Health, Safety and Wellbeing Self-Assessment Tool

<u>Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners</u>

Acknowledgement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Safe and Equal acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional and ongoing custodians of the lands on which we live and work. We pay respects to Elders past and present. We acknowledge that sovereignty has never been ceded and recognise First Nations peoples' rights to self-determination and continuing connections to land, waters, community and culture.

About Safe and Equal

Safe and Equal is the peak body for specialist family violence services that provide support to victim survivors in Victoria. The interests of people experiencing, recovering from, or at risk of, family violence is at the heart of everything we do. Our vision is a world beyond family and gender-based violence, where women, children and people from marginalised communities are safe, thriving, and respected. We recognise the gendered nature of violence in our society, and the multiple intersecting forms of power and oppression which can compound the impacts of violence and limit people's access to services, support, and safety. We work closely and collaboratively with other organisations and support the leadership of victim survivors to amplify their voices and create change.

We provide specialist expertise across primary prevention, early intervention, response and recovery approaches and the inter-connections between them. Our work is focused on developing and advancing specialist practice for responding to victim survivors, building the capability of specialist family violence services and allied workforces, organisations and sectors that come into contact with victim-survivors; building the capabilities of workforces focused on primary prevention; and leading and contributing to the translation of evidence and research, practice expertise, and lived experience into safe and effective policy, system design and law reform.

We develop family violence practice and support workforces to ensure that victim survivors are safe, their rights are upheld, and their needs are met. The prevalence and impact of family and gender-based violence will be reduced because we are building a strong and effective workforce responding to victim survivors that can meet the needs of the community we serve, while also having a growing and impactful workforce working to prevent violence.

We work to strengthen and connect organisations, sectors, and systems to achieve safe and just outcomes for victim survivors irrespective of entry point, jurisdiction and individual circumstances. Joining efforts across prevention, response, and recovery we work to ensure the family violence system is informed and supported by a well-resourced and sustainable specialist sector. Our contributions to primary prevention workforces, initiatives and alliances contribute to social change for a safer and more respectful community.

We are building momentum for social change that drives meaningful action across institutions, settings, and systems for a safer and more equal society. Our workforce and practice development efforts are coupled with a partnership approach that builds community awareness and commitment to change. Our expertise and efforts enable citizens across the community to recognise and respond to family and gendered violence, hold perpetrators to account and support the ongoing recovery and empowerment of victim survivors.

We are a strong peak organisation providing sustainable and influential leadership to achieve our vision. The work we do and the way we work are integrated and align with our values. This is achieved through inclusive culture, and a safe and accessible workplace supported by robust systems and processes.

Contents

Introduction

This Tool is designed to establish an initial Health, Safety and Wellbeing organisational benchmark.

Considerations on the approach to using this Self-Assessment Tool

1. **Preparation and process tips**
   a   Decide on the best approach for the organisation to undertake the Assessment Tool. This could include:
       i   Organisational input required, including engagement mechanisms (such as surveys, online communication etc.):
           The use of a cross-organisational working group: when establishing a working group include representatives from across all levels of the organisation.
   b   Discuss the reflective questions and consider the context into which this places the Self-Assessment Tool.
   c   Provide clarity on participation confidentiality

2. **Post**
   a   Evaluate the responses identify and record trends/areas of strengths and improvements.
   b   Troubleshoot the areas of improvement and consider possible solutions by referring to the Guide, in particular the factors contained within the **five main pillars**. Consider convening a working group to develop an action plan to generate and implement solutions to the areas of improvement.
   c   Consider the areas of strength and identify the main drivers of success and consider if/how they can be reinforced and/or drawn upon to support areas of improvement.
   d   Provide feedback to participants setting out:
       i   The strengths identified, and credit the achievements of those involved in ensuring/supporting those areas. Explain how those strengths will be supported and built upon moving forwards.
       ii The opportunities identified and the action plan for resolution.

The Self-Assessment Tool

1. Organisational Level

1.1 Shared Vision, Ethics and Standards

Assessment questions	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments
Does the organisation utilise the Domestic Violence Victoria Code of Practice for Specialist Family Violence Services for Victim-Survivor's 2nd Edition (2020) and/or Men's Behaviour Change Minimum Standards (for work with perpetrators) to inform their shared vision, ethics and practice standards?			
Are the practice standards of the specialist family violence service system reflected in the operational procedures and processes?			
When decisions or processes in the broader family violence system work against the shared vision, ethics and standards of the organisation, does the organisation deal with this in a planned and constructive way?			
Does the organisation develop advocacy strategies in instances where feedback regarding systemic reforms, which work against the shared vision, ethics and standards of the organisation is not acted upon?			

