

1. Purpose

Tearfund's leadership is committed to providing a safe, respectful and inclusive workplace for all who work with us.

2. Scope

This policy and the associated guidelines extend to all Tearfund People as defined in Definitions unless a subset of this group is identified as the relevant group. It also applies to prospective employees in regard to infection control measures such as wearing of masks when entering a workplace.

3. Policy

At Tearfund we recognise that safety is everyone's responsibility, expressed as a mutual duty of care towards ourselves and others, and that this includes physical, psychological and psychosocial aspects of a person's work experience. We recognise that health and safety measures are most effective when a collaborative approach is used to identify and solve problems.

3.1. Policy Approach:

Tearfund's approach to Work Health and Safety (WHS) attempts to balance an understanding of risk with an understanding of the work we are doing. For this reason, WHS at Tearfund is intended to support both Tearfund People and the work we do. Tearfund works to understand the key risks to health and safety at work for Tearfund People and to take all reasonable, practicable actions to eliminate, reduce or mitigate those risks. Decision-making around higher risk activities includes the Tearfund People directly affected and is taken prayerfully and with great care. Our approach to WHS is consistent with Tearfund's core Christian values of care for the whole person, justice, accountability, and excellence.

3.2. Health and Safety Strategies:

Tearfund will seek to achieve a safe workplace and working environment (attending to physical, psychosocial and other identified risks) by:

- a. Identifying, mitigating and monitoring the risks and hazards connected to all types of work activities and work environments.
- b. Providing instruction, training and supervision to improve individual understanding of workplace hazards, including safe work practices and emergency procedures.
- c. Involving individuals in occupational health and safety matters and consulting with them on ways to recognise, evaluate, control, eliminate and minimise workplace hazards.
- d. Ensuring that everyone (including visitors and contractors) complies with appropriate standards and workplace directions to protect their own and others' health and safety at work.
- e. Providing inclusive systems to effectively manage rehabilitation and return to work processes.
- f. Taking steps to control and mitigate the impact of endemic or epidemic infections such as COVID-19 or other infections where a risk to health and safety is identified. Tearfund will, where appropriate, encourage, or if necessary, require various persons to be vaccinated unless they have a medical exemption (see Vaccination and Medical exemption definition in section 5 below).

3.3. Health and Safety Implementation:

Tearfund will implement and maintain an on-going work health and safety program, including training at induction for new Tearfund People and on-going training for Tearfund People as applicable, conducting regular inspections of the workplace, regular surveys to monitor psychosocial risks and facilitating discussions aimed at preventing accidents and incidents, improving WHS and eliminating or minimising hazards, so far as is reasonably practicable.

3.4. Consulting with Staff

Tearfund has a People at Tearfund Working Group (PaTWG) which is made up of representatives from all departments, and a representative from the Executive Leadership Team (ELT). The role of a PaT Representative is to actively consult with their department and represent the people management and safety concerns of their co-workers. The functions of the PaTWG include providing support and advice to People & Culture in the care and management of staff, and acting as a consultation point, advisory and provider of support or assistance to People & Culture and management in the resolution of issues relating to work health and safety, as requiredⁱ.

3.5. Reporting of hazards & incidents

The Board is responsible for governance of the organisation's work health safety program and will receive quarterly reports on hazards and incidents as well as regular updates on WHS systems and policies. External reporting of notifiable incidents will be managed by the WHS Officer (see section 3.8).

3.6. Responsibilities of Tearfund People

All Tearfund People are expected to:

- a. Abide by the WHS Policy, safe work practices, procedures and directions and actively participate in safety improvement activities.
- b. Take reasonable care for their own safety and the safety of those around them (including psychosocial, psychological and physical aspects).
- c. Report all risks, hazards, injuries, safety incidents and near misses to their supervisor. Reporting a hazard may include reporting another person who is behaving in an unsafe manner or posing a risk.

Any breach of this policy will initially be discussed with the person(s) involved. Where appropriate, the matter may be handled through the Complaints, Grievance or Performance Management & Discipline Policies.

3.7. Responsibilities of Supervisors

In addition to the responsibilities which apply to all staff and volunteers, supervisors will:

- a. Provide an example to others by always directing and performing work in a safe manner.
- b. Ensure that safe work practices are followed, through good supervision of Tearfund People. This includes holding people accountable who breach the WHS Policy.
- c. Ensure that regular discussions take place between themselves and Tearfund People regarding WHS issues, encourage commitment, cooperation and open communication about safety issues.

3.8. Responsibilities of the WHS Officer

It is the role of the WHS Officer to oversee and support the implementation of WHS systems, to maintain WHS documentation and reporting including the WHS policy and guidelines, support follow up and reporting of hazards and incidents (including incident reporting to relevant authorities if required), investigation processes, and issue resolutions, as well as return to work planning and Worker's Compensation claims. The role also has responsibility to lead and support safe workplace teams (i.e., Emergency wardens /First aiders) and related training/drills, ergonomic or work from home assessments, health and well-being initiatives, and to liaise with Health Safety Reps and selected staff regarding safety audits and follow up.

4. Related References

Tearfund policies and documents	
Bullying and Harassment Policy Domestic Travel Policy Domestic Travel Guidelines International Travel Policy International Travel, Health and Security Guidelines Performance Management & Discipline Policy	PSEAH Policy and Guidelines Safeguarding Children Policy and Guidelines Security Policy Complaints Policy Grievance Policy & Guidelines WHS Guidelines

5. Definitions/Terminology Clarification

Endemic – an outbreak confined to a particular geographic area.

Epidemic – a more widespread outbreak that may affect the entire nation.

Hazard is a situation that could cause harm to someone or something.

Medical Exemption refers to an exemption from vaccination which meets the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) listed reasons for a medical exemption to vaccination. This includes permanent vaccine exemption or temporary vaccine exemption until a specified dateⁱⁱ.

Pandemic – an epidemic that is affecting the entire world, such as the [COVID-19 pandemic](#).

Psychosocial hazards are hazards that arise from or in relation to the design or management of work, the working environment, plant or equipment at a workplace, or workplace interactions or behaviours and which may cause psychological and/or physical injury, illness, or harm.

Risk refers to the likelihood of harm arising from exposure to hazards and the consequences of that harm.

Tearfund: In this document ‘Tearfund’, ‘the organisation’, ‘we’, ‘us’ or ‘our’ means Tearfund Australia.

Tearfund People refers to all Tearfund staff, volunteers (including board members), consultants and contractors (when engaged in Tearfund activities).

Workplace refers to the space where Tearfund People conduct their Tearfund activities, including vehicles.

6. Change History

This policy will be reviewed according to the policy review schedule (outlined in the *Key Tearfund Documents Development and Management Policy*) and in line with Tearfund Family standards.

Date	Modification
Sept 2023	Increase in scope to include prospective employees. Inclusion of Psychosocial risks and infection control. Updated responsibilities of the PaTWG and WHS Officer. Moved responsibility to notify serious incidents to guidelines as implementation step. Updated logo and business name.
May 2019	Included responsibility to notify relevant safety for serious incidents. Updated references. Included Tearfund values and ethos rationale for safety.

15 May 2005	This policy was adopted as part of the consolidated manual.
May – Nov 2011	The OHS Committee revised the policy, to present to the DCT, then the Board for approval.
Sept 2015	Updated reference from Safety Committee to People at Tearfund Working Group. Included additional references. Strengthened commitment from LT.

ⁱ Taken from the People at Tearfund Working Group Terms of Reference (updated Aug 2023).

ⁱⁱ See ATAGI clinical guidance for COVID-19 vaccine providers | Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care for more information.