

arbias

Human Resources
Guidelines

December 2008



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1. INTRODUCTION

In 1989 Ms Marilyn Hage convened a meeting held at the St. Vincent's Department of Community Medicine. In attendance were a group of people who shared with Marilyn a vision to establish a service to support those with alcohol related brain impairment.

The Group included Ms. Christine Clifford, Mr. Tim Costello, Mr. Les Drew, Ms. Margret Hamilton, Ms. Jeni Lee, Ms. Maureen Molloy, Mr. Ian Paxton, Ms. Pat Wilkinson and Ms. Beverley Wood. In the beginning, the primary focus was with people who were homeless and suffering brain damage – the people who constantly fall through the gaps in the service networks.

A working group was assembled, meeting regularly at St. Vincent's Hospital. As a result, a Management Committee was formed, staff were appointed in August 1990 and services commenced in September. In October **arbias** moved into its first premises and the Neuropsychological Assessment Unit commenced work.

Driven by the energy of this group and importantly over the past 4 years a drive for excellence and endeavour that is second to none, the service is now nationally recognised as the leader in this field and has developed into what we now know as **arbias**, a not-for-profit specialist disability service which works together with families, support networks, employers and service providers to assist people with alcohol and other substance related brain impairment to live and function to their full potential in the community.

In 2006 its services were expanded to include people with 'other substance' related brain injury. The **arbias** Vision is a world free of alcohol and other substance related brain impairment and seeks to achieve this vision through 6 key objectives; Prevention, Intervention, Treatment, Awareness Raising, Education and Research.

arbias has Local, National and Global Partnerships with Workforce Development agencies, the Criminal Justice system, Mental Health organisations, Housing, Alcohol and Other Drugs, Employment, Aged Care and Research & Development in the tertiary sector.

arbias currently employs approximately sixty people in areas including case management, accommodation, lifestyle support, neuropsychological assessment, research and workforce training and development.

In late 2006 **arbias** successfully applied to the Alcohol Education & Rehabilitation Foundation (AERF) for funding to develop a comprehensive human resources strategy. To date human resources policies and procedures have been created as needed, and this funding allowed **arbias** the much needed opportunity to do this in a more strategic and consultative way. This manual is the outcome of that project and will allow **arbias** to approach human resources in a much more consistent, consultative and fair manner than has been possible before. It has been developed after extensive consultation with our staff and is written in such a way that future amendments to it can occur easily and consistent with the human resources strategy we have now adopted.

The manual is to be made available to other agencies within the ABI sector, for their information and use (if they wish).

arbias

We anticipate reviewing the manual periodically to ensure it continues to meet our human resources requirements over time.

We wish to sincerely thank AERF for the funding for the project, our own staff for their positive contribution to the document, and to acknowledge the work of Wendy Murphy and Norena Kavanagh in the preparation of the manual.

John Eyre
Executive Manager
arbias
December 2008

2. HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

LEADERSHIP PRACTICES	EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT	KNOWLEDGE ACCESSIBILITY	WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT	LEARNING CAPACITY
<p>Communication Management's communication is open and effective.</p>	<p>Job Design Work is well organized and taps employees' skills.</p>	<p>Availability Job-related information and training are readily available.</p>	<p>Processes Work processes are well defined, and training is effective.</p>	<p>Innovation New ideas are welcome.</p>
<p>Inclusiveness Management collaborates with employees and invites input.</p>	<p>Commitment Jobs are secure, employees are recognized and advancement is possible.</p>	<p>Collaboration Teamwork is encouraged and enabled.</p>	<p>Conditions Working conditions support high performance.</p>	<p>Staff Training and Development Training is practical and supports organizational goals.</p>
<p>Supervisory skills Managers eliminate barriers, provide feedback, and inspire confidence.</p>	<p>Time Workload allows employees to do jobs well and enables good work/life balance.</p>	<p>Information sharing Best practices are shared and improved.</p>	<p>Accountability High performance is expected and rewarded.</p>	<p>Career Planning Employees have formal career development plans.</p>
<p>Executive skills Senior executives eliminate barriers, provide feedback and inspire confidence.</p>	<p>Systems Employee engagement is continually evaluated.</p>	<p>Systems Collection systems make information easily available.</p>	<p>Recruitment Hires are chosen on the basis of skill; new hires complete a thorough orientation.</p>	<p>Value and support Leaders demonstrate that learning is valued.</p>
<p>Systems Leadership development and transition systems are effective.</p>			<p>Systems Employee performance management systems are effective.</p>	<p>Systems A learning management system automates aspects of training.</p>

(Source: Adapted from the *Harvard Business Review* March 2007)

3. LEADERSHIP PRACTICES

Leadership practices are those practices which support open and inclusive communication between managers and employees and the development and nurturing of leadership skills. Fundamental to this is the promotion of **arbias'** vision, mission and values.

Vision

The **arbias** vision is a world free of alcohol and other substance related brain impairment.

Mission

The aim of **arbias** is to provide leadership in all aspects of alcohol and other drug related brain impairment, and in doing so, build the capacity of communities to support those affected to live to their full potential.

Values

People affected by alcohol and other drug related brain impairment have the ability to make good decisions about their lives and reach their full potential and as such:

Commitment

People with alcohol and other drug related brain impairment can live in the community with maximum independence.

Social Justice

People with alcohol and other drug related brain can function as part of the community and have the same rights as everyone else.

Respect

Our practices encourage the personal dignity and acknowledge the strengths of our service users and others with an alcohol and other drug related brain impairment.