Issues for consideration under the organisational health, safety and wellbeing plan:

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2)………………………………………………………………………………………………

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1.2 Organisational Change

Assessment questions	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments

Assessment questions	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments
Does the organisation provide input and advice to support implementation of ongoing sector changes?			
Do leadership teams effectively communicate organisational changes?			
Do leadership teams encourage people to take control and be empowered during times of change?			
Do leadership teams provide the same information and give consistent messages across the organisation?			
Do leadership teams establish mechanisms to facilitate meaningful staff input to the change process?			
Do staff take responsibility for accessing information which assists them to understand the nature of the changing environment?			
Are impacts of changes on the organisation monitored and discussed?			
Does the organisation re-engineer internal systems and processes to manage the change?			
Are the position descriptions of staff negotiated and redeveloped to manage the change?			

Issues for consideration under the organisational health, safety and wellbeing plan:

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1.3 Organisational Climate

Assessment questions	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments
Does the organisation have a staff Code of Conduct that integrates the organisational vision, values and goals?			
Are the human resource management policies and procedures that underpin the support and management of staff documented and accessible?			

	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments
Has the organisation considered how to implement and monitor processes to enhance inclusion of staff and access and equity for victim survivors ?			
Does the organisation have internal information sharing processes that are efficient and effective?			
Does the organisation unite during periods of unprecedented demand or external challenge?			
Does the organisation celebrate successes?			
Does the organisation recognise specific staff milestones? E.g. 5yr, 10yr etc anniversary			

Issues for consideration under the organisational health, safety and wellbeing plan:

1)……

2)……

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1.4 Organisational Justice and legislative compliance

Assessment questions	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments
Do leadership teams have monitoring systems in place to ensure staff have opportunities in accessing professional development and career pathways?			
Do leadership teams have monitoring systems in place to ensure that staff workloads are evenly distributed and less favoured work is distributed evenly?			
Are staff aware of equal opportunity legislation, discrimination and harassment policies and procedures governing workplace conduct?			
Does the organisation have zero tolerance to all forms of discrimination and bullying?			
Does the organisation have a clear anti- bullying policy and procedure that is communicated to and easy to access for all staff?			
Does the organisation audit all policies and procedures, promote diversity and work against discrimination, in all its forms?			
Is the diversity among staff recognised and celebrated?			

Issues for consideration under the organisational health, safety and wellbeing plan:

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1.5 Policies and Procedures

Assessment questions	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments
Does the organisation have a list of all the policies and procedures required to operate the organisation?			
Are these policies and procedures kept up to date?			
Are policy and procedure 'owners' identified?			
Does the organisation have a system in place to keep staff informed of new or changed policies and procedures?			
Do all staff have a working knowledge of all policies and procedures?			
Is there an organisational operating plan that indicates the responsibilities of individual teams?			
Do staff understand the critical role that policies and procedures play in directing practice and achieving a functional organisational climate?			
Are staff aware of the implications of non-compliance with organisational policies and procedures?			
Does the organisation have policy and recruitment procedures in place to ensure that those with diverse experiences and backgrounds are afforded equal opportunity in the recruitment process?			

Issues for consideration under the organisational health, safety and wellbeing plan:

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1.6 Physical environment and resources

Assessment questions	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments
Has the organisation completed a workplace audit to determine what measures can be taken to improve accessibility and ease of use for staff with disabilities?			
Does the organisation promote the diversity that exists across society, via use of imagery on walls and notice boards?			
Are staff able to have some personal items in their work stations?			
Does the work environment meet occupational health and safety standards?			
Does the workplace have a private space where staff can go, if needed?			
Do staff have access to natural light whist at work?			
Do staff have access to the technology, office equipment and supplies required to fulfil their roles?			
When catering for work events does the organisation provide healthy food options?			

Issues for consideration under the organisational health, safety and wellbeing plan:

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1.7 Appropriate Employment Conditions

Assessment questions	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments
Do staff have access to award wages and entitlements / Fair Work Australia Standards?			
Do employment conditions impact on the organisation's capacity to recruit staff with the expertise and skill required to fulfil roles within your organisation?			

Do leadership teams advocate for improved wages and entitlements across the sector?			
Does the organisation's enterprise agreement adhere to award wages and entitlements?			
Does the organisation provide information regarding the appropriate union to new staff?			

Issues for consideration under the organisational health, safety and wellbeing plan:

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1.8 Advocacy for policy, legislative and systems reform

Assessment questions	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments
Do staff have opportunities to work with other organisations on advocacy activity?			
Are staff supported with adequate time and resources to undertake advocacy activities?			
Are staff provided with professional development to support their advocacy work?			
Are the achievements resulting from advocacy activity celebrated?			

