harm or Abuse that may arise.

The details of those reporting Abuse will be kept private and confidential.

A documented reporting process with escalating procedures has been established by Our Big Kitchen for handling allegations of Abuse. The process is as follows:

- For all Reasonable Suspicions immediately contact the Our Big Kitchen head office and speak to a Company Director.
- Verbally provide details of the alleged suspicion. This should include: Our Big Kitchen location, Child's name and description/details of allegation which include details of the alleged perpetrator.
- Our Big Kitchen head office will document the details and provide the details to the police if the allegation warrants further action. This will be provided confidentially to the police.

The escalating procedures will be as follows:

- The automatic suspension from all work or other duties within Our Big Kitchen of any person while under investigation by Our Big Kitchen, or by the police, for alleged Abuse;
- The automatic termination of their employment, contract or involvement with Our Big Kitchen if found guilty of committing Abuse, either by internal investigation or by a court. If there is Reasonable Suspicion that a Participant has been or is suffering Abuse, the Police and the Organisation's Insurer will be contacted immediately.

The Police will also be notified if a Participant discloses an incident of Abuse that has occurred somewhere other than Our Big Kitchen premises.

If a disclosure of Abuse is made, the person who receives the disclosure will maintain appropriate pastoral care to the person making the disclosure. This will include:

- Treating each allegation seriously and not attempting to deny the allegation or downplay or minimise the allegation's impact on the alleged victim.
- Not pushing the Participant to disclose details of the alleged assault or attempting to investigate the allegation.
- Assuring the Participant that they are understood: that their disclosure is being taken seriously and that they are correct in disclosing the incident.
- If the Employee or Volunteer is already providing counsel to the alleged perpetrator, it may be advisable for another person to assume this

responsibility for the duration of any investigation.

- If an alleged sexual assault has taken place recently, clothing worn by the Participant should be, if reasonably practical, retained and handed to the police for forensic examination.
- Maintaining confidentiality.
- Ensuring there is no victimisation of those reporting Abuse or towards any participant in the process.

Any disclosures by a Participant, reports of suspected Abuse and all details of the subsequent investigation will be documented promptly and the documents will be held in a secure location where a breach of privacy cannot occur.

## **8 Drugs**

The consumption of illegal drugs on Our Big Kitchen premises or location where Our Big Kitchen activities are conducted is not to be allowed or condoned by any Employee. Any Participant found to be under the influence of illegal drugs is to be counselled and may be dismissed.

## **9 Alcohol**

The consumption of alcohol on Our Big Kitchen premises or location where Our Big Kitchen activities are conducted is not to be allowed or condoned by any Employee whilst engaged in any Our Big Kitchen activity. Any Participant found to be under the influence of alcohol is to be counselled and may be dismissed.