Objectives

- Prevention:** Identify and address factors leading to alcohol and other substance related brain impairment.
- Intervention:** Provide immediate services through secondary consultation, crisis intervention and monitoring.
- Treatment:** Provide a range of specialist services for people with alcohol and other substance related brain impairment and associated complex needs.
- Health promotion:** Actively promote issues of alcohol and other substance related brain impairment with policy makers, service providers and the community.
- Education:** Develop and enhance the knowledge and skills required to work effectively with people who have an alcohol and other substance related brain impairment.
- Research:** Undertake research in alcohol and other substance related brain impairment which informs current and future service provision and policy development.

Commitment to professional development and support

arbias is actively committed to the professional development and support of its employees and provides time and resources to ensure this occurs. **arbias** believes that good quality professional development has a direct impact on positive outcomes for its clients.

Key features of effective professional development are:

- An identified manager.
- A process that includes guidance, direction, feedback about performance and identification of training and professional development needs.
- Regular professional development meetings.
- A clear work plan and development plan that is reviewed on a monthly basis.

Professional development is provided to all employees of **arbias**, regardless of experience or position. At times, the extent of professional development may vary depending on the experience and skill of the employee in particularly demanding circumstances. New employees, for example, may receive more regular professional development in the early stages of their career with **arbias**.

Managers may use a variety of methods of professional development. These include:

- Mentoring.
- Coaching.
- Discussion of approaches to case management.
- Discussion of work issues.
- One-to-one meetings.
- Group meetings.

Good quality professional development has positive impacts. These include:

- Effective and accountable performance by employees.
- Effective client service delivery.
- Improved 'fit' of employees with their job.
- Lowered stress levels.
- Improved sense of belonging to the organisation.

Difference between professional development and clinical supervision

arbias also provides clinical supervision for staff involved in client services. Clinical supervision is different from professional development or management supervision. Clinical supervision is defined by NCETA (Australia's national research centre on AOD Workforce Development) as 'directed at developing a less experienced worker's **clinical practice skills** through the provision of support and guidance from a more experienced supervisor. The clinical supervision relationship is characterised by regular, systematic and detailed exploration of a supervisee's work with clients or patients'.

http://www.nceta.flinders.edu.au/pdf/TIPS/02-Clin_Supervision.pdf

4. EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Employee engagement encompasses those policies and practices which support clarity of expectations, security, commitment and recognition of employees and enabling systems such as performance management and feedback.

Job design and documentation

Policy

Purpose:

To outline *arbias*' commitment to providing clear job expectations, a solid basis for identifying training and development needs and the accurate advertising of positions.

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees.

Policy Statement:

arbias is committed to designing and documenting roles that meet its strategic objectives and service delivery needs taking into account any specific funding requirements.

Designing jobs

Jobs are designed taking the following into account:

- What does the strategic or business plan say about what work must be conducted in the area?
- What responsibilities must the role undertake as part of funding?
- What is the main objective of the role?
- What are the specific responsibilities of the role and what outcomes are required?
- How will the job fit in with the existing team?
- Who does the role report to?
- Who does the role communicate with and why?
- Will the role have supervisory or management responsibilities?
- What will be the level of the role?
- Will the role be long term, short term or casual?

Positions descriptions

Once a job has been designed, a position description can be written using the *arbias* position description template. The position description will be used to advertise the job and to provide the incumbent with a clear statement of expectations for performance. It may also provide a guide to training and development.

Selection criteria

Selection criteria form the basis for recruitment and selection decisions. These criteria represent the 'must have' knowledge, skills and personal attributes necessary to undertake the job well.

When developing selection criteria, the following point should be considered:

- Personal attributes are rarely able to be learnt on the job, so it is important to spend time identifying and assessing these.
- Be cautious to not overly emphasis knowledge or experience unless it is critical to the role as it may inadvertently exclude very good candidates. Consider how much can be learnt on the job.
- Think about to what degree the criterion needs to be demonstrated. For example, is the criterion required to be:
 - Well developed
 - Demonstrated
 - Proven
 - Significant
 - Sound
 - Extensive

Examples of selection criteria ¹

The following are examples of generic selection criteria which may apply to positions within **arbias**.

Knowledge and skills		Personal attributes
Case management	Policy skills	Conceptual and analytical ability
Assessment and intervention skills	Problem solving	Client focus
Written communication	Project management	Decision making
Verbal communication	Stakeholder management	Detail focus
Presentation skills	People management	Developing others
Interpersonal skills	Change management	Drive and commitment
Organising and planning	Resource management	Flexibility
Self management	Conflict management	Initiative and accountability
Leadership	Service delivery	Relationship building
Influence and negotiation	Tender management	Resilience
Strategic planning		Self confidence
System thinking		Team work

arbias specific knowledge and skills	arbias specific qualification
Experience in the alcohol and drug, acquired brain injury sector or related areas such as: mental health, criminal justice, aged care and housing	Tertiary qualifications in social work, psychology or other relevant fields and/or significant relevant professional experience
Experience in disability, A&OD, mental health and/or accommodation support.	Tertiary qualifications in disability, A&OD, welfare and/or nursing.

¹ A number of these are based on recruitment capabilities listed in the *Victorian Government Recruitment Capability Card set*.

Understanding of cognitive impairment caused by alcohol and other substance abuse and the consequent social, legal health and mental health implications	First Aid Level 2
Knowledge of working with people with multiple and complex needs and the ability to engage a range of community services and linkages	Tertiary degree in accounting
Knowledge of and experience in working with people who have alcohol-related or other acquired brain injury.	Current drivers licence
Commitment to arbias' vision, mission, objectives and values.	
Ability to work with a challenging client group including the management of difficult behaviour	
Capacity to communicate effectively with people with disabilities, including those presenting with complex behaviours.	

