

## FAMILY & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE POLICY

CCGT is committed to providing a supportive and safe workplace that can ease the emotional, psychological and physical pain that family and domestic violence has on affected employees.

The Fair Work Act defines Family and Domestic Violence as violent, threatening, or other abusive behaviour by an employee's close relative, a current or former intimate partner, or a member of their household that both seeks to coerce or control the employee and causes them harm or to be fearful.

A close relative is:

- an employee's:
  - spouse or former spouse
  - de facto partner or former de facto partner
  - child
  - parent
  - grandparent
  - grandchild
  - sibling
- an employee's current or former spouse or de facto partner's child, parent, grandparent, grandchild or sibling, or
- a person related to the employee according to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander kinship rules.

People who experience family and domestic violence can be from any socio-economic background, religion, education level, age, gender or sexual orientation.

Family and domestic violence can take many forms. Examples can include:

- physical violence
- sexual assault or sexually abusive behaviour
- verbal abuse
- emotional or psychological abuse
- stalking
- financial abuse
- spiritual or cultural abuse
- serious neglect where there is a relationship of dependence
- damage to property or belongings
- technology or threatened abuse of pets
- behaviour by a person using violence that causes a child to be exposed to the effects of family and domestic violence

CCGT recognises the importance of knowing the signs that someone may be experiencing family and domestic violence, so they can help employees access the support they need.

Behaviours that may signal a person is experiencing family and domestic violence include:

- excessive absence or lateness (especially on Mondays)
- a sudden or sustained drop in productivity
- frequent unexplained bruises or injuries
- wearing concealing clothing, even in warm weather
- frequent or unusual work breaks, or unusual start and finish times
- displaying anxiety
- appearing distracted, depressed or overly jumpy
- lack of concentration or difficulty making decisions
- inability to take work-related trips
- receiving excessive personal calls, texts or visits

If a CCGT employee is displaying some of the signs of experiencing family and domestic violence, CCGT's procedure is to respectfully raise concerns with the employee or their Manager. While Managers and co-workers aren't counsellors or confidantes, it's important that they feel equipped to raise their concerns and support their employees or fellow co-workers.

When speaking with the employee it's important to:

- provide a safe and private place where you can have a confidential conversation. Do not ask them in a public place or in a team meeting if they're okay.
- ask open-ended questions that give your employee a way to safely disclose, such as 'How are things at home?', or 'You seem anxious lately. Are you ok?.'
- avoid asking them overly direct or insensitive questions, such as whether they're in a violent relationship
- share your observations using non-judgmental language and expressions
- be prepared for an emotional response, including tears, defensiveness or withdrawal
- listen and avoid giving advice, let them be in control of the conversation
- not assume any facts before you've spoken to the employee

An employee can choose not to talk to you about your concerns. However, if an employee confides in you whether of their own initiative or yours, it's important to stay calm and respond appropriately. It's important to:

- Take the matter seriously, believe them, tell them it's not their fault and that violence is never okay. Don't express doubt, judgement or shock
- Use a calm and reassuring tone
- Avoid making comments or asking questions that undermine what the employee is experiencing such as 'Why do you put up with it?' or 'Why are you still there?'
- Acknowledge how hard it must be for the employee to talk about what is happening to them
- Put safety first and check for an immediate threat – if you are concerned for their safety, say so
- Be aware of how the employee's cultural and linguistic background could affect their understanding of what family and domestic violence is
- Provide practical support by asking how you can help
- Do not criticise their decisions, partner or family member (the suspected perpetrator)
- Give information about their entitlements outlined in CCGT's family and domestic violence policy
- Provide information about support services available and refer them on if requested
- Don't try to 'fix' their situation such as by pressuring them to leave or taking any specific action
- Follow up with them and continue providing support

CCGT Management will discuss possible safety measures that could be implemented if the employee feels unsafe in the workplace, such as screening the employee's incoming calls, blocking emails, changing a phone number, or changing working hours or location.