Issues for consideration under the organisational health, safety and wellbeing plan:

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1.9 Advocacy for service improvements, resources, and funding

Assessment questions	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments
Is the organisation active in providing input to the ongoing development and refinement of the integrated family violence service system?			
Are provisions allocated to remunerate the extra work that staff may need to do in times of extensive reform?			
Do leadership teams receive advice and support from the governing body of your organisation in conduct of this work?			
Do leadership teams provide feedback to government when issues arising in reform processes impact negatively on the organisation or staff?			

Issues for consideration under the organisational health, safety and wellbeing plan:

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2)…………………………………………………………………………………………………

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2. Leadership Level

2.1 Providing staff feedback

Assessment questions	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments
Do leadership teams demonstrate that they value staff contributions regularly?			
Are staff recognised and rewarded for meaningful work that is invisible, as well as for outstanding contributions?			
Do leadership teams provide feedback to staff regularly?			
Do leadership teams receive training in appraising staff performance and providing appropriate staff feedback?			

Issues for consideration under the organisational health, safety and wellbeing plan:

1)……………………………………………………………………………………………

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2.2 Proactively support and encourage health, safety and wellbeing

Assessment questions	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments
Do leadership teams model feminist, adaptive, compassionate and trauma-informed leadership?			
Do leadership teams model the prioritisation of their own wellbeing (i.e. hours worked, taking breaks and scheduling in annual leave)?			
Do leadership teams model, educate and encourage staff to seek help and to talk openly about impact of the work on staff health and wellbeing concerns?			
Are there accessible reporting channels for leadership teams to report concerns of health, safety and wellbeing risks (including increased stress and potential for burnout) within their team?			
Do leadership teams monitor and discuss health, safety and wellbeing risks (including increased stress and potential for burnout) within their teams?			
Do leadership teams have strategies in place to mitigate increased levels of stress within their team?			
Do the actions of leadership teams indicate that they are concerned about the wellbeing of staff?			
Do leadership teams promote access to an Employee Assistance Program?			
Do leadership teams provide advice regarding the strategies that can be used to reduce stress and build resilience over time?			
In instances where staff remain impacted by the work, do leadership teams explore opportunities to adjust their workplans for staff to have a break from direct service activities?			

	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments
In instances where staff remain impacted and there is no indication that this situation will improve, do leadership teams discuss different employment options with affected staff?			
Do leadership teams inform staff about behaviours that are often adopted in response to workplace stress and individual strategies that can be adopted to prevent or reduce stress?			
Do leadership teams have approaches and processes in place to underpin effective teamwork?			

Issues for consideration under the organisational health, safety and wellbeing plan:

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2.3 Supervision

Assessment questions	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments
Do leadership teams monitor work plans to ensure that unrealistic workloads are avoided?			
Do leadership teams proactively provide access to debriefing, when needed?			
Do leadership teams monitor staff participation in professional development activities?			
Do leadership teams provide regular supervision sessions that include discussions on work planning, reflection and professional development?			

Issues for consideration under the organisational health, safety and wellbeing plan:

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2.4 Workload support

Assessment questions	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments
Do leadership teams have modified practice arrangements to manage the workloads of staff during times of excessive demand?			
Do leadership teams provide resources and support to staff around work prioritization during times of excessive demand?			

Issues for consideration under the organisational health, safety and wellbeing plan:

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2.5 Professional and skilled management

Assessment questions	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments
Are leadership teams aware of the role that they can play in promoting and supporting health, safety and wellbeing in the workplace?			
Are leadership teams aware of the need to develop sound protocols, policies, procedures and an organisational climate that is conducive to positive health, safety and wellbeing?			
Do leadership teams receive appropriate training in the management of health, safety and wellbeing issues that staff may be experiencing?			
Does the organisation ensure that, as staff, leadership teams are also the beneficiaries of any health and wellbeing actions taken?			

Issues for consideration under the organisational health, safety and wellbeing plan:

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2)……………………………………………………………………………………………………

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3. Job Design Level

3.1 Role Clarity

Assessment questions	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments
Do the position descriptions adequately define roles in terms of the competencies required to do the job well?			
Do all staff have up to date position descriptions?			
Do all staff have up to date work plans?			
Are there practice guidelines in place to guide staff in their provision of services to those subjected to or perpetrating family violence?			
Are staff work plans monitored to ensure that unrealistic workloads are avoided?			
Are the organisational team plans realistic?			
Does the organisation have a strategic plan?			
Can staff readily identify the contribution that they make in achieving the overall organisational strategy?			