Changes to position descriptions

At times, **arbias** may need to amend position descriptions to reflect changes in service directions or arrangements. Where this occurs with occupied positions, employees will be consulted about the change.

Where changes result in a substantial change to the job, this will be dealt with under the *Change and redundancy policy*.

Position description template

Part 1 – Information on *arbias*

This information sheet is to be used along with position descriptions that are sent to people enquiring about positions at *arbias*.

arbias Ltd was established in 1990 and is a specialist disability service for people with an alcohol and other substance related brain impairment. *arbias* provides a number of services, all of which are aimed at encouraging the person with a disability to function to their full potential, and supporting the family/carer in their role.

arbias receives funding from a number of government departments, fees, membership subscriptions, and donations. It is a not for profit company managed by a Board of Directors from the Corporate and community sector.

Further information on *arbias* may be obtained by visiting the following website: <http://www.arbias.org.au/>

Vision

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Objectives

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Prevention: | Identify and address factors leading to alcohol and other substance related brain impairment. |
| Intervention: | Provide immediate services through secondary consultation, crisis intervention and monitoring. |
| Treatment: | Provide a range of specialist services for people with alcohol and other substance related brain impairment and associated complex needs. |
| Health Promotion: | Actively promote issues of alcohol and other substance related brain impairment with policy makers, service providers and the community. |

Education:	Develop and enhance the knowledge and skills required to work effectively with people who have an alcohol and other substance related brain impairment.
Research:	Undertake research in alcohol and other substance related brain impairment which informs current and future service provision and policy development.

Organisation structure

arbias employs over 60 employees in the areas of neuropsychology, social and welfare work, community access, accommodation and administration. Each year **arbias** provides services to Melbourne metropolitan Regions and nationally. **arbias** services include secondary consultation, neuropsychological assessments, outreach case management, long term and transitional accommodation, community access, attendant care, research, training and education.

Equal opportunity

arbias is committed to a workplace free from discrimination, harassment and bullying. **arbias** employees with supervisory responsibilities are required to model appropriate workplace behaviours and actively address any potential incidents of inappropriate behaviour.

Part 2 – Position details

Title	
--------------	--

Reports to	
-------------------	--

Principal objective/s	1.
	2.

Responsibilities and duties	1.
	2.
	3.
	4.
	5.

Selection criteria	1.
	2.
	3.
	4.
	5.

Other requirements	1. Ability to work flexible hours.
	2. Current and satisfactory police check.
	3. Current driver's licence.

Approved	
Name	
Position	
Signature	
Date	

Incumbent statement

I have read and understood the above position description.

Signed: Name: Date:

Performance Development System

Policy

Purpose:

To inform employees of the **arbias** Performance Development System (PDS).

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees.

Policy Statement:

arbias recognises that an effective PDS will significantly contribute to the achievement of its strategic goals. The PDS states the expectations for work and outlines the development plan for the coming year.

Work plans form the basis for the PDS. Work plans are developed between the manager and the employee, usually at the beginning of each financial year. For new employees, work plans are developed following their two week induction program. Plans are used as a basis for professional development and for monitoring of work progress. This means that they are reviewed during professional development sessions which occur on a regular basis.

Formal reviews will occur at the six month and twelve month point. At the completion of the twelve month cycle, an employee will be assessed as either below standard, effective, superior or exceptional performance.

Purpose of the work plan

The purpose of the work plan is to:

- Clearly outline roles and responsibilities consistent with the job description and **arbias'** strategic directions.
- Monitor workload and progress.
- Ensure the quality of work meets **arbias** standards.
- Ensures training and development needs are identified and followed up.
- Form the basis for determining pay and reward outcomes.

Regular and six monthly reviews

Regular reviews of the work plan should occur at professional development sessions so that adjustments can be made as required. The six monthly review should be formally documented. Managers are required to effectively manage below standard performance.

Annual review

The annual review is a formal process conducted by the manager with the employee. The annual review assesses the outcomes of performance against the expectations set in the work plan. This includes identifying outcomes that have been achieved and those that have not been fully met. This assessment determines the pay and reward outcomes for the employee.

Information from the annual review may be used to determine the following year's work plan.

Employee responsibilities

Employees should actively participate in the PDS and should contribute to the development of strategies for achieving outcomes. Where an employee disagrees with a decision, they may refer the matter to the Executive Manager.

Definitions

Below standard performance

The employee did not meet all objectives. While the employee may have strengths in some areas of professional competence the employee has identified weaknesses in a number of other areas and would benefit from targeted training and development to address needed areas of improvement.

Effective performance

The employee met all objectives and all associated task/outcomes and shows strengths in a number of areas of professional competence with some areas of development identified.

Superior performance

The employee exceeded all objectives and associated task/outcomes and shows strengths in many areas of professional competence. This performance is rated as well above expectations across a significant number of areas which have led to a significant impact on program outcomes.

Exceptional performance

The employee met all objectives and significantly exceeded associated task/outcome requirements and shows strengths in all areas of professional competence in their position. This performance is rated as consistently 'above and beyond' across all areas specified in the work plan and has led to a significant impact on organisational outcomes.

Procedure

Purpose:

To outline the process for implementing the Performance Development System (PDS).

Scope:

This procedure applies to all employees.

Process Steps:

1 development of work plan

The manager and the employee develop a work plan based on the employee's position description, the program area's business plan and the **arbias** strategic plan. This should include objectives, specific tasks to achieve the objectives, the outcomes required and the timeframe for milestones. It should also include a development plan which outlines the development needs of the employee and the methods for achieving these.

2 regular and six monthly reviews

The manager and the employee will regularly review the work plan during professional development. The six monthly review should be formally documented and the Executive Manager notified of the outcome.