### **Leave and Other Entitlements**

CCGT employees (including part-time and casual employees) can take paid leave if they need to deal with the impact of family and domestic violence and if it's impractical to do so outside of their ordinary hours of employment. For example, making arrangements for their safety, or the safety of a family member (including relocation) or attending court hearings, accessing police services, attending counselling and attending appointments with medical, financial or legal professionals

Employees dealing with the impact of family and domestic violence can:

- take paid family and domestic violence leave
- request flexible working arrangements
- take paid or unpaid personal/carer's leave, in certain circumstances

### **Family and Domestic Violence Leave**

Employees are entitled to 10 days of paid family and domestic violence leave for each year of their employment from their commencement. This also includes part-time and casual staff.

The 10 days renew each 12 months but do not accumulate from year to year if it is not used.

Family and domestic violence leave doesn't need to be taken all at once it can be taken as single or multiple days.

An employer and employee can also agree for an employee to take less than 1 day at a time or, for the employee to take more than 10 days of paid family & domestic violence leave.

Family and domestic violence leave does not break an employee's period of continuous service but does not count as service when calculating accumulated entitlements such as paid leave.

Full-time and part-time employees can take paid family and domestic violence leave at their full pay rate for the hours they would have worked if they weren't on leave.

Casual employees will be paid at their full pay rate for the hours they were rostered to work in the period they took leave. An employee's full pay rate is their base rate plus any:

- incentive-based payments and bonuses
- loadings
- monetary allowances
- overtime or penalty rates
- any other separately identifiable amounts.

If an employee takes family and domestic violence leave they have to let CCGT know as soon as possible. This can happen after the leave has started. Employees also need to tell CCGT how long they expect the leave to last.

CCGT may ask their employee for evidence that shows the employee took the leave to deal with family and domestic violence for any time period. If the employee doesn't provide the requested evidence, they may not be granted family and domestic violence leave.

Types of evidence includes:

- Documents issued by the police service
- Documents issued by a court
- Family violence support service documents or, a statutory declaration

### **Flexible Working Arrangements**

Flexibility in the workplace allows employers and employees to make arrangements about working conditions that suit them. Employees need to request flexible working arrangements in writing explaining what changes they would like to make and the reasons for the requested change.

To be eligible, employees must have worked with CCGT continuously for at least 12 months. A casual employee can make a request if they've been working for CCGT regularly and systematically for at least 12 months and there is a reasonable expectation of continuing work with CCGT on a regular and systematic basis.

Examples of flexible working arrangements include changes to:

- hours of work, such as working staggered start, finish or lunchtimes
- patterns of work, such as split shifts or job sharing
- locations of work, such as working away from the office
- duties, such as moving into non-public-facing roles or temporary work assignments off-site.

### **Paid or Unpaid Personal/Carer's Leave**

An employee can access paid or unpaid sick or carer's leave as a result of family and domestic violence when the employee has:

- a personal illness or personal injury affecting the employee caused by family or domestic violence
- an unexpected emergency affecting a member of the employee's immediate family or household due to family or domestic violence.

Access to sick or carer's leave doesn't extend to taking leave to do something to deal with the impact of family or domestic violence. For example, it can't be taken to attend legal appointments or access police services. Family and domestic violence leave can be used for these purposes.

### **Confidentiality**

CCGT takes reasonably practicable steps to keep any information about an employee's situation confidential. This includes information about the employee giving notice that they are taking family & domestic violence leave and any evidence they provide.

CCGT are not prevented from disclosing information if:

- It's required by law or,
- Is necessary to protect the life, health or safety of the employee or another person

CCGT Acknowledges that any information about an employee's experience of family and domestic violence is sensitive. If information is mishandled, it could have adverse consequences for their employee. CCGT will work with their employee to discuss and agree on how this information will be handled.

### **Support Services**

CCGT can provide services inside and outside of the workplace.

CCGT provides an Employee Assistance Program (EAP). An EAP is a program designed to enhance the emotional, mental and general psychological well-being of our employees.

Please refer to CCGT's Employee Assistance Program Policy for full details.

Counselling and support for people impacted by domestic and family violence is available at 1800 RESPECT website [www.1800respect.org.au](http://www.1800respect.org.au), the national sexual assault, domestic and family violence counselling service.

Endorsed by the Board of Directors on 26/11/24



CCGT Chairman



CCGT Senior Manager