Issues for consideration under the organisational health, safety and wellbeing plan:

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3.2 Demand and control

Assessment questions	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments
Are there mechanisms in place to ensure that staff are allocated realistic levels of work?			
Are staff able to carry out their work independently in line with their role and level of responsibility?			
Are the organisational decision-making processes made clear?			
Are staff engaged in internal committees or problem-solving teams to provide input to decisions at an early stage of the process?			

Issues for consideration under the organisational health, safety and wellbeing plan:

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3.3 Job Characteristics

Assessment questions	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments
Does the organisation have an employment policy that promotes flexibility, such as changing full time status, start times, RDO options?			
Do staff have flexibility in their roles that allows engagement in a diversity of work tasks?			
Do staff feel they have access to work that contributes to the organisation's mission and strategic priorities?			
Are direct service staff able to allocate some time to non-direct service tasks?			

Assessment questions	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments
Are staff encouraged to present new ideas and contribute to organisation learning and innovation?			
Do staff know that their work is valuable to the organisation?			

Issues for consideration under the organisational health, safety and wellbeing plan:

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2)...

3)...

3.4 Ongoing Exposure to Family Violence

Assessment questions	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments
Do leadership teams provide opportunities for staff to participate in advocacy activities designed to improve service responses to those subjected to or perpetrating family violence?			
Do leadership teams provide opportunities for staff to participate in activities designed to promote gender equity to prevent violence against women?			
Do leadership teams regularly engage with staff on the strategies to reduce likelihood of vicarious trauma?			
Are staff supported to maintain their compassion and empathy with clients whilst also maintaining professional boundaries underpinning good practice?			

Issues for consideration under the organisational health, safety and wellbeing plan:

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3)..

3.5 Personal advocacy on behalf of clients

Assessment questions	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments
Do all direct service staff in the organisation undertake professional advocacy activities on behalf of clients and understand the importance of doing so?			
Is client advocacy at an agency and systems level included in all direct service staff position descriptions and are they supported to fulfill this requirement?			

Issues for consideration under the organisational health, safety and wellbeing plan:

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4. Team and Work Group Level

4.1 Formal systems of support

Assessment questions	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments
Do leadership teams receive training in the provision of staff support, debriefing, critical incident management and supervision?			
Do staff have access to critical incident debriefing (CID) provided by a service that has expertise in the provision of services to people subjected to or perpetrating family violence?			
Do staff engage in organisational informal gatherings and other opportunities to receive and offer support to peers?			

Issues for consideration under the organisational health, safety and wellbeing plan:

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4.2 Professional Development

Assessment questions	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments
Are staff supported to undertake professional development activities?			
Does the organisation have a policy on professional development that states the amount of time and budget allocated to individual staff?			
Is professional development factored into budgets as a standard organisational practice?			
Are staff given the opportunity to participate in reflective practice processes and opportunities?			

Issues for consideration under the organisational health, safety and wellbeing plan:

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5. Individual Level

5.1 Work Hour Span and Leave Entitlements

Assessment questions	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments
Do staff take regular breaks?			
Does the organisation have a policy and procedure in place regarding the amount of annual leave staff can accrue and is it adhered to?			

Assessment questions	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments
Does the organisation have a policy and procedure in place regarding the amount of time in lieu staff can accrue, and is it adhered to?			
Does the organisation have a policy and procedure in place regarding overtime work?			
Do staff often work overtime hours which are not paid?			
Do staff often come into work when they are unwell?			
Do leadership teams analyse the amount of annual leave, time in lieu, overtime and sick leave staff are accruing?			

Issues for consideration under the organisational health, safety and wellbeing plan:

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5.2 Seeking and availability of informal support

Assessment questions	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments
Do leadership teams have an open-door policy which enables staff to speak with leadership teams and receive support when required?			
Do leadership teams regularly ask their staff whether they need additional support in performance of their work?			
Do staff ask for support when needed?			
Do staff provide support to one another when needed?			

Issues for consideration under the organisational health, safety and wellbeing plan:

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5.3 Active participation in supervision

Assessment questions	Y/N	Adhered to?	Comments
Do staff prepare for supervision sessions and are they encouraged by leadership teams to do so?			
Is there a standard template that is used by staff to prepare for supervision sessions?			
Do staff have a record of supervision that measures the regularity of attendance and preparation undertaken?			
Are supervision records and agreements reviewed regularly?			

Issues for consideration under the organisational health, safety and wellbeing plan:

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