3 annual review

The manager has a preliminary discussion with the Executive Manager about the likely performance outcomes of the manager's staff.

In discussion with the employee, the manager determines the performance standard of the employee. This is either below standard, effective, superior or exceptional performance.

The manager consults the Executive Manager of the review outcomes of his/her staff.

4 review decision

The Executive Manager approves or not approves the review decision. The Executive Manager notifies the manager of the decision. The manager then notifies the employee, including the right of review.

Performance Development System template

PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

NAME: _____

TITLE: _____

MANAGER: _____

AREA: _____

DATE PLAN DEVELOPED: _____

SIX MONTHLY REVIEW DATE: _____

ANNUAL REVIEW DATE: _____

WORK PLAN

STRATEGIC AREA	OBJECTIVE	TASKS	OUTCOMES	DATE FOR COMPLETION	REVIEW COMMENTS ²

Manager's signature _____

Date _____

Employee's signature _____

Date _____

² Please use an additional sheet if there is insufficient space.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

LINK TO JOB DESCRIPTION	LEARNING ACTIVITIES (E.g. Coaching and mentoring, special projects, training programs)	REVIEW COMMENTS

Manager's signature _____

Date _____

Employee's signature _____

Date _____

Rewards

Policy

Purpose:

The reward process has been designed to

- Manage recognition for the achievement superior and exceptional performance.
- Provide one off bonuses and/or other rewards in recognition of exceptional performance from an individual.

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees.

Policy Statement:

The Rewards process provides a mechanism for rewarding and formally recognising performance assessed through the **arbias** Performance Development System (PDS) where the organisation has sufficient funds available.

Any reward for employees will be determined according to PDS review outcomes.

Reward

A reward is an outcome associated with performance assessed through the **arbias** PDS. Rewards can be a cash payment in the form of a bonus, improved access to professional development, or some other form of reward provided to an employee in recognition of superior or exceptional performance outcomes.

Performance recognition

Performance recognition is given when an employee meets a superior standard of performance as assessed through the PDS.

Bonus

A bonus may be given to an employee where performance is:

- Exceptional and their work outcomes significantly contribute to achieving major improvements in productivity or improved organisational performance. Exceptional means that performance outcomes should be unexpected and result from work that is outside the normal role and responsibility of the employee.
- A performance bonus is a one-off non-recurrent payment made to the employee and should follow the completion of the PDS cycle. Superannuation is deducted from this payment.

- A performance bonus should not exceed 5% of the employee's base salary that applies at the time of awarding the bonus.

No performance recognition

Performance recognition is only available for employees who are assessed as superior or exceptional, and only then when sufficient funds are available to the organisation to allow for such. Where performance recognition does not happen because the employee is assessed at other levels, then the employee is ineligible for another opportunity for recognition until the satisfactory completion of the next review cycle.

Dispute Resolution

Should any employee believe the decision about their performance is unfair they may refer the matter to the Executive Manager.

Procedure

Purpose:

To outline the procedures for applying the rewards process.

Scope:

This procedure applies to all employees.

Process Steps:

1 annual assessment of performance through the performance development system

The manager has a preliminary discussion with the Executive Manager about the likely performance outcomes of the manager's staff.

In discussion with the employee, the manager determines the performance standard of the employee. This is either below standard, effective, superior or exceptional performance.

The manager notifies the Executive Manager of the outcomes of his/her staff.

2 approval process

Where the reward is within the budget agreed to by the Board, the Executive Manager approves or not approves the payment of the relevant reward. The Executive Manager notifies the manager of the outcome. The manager then notifies the employee, including the right of review.

Occupational Health and Safety

Policy

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to affirm **arbias**' commitment to occupational health and safety (OHS).

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees.

Policy Statement:

In keeping with our values, **arbias** promotes a culture where harm to our employees through work is unacceptable. **arbias** is committed to ensuring the health and safety of all employees, residents, clients, contractors, volunteers, visitors and the general public.

arbias is committed to ensuring compliance with OHS legislation and the pursuit of industry best practice for the prevention and management of injury and illness.

OHS is an integral part of every work activity. We recognise the importance of effective consultation and cooperation between management, employees and OHS representatives, to achieve safe working conditions and work practices.

At all **arbias** sites, we are continuing to develop, implement, and maintain safety management systems that are consistent with industry standards and enable us to:

- Document standards and OHS policies.
- Identify, assess and control risks in consultation with employees.
- Provide OHS information and training.
- Maintain accurate records.
- Monitor the system and report progress.
- Communicate with all stakeholders.

We regularly review and report our progress to key stakeholders and ensure this policy remains relevant to the needs of our organisation.

Employee Assistance Program

The employee assistance program is a personal counselling service for employees who may be experiencing work related difficulties. It provides for a limited number of counselling sessions or referral to other services. It can help clarify situations and difficulties and find appropriate management strategies.

Employees who consider they may benefit from accessing personal counselling for a work related matter are encouraged to contact the Executive Manager.

Critical incident stress debriefing

Critical incident stress debriefing is available to **arbias** employees who may have been exposed to critical incidents. Examples of critical incidents are:

- Death or injury to client, co-worker, visitor or self.
- Verbal abuse, intimidation or harassment.
- Physical or psychological threat.
- Attempted or threatened suicide.

Debriefing can assist employees to understand common reactions to critical incidents and things that can be done to assist in recovering.

Employees who consider they may benefit from debriefing are encouraged to contact the Executive Manager.

Occupational Health and Safety Committee

Policy

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to outline the responsibilities of the OHS Committee and the process used for resolving OHS issues.

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees.

Policy Statement:

The OHS committee brings employees and management together in a cooperative effort to promote health and safety in the workplace. Specifically, the role of the OHS committee and OHS representatives is to:

- Operate as a consultative forum for the consideration of OHS issues.
- Provide assistance and advice to senior management on OHS policy and procedures.
- Assist in the development of proactive and preventative OHS measures.
- Make recommendations on OHS matters.

The committee has representative from all program areas. In bi-monthly meetings, the committee:

- Reports on consultation with **arbias** employees regarding OHS issues.
- Identifies potential workplace hazards.
- Reviews hazard recording systems.
- Analyses incident statistics.
- Recommends OHS training after consultation with employees.

arbias senior management and board of management are responsible for making the appropriate decisions about OHS in the workplace.

Local resolution of day to day issues

As the OHS committee meetings provide a forum for the exchange of ideas, initiatives and expertise to improve the existing systems of work, employees are encouraged to consult with line managers and/or OHS representatives to resolve everyday safety issues. Only where issues cannot be resolved at the local level should they be referred to the OHS committee for further review.

Resolving Occupational Health and Safety Issues

Procedure

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to detail the steps in resolving occupational health and safety issues within *arbias*.

Scope:

This policy applies throughout *arbias*.

Process steps:

1 **dispute / issue considered by the line manager**

When an employee or OHS representative identifies an issue for resolution, they will contact their line manager for action.

If there is no satisfactory response then the OHS representative raises the issue with the Executive Manager.

2 **dispute / issue considered by the OHS Committee**

If the issue cannot be resolved the OHS representative will refer the issue to the OHS Committee for discussion and consideration.

The OHS Committee shall try to resolve the matter before requesting a Workcover Inspector to visit the workplace to provide advice. If the issue cannot be resolved after consultation between the members of the committee then a request by the Committee or OHS Representative can be made for a Workcover Inspector to visit.

The OHS Committee reports to the Executive Manager and needs to report on issues that it is attempting to resolve, and seek his/her approval to make any changes. This will occur within 5 working days of a matter being raised with the committee.

If a matter cannot be resolved a request may be submitted by the OH&S Representative or Executive Manager for a Workcover Inspector to attend the site and assist with a resolution.

3 **WorkCover inspector**

Workplace Inspector attends the workplace to resolve the issue.

5. KNOWLEDGE ACCESSIBILITY

Approach to sharing of knowledge across groups

arbias is committed to sharing knowledge with its staff. The ways in which it does this are:

- embracing of a culture of sharing information with work colleagues. *arbias* deliberately has an open office plan to assist with this, and has a “hot desk” for staff who work in the field to periodically come into the main office,
- a small and growing library of books and journals for all staff to access,
- regular information sharing at team meetings for staff in each program area, and for all staff at bimonthly meetings for all staff,
- allowing the use of the internet for research purposes,
- an internal electronic document storage system (ekey) for the use of all staff, and
- timely distribution and sharing of relevant documents.

Teamwork

arbias encourages and frequently requires staff to work together on projects and tasks and to attend project and “all staff” meetings.

6. WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT

Recruitment and selection

Policy

Purpose:

To provide guidance to all managers in the recruitment and selection of employees.

Scope:

This policy applies to all positions.

Policy Statement:

Recruitment and selection at **arbias** will be based on the following considerations:

- Selection decisions will be based on merit.
- Applicants will be treated fairly and reasonably.
- Equal opportunity will be provided.

Merit will be applied by the following:

- A fair and accurate position description.
- An advertisement process which seeks to attract a viable field of applicants.
- Objective assessment criteria.
- A selection panel of at least two members, with consideration being given to including a client on the panel, where appropriate.
- A selection report that properly reflects the process undertaken.

Use of recruitment agencies

From time to time the use of recruitment agencies may be used to employ staff at **arbias**. This requires the approval of the Executive Manager.

Procedure

Purpose:

The objective of the procedure is to ensure a consistent approach is undertaken for all recruitment and selection at **arbias**.

Scope:

The procedure applies to all positions.

Process Steps:

1 vacancy identified

A vacancy has arisen either due to an existing position becoming available or due to new funding being provided for work.

2 position defined

The Executive Manager reviews the position description in consultation with the line manager. If the position is a new one, a position description is developed using the *Job design and documentation policy and procedures*.

3 position advertised

The Executive Manager advertises the position. Advertisement using the **arbias** template may occur in the major press (The Age), local press or Infoxchange.

The Executive Manager or nominee is the contact person for enquiries about the position.

The Executive Manager informs **arbias** employees of the advertisement.

Unless exceptional circumstances apply, applicants usually are given 2 weeks to apply.

4 shortlisting of applications

The selection panel is determined by the Executive Manager. This usually includes the Executive Manager and the line manager. A third member of the panel may be included, and may be a client, if appropriate.

The selection panel shortlists the applications based on the selection criteria listed on the position description.

5 interviews

Shortlisted applicants are notified by the line manager and interview times are scheduled. Applicants should bring to the interview:

- Current police record check, if available.
- Evidence of qualifications, if applicable to the role.

The selection panel develops interview questions based on the selection criteria. A guide to interviews and generic questions are available to assist panel members.

Interviews are conducted and competitive applicants are identified by the panel for referee checking.

6 referee checking

A minimum of two referees checks are conducted by the Executive Manager or line manager using the **arbias** referee check proforma. Referees should include a current manager if possible.

7 making and finalising a job offer

The Executive Manager notifies the successful applicant and makes a verbal job offer. If this is accepted by the applicant, the Executive Manager forwards a written job offer.

Once all documentation is received by the Executive Manager, the *appointment of a new employee procedure* begins.

8 notifying unsuccessful applicants

The line manager notifies unsuccessful applicants.

Appointment of new employee

Procedure

Purpose:

The objective of this procedure is to ensure all new employees provide necessary documentation to allow a proper and efficient appointment to occur.

Scope:

The procedure applies to all new staff.

Process steps:

1 prior to commencement of employment

When the recommended applicant agrees to a verbal job offer, the manager will:

- Submit a *New Employee Payroll Adjustment Form* to the Accounts Manager.
- The Accounts Manager will forward a written letter of offer to the applicant. The letter of offer will include:

• Employment Schedule (which is the SACS or other relevant Award and any additional conditions) and Employee declaration and acceptance of offer - to be signed and returned
• Police record check form - to be signed and returned
• Position description - to be signed and returned
• Superannuation Standard Choice Form – to be signed and returned
• Tax Declaration Form – to be signed and returned
• Employee information form which includes banking details for electronic payment of salary – to be returned
• Code of Conduct
• arbias mission and values
• A request that a Birth Certificate and evidence of name change if applicable (such as Marriage Certificate, Change of Name certificate or Deed Poll) be provided on their first day of employment
• A request that their drivers licence be provided on their first day of employment, and a driver's declaration be completed (available from the Accounts Manager).
• A request that evidence of their qualifications be provided on their first day of employment, if applicable
• Workplace Relations Fact Sheet

- The Accounts Manager will establish a personnel file for the new employee and attach to it:
 - Employee information form which includes their personal contact details, emergency contacts and banking details.
 - Job application, including any attachments such as the resume.
 - Signed job offer which includes the employment schedule, employee declaration and acceptance of offer.
 - Signed position description.

- Choice of superannuation fund form.
- Tax declaration form.

2 first day of employment

On the first day of employment, the new employee provides to the Accounts Manager:

- A Birth Certificate.
- Evidence of name change if applicable (such as Marriage Certificate, Change of Name certificate or Deed Poll).
- A driver's licence.
- Evidence of qualifications, if applicable.

The Accounts Manager will attach these to the employee's file.

The relevant manager will explain how the arbias **salary** packaging system works and direct the new employee to the information booklet on ekey.

Contract of employment

Policy

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to provide information on the conditions of employment for **arbias** employees.

Scope:

This policy applies to all **arbias** employees.

Policy Statement:

An employment contract outlines the specific entitlements and obligations of both the employee and the employer. It is made when the employee accepts an offer of employment from **arbias**. The contract is a legal document and is in the form of a written letter of offer. It must be dated with the date of the offer and will include:

- Names of parties to the contract.
- Position title.
- Starting date of employment and if appropriate end date.
- Duties and responsibilities.
- Nature of the employment (e.g. permanent/temporary, full-time/part-time).
- Rate of pay and any requirements for how you are to be paid (e.g. electronic transfer, day of the week).
- Superannuation details (fund and amount).
- Details of benefits (e.g. salary packaging, mobile phone, vehicle)
- Hours of work.
- Leave entitlements (e.g. annual, sick, parental, study).
- Probationary period.
- Deadline for your response.

Social and Community Services – Victoria – Award 2000 or other relevant Award

Most **arbias** employees are employed under the *Social and Community Services – Victoria – Award 2000 or other relevant Award*. As such, their employment contract will also make reference to the relevant award.

Awards usually cover such matters as conditions of employment, the amount of notice for termination, termination arrangements and contract review and amendments processes. Where these aren't covered by the award, then **arbias** will outline how they are to be managed.

arbias-specific employment conditions

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arbias employees' employment contract will also include additional **arbias**-specific employment conditions. Some **arbias**-specific employment conditions apply to all employees. These include:

- Commitment to the **arbias** Code of Conduct.
- Commitment to **arbias** policies and procedures.
- A current and satisfactory police record check.

Other **arbias**-specific conditions may vary between employees. These may include:

- Provision of salary packaging.
- Provision of a vehicle.
- Provision of a mobile phone.
- Provision of a lap top computer.

Orientation and induction

Policy

Purpose:

The objective of the orientation and induction policy is to ensure all new employees are provided with the necessary information for a smooth transition into **arbias** and their role and responsibilities.

Scope:

The induction policy applies to:

- Employees new to **arbias**.
- Any employee who has not previously received an induction.
- Employees who move to a new role.

Policy Statement:

arbias is committed to providing relevant and key information to all new employees to ensure they are familiar with its services, their job, their colleagues, **arbias** systems, processes and policies with a view to ensuring they can make a contribution to **arbias** services as quickly and as effectively as possible.

Orientation and induction Program

A structured orientation and induction program comprises a two week orientation program undertaken when the employee commences their duties, followed by an induction program which takes place over the next three months. Managers are responsible for ensuring the orientation and induction program takes place.

The orientation and induction program provides a detailed introduction to:

- **arbias'** role and responsibilities.
- Management arrangements, organisational structure and roles of various positions.
- Key policies concerning both employment and client services (which must be signed off as they are read).
- Information on ABI, including the ABI network and specialist services.
- The role of the Acquired Brain Injury Assessment Unit.
- An understanding of the **arbias** model of Outreach Case Management.
- Other **arbias** services.
- The specific role to be undertaken by the employee, including a detailed discussion of the position description and their expectations.
- Identifying training and support which may be required.

Refer to the **arbias** orientation program for further details.

Procedure

Purpose:

The objective of the procedure is to ensure an orientation and induction program is undertaken by all employees new to a role.

Scope:

The orientation and induction procedure applies to:

- Employees new to **arbias**.
- Any employee who has not previously received an induction.
- Employees who move to a new role.

Process Steps:

1 pre-arrival preparation

Two weeks prior to the commencement of the new employee, the manager prepares the work environment. The manager is responsible to:

- Allocate and set up a workstation, if relevant.
- Arrange for access card and determine the areas to which access is required.
- Arrange for email address.
- Advise reception of new starter name, date of commencement, telephone number/extension, mobile phone number and after hours contact details.

2. orientation program and manual

The manager provides and discusses with the employee the orientation program checklist and the Orientation Manual which will include copy of *Social and Community Services* or other relevant award. The manager guides the employee in undertaking the induction over the two week period, by:

- Ensuring the employee has all relevant material to complete the induction.
- Organising the meetings with key staff as specified in the induction program.
- Establishing regular meetings with the employee to review and monitor progress.
- Review the detail of the position description and have the new employee sign it off once they fully understand the role of the position and its responsibilities. This should be attached to the person's personnel file.

The new employee also provides the Accounts Manager with all necessary administrative forms on their first day of employment. (See procedure for appointment of new employee).

3 completion of orientation program

At the end of the second week, the manager discusses with the employee their experience of the orientation program and any areas they wish to further explore.

This information may be documented in their Performance Development System (PDS) work plan.

The manager and the new employee sign the induction program checklist and the manager places it on the employee's personnel file.

Probation

Policy

Purpose:

The objective of the probation policy is to detail probation arrangements for long-term staff.

Scope:

Long-term employees are subject to a six month probationary period.

Policy Statement:

A six month probation period provides managers with an opportunity to:

- Assess the extent of the new employee's fit with the role.
- Assess whether the new employee has met **arbias'** conduct and performance standards.
- Determine whether the new employee should:
 - Be confirmed in their role.
 - Have their probation period extended for three months.
 - Have their employment discontinued.

Managers are required to ensure ongoing support and direction are provided to employees during probation and to provide feedback on a regular basis.

Operating principles

- Confirmation of employment is dependent on satisfactory conduct and performance during the probationary period.
- Unsatisfactory conduct or performance during the probationary period may result in:
 - Extension of the probationary period.
 - Cessation of employment.
- Extension of probation requires an assessment that an extension of probation period is likely to result in fully meeting conduct and performance standards.
- Extension of probation and cessation of employment requires the approval of the Executive Manager.

Procedure

Purpose:

The objective of the probation procedure is to outline the responsibilities for and activities over the probation period.

Scope:

Long-term employees will be subject to a probationary period.

Process Steps:

1 week 1

Manager

- Begin induction and induction process
- Ensure employee understands the probation period.

Employee

- Actively participate in the meeting and induction process.

2 between week 2 and the end of 3rd month

Both manager and employee meet fortnightly to assess progress, provide support and encouragement. The manager records the outcomes of all meetings.

3 mid-probation assessment

- The manager undertakes a mid-probation assessment and provides a copy to the employee for comment.
- A copy of the assessment is placed on the employee's personal file.

4. from mid-term assessment to 1 month prior to completion of probation period

Both manager and employee meet fortnightly to assess progress, provide support and encouragement. The manager records the outcomes of all meetings.

5 1 month prior to completion of probation period

- Manager makes a final assessment of the employee.
- If the conduct and performance of the new employee is satisfactory, the manager notifies the employee and the Executive Manager.
- If the conduct and performance of the new employee is unsatisfactory, the manager must determine whether to extend the probation or cease the employment. Unless specified otherwise in the contract, at least one weeks notice prior to the completion of the probationary period must be provided to the employee in both cases.

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- If the Executive Manager agrees that the probation is to be extended or the employment is to be discontinued, written notification must be provided to the employee.

Cessation of Employment

Policy

Purpose:

To outline processes for ceasing employment (other than termination for unsatisfactory performance, misconduct or serious misconduct).

Scope:

This policy applies to all staff.

Policy Statement:

Resignation

arbias is committed to promptly processing resignation actions and will consider requests for variation to notice periods on a case by case basis. Exit interviews will be offered where appropriate.

Completion of a contract

Unless offered a further contract of employment, any employee whose contract expires will cease employment on the date of expiry of the contract.

Unless otherwise specified in the contract, **arbias** will provide one months notice to an employee of its intention to renew or not renew employment upon expiry of the contract.

Abandonment of employment

Abandonment of employment occurs when an employee fails to attend work on an ongoing basis without permission or satisfactory explanation.

Where an employee has been absent from duty for a minimum of three working days without permission or satisfactory explanation, **arbias** will attempt to contact the employee and if there is no response, their emergency contact. If these attempts are unsuccessful, **arbias** will send a certified letter to the employee's last known address seeking an explanation for the absence from duty.

If the employee does not establish to the satisfaction of the Executive Manager that they were absent for reasonable cause and the employee seeks to resume duty, the matter may be dealt with as possible misconduct under the Discipline policy.

If the employee fails to respond within 5 working days after sending the certified letter, the employee will be considered to have abandoned their employment and **arbias** will treat the matter as the employee having resigned and the employment terminated at the employee's initiative.

Death

In the event of the death of an employee the Executive Manager should be notified as soon as possible. The Executive Manager will contact the next of kin to offer assistance and to begin the processes relating to superannuation, outstanding salary and other entitlements.

Other

On occasion **arbias** may need to revise a contract (this may be due to a change in circumstances - major changes are outlined in the change and redundancy section). In these instances **arbias** will offer the employee a new contract and give 4 week's notice of the termination of the existing contract.

Return of **arbias** property

Upon completion of employment, the employee will return all **arbias** property in good condition. This property may include: equipment, books, staff access cards, mobile phones and/or accessories, files, computer hardware and software and vehicles.

Procedure

Purpose:

To detail processes for ceasing employment (other than termination for unsatisfactory performance, misconduct or serious misconduct).

Scope:

These procedures apply to all staff.

Process Steps:

Resignation

1 employee action

Employees will submit a letter of resignation to their Manager. This should specify the final date of employment and include the appropriate period of notice.

2 manager's response

The manager notes the resignation details and provides the letter to the Executive Manager as soon as possible for processing. Prompt action is required to avoid the possibility of a salary overpayment. If a variation to the notice period is requested, the Manager should indicate whether or not the request is supported.

3 Executive Manager's action

The Executive Manager will acknowledge the resignation as soon as possible after receipt and notify the appropriate areas of **arbias**. The final salary will be processed in the pay cycle which coincides with the resignation date and will normally be paid on the regular pay day.

The Executive Manager will offer an exit interview, where appropriate.

Completion of a contract

1 manager action

Unless otherwise specified in the contract, six weeks prior to the expiry of the contract, the manager will:

- Determine whether or not the contract will be renewed, in discussion with the Executive Manager.
- If the contract is to be renewed, a new contract will be offered to the employee.
- If the contract is not to be renewed, notify the employee in writing of the decision and requesting return of all **arbias** property. An exit interview may be offered if appropriate.

Death

1 Executive Manager action

The Executive Manager will contact the next of kin to offer assistance and to begin the processes relating to superannuation, outstanding salary and other entitlements.

The Executive Manager will notify relevant staff and may offer debriefing or counselling support.

Other

1 Executive Manager action

The Executive Manager will discuss the changed circumstances and proposed new contract with the employee. The Executive Manager will allow time for these discussions to occur and be finalised (approximately 1 to 2 weeks), then give 4 week's written notice that the previous contract will be finalised **AT THE SAME TIME** as offering the new contract.

Exit Interviews

Policy

Purpose:

arbias recognises that employees leave **arbias** for a variety of reasons. Through exit interviews, **arbias** seeks to obtain information about the experiences of employees and to use that information to improve the workplace wherever possible.

Scope:

Exit interviews will be offered to employees who leave **arbias**. Employees whose employment has ceased due to misconduct will not be offered an exit interview.

Policy Statement:

Participation

Participation in exit interviews is voluntary.

The exit interview

Employees have the opportunity of participating in an exit interview with either senior **arbias** staff or an external service.

Employees are able to nominate a senior **arbias** manager to conduct the exit interview and this may occur in conjunction with the Executive Manager, if desired by the employee.

Where an employee opts for an external service, this will be organised and paid for by **arbias**.

An exit interview questionnaire is available to guide the process. Any information from the interview will be treated confidentially and provided only to the Executive Manager. Recommendations for any changes arising from information received as part of an exit interview will be made to the Executive Manager.

Procedure

Purpose:

To detail processes for exit interviews.

Scope:

These procedures apply to all employees who wish to participate in an exit interview.

Process Steps:

1 initiating the interview

The manager offers the employee who will cease employment (other than due to misconduct) the opportunity of an exit interview. The manager explains the purpose, process and benefits of participating in an exit interview. Key points are:

- The benefits to the employee in making a smooth transition from **arbias** to their next role by providing the employee with an opportunity to reflect on their experiences, their decision to move on, how they wish to move on from **arbias** (such as farewells) and to complete any unfinished business with **arbias**.
- The benefits to **arbias** in receiving information which can be used to improve **arbias'** approach or operations.
- Who will conduct the interview – the employee has two choices: an **arbias** senior manager of their choice, with the Executive Manager if they wish or an external service.
- What questions will be asked – these will be general questions concerning their experiences at **arbias**, what worked well, what worked less well, areas for improvement and some questions that concern the employee's role.
- Notes will be taken during the interview.
- What will happen to the information – it will be treated confidentially and only made available to Executive Manager.

2 If the employee accepts the offer of an exit interview, the manager notifies the Executive Manager of the acceptance, stating the employee's preference for the conduct of the interview. Arrangements will be made for the interview to occur at a mutually convenient time, preferably in the last week of the employee's employment.

3 conducting the interview

The person conducting the interview will use the exit interview questionnaire as the basis, allowing for additional comments to be provided by the employee. Notes will be taken.

4 follow up and response

The notes of the exit interview will be provided to the Executive Manager who will review them to identify key issues that may warrant a response. Where the

Executive Manager considers that any changes may be required as a result of the exit interview information, this will be discussed with the relevant staff.

Leave

Policy

Purpose:

To provide information to employees of their leave entitlements.

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees.

Policy Statement:

arbias is committed to supporting employees balancing their personal and work demands. Leave is provided for all employees for rest and relaxation purposes and to enable them to fulfil personal responsibilities.

Leave entitlements

The Social and Community Services (SACS) Award, which covers most **arbias** employees, states the range and circumstances in which leave may be taken. Full details of the SACS and other awards can be found at

<http://www.wagenet.gov.au>

[/wagenet/search/view.asp?docid=284344&query=\(community\)&quickview=y&attr=rh](http://wagenet/search/view.asp?docid=284344&query=(community)&quickview=y&attr=rh)

Employees are entitled to:

- Annual leave.
- Sick leave.
- Carer's leave.
- Bereavement leave.
- Parental leave.
- Leave to attend jury service.

Leave accrues on an hourly basis.

Approving and scheduling of leave

Annual leave should be taken in the year it is accrued, after the accrual. Employees must seek the approval of their immediate manager for any leave. This should occur no later than six weeks before the requested time.

It is the preference of **arbias** that staff take at least one block of 2 weeks of annual leave each calendar year. Employees wishing to take their annual leave in some other way should seek the approval of their manager and Executive Manager in writing before taking the leave.

Each manager is to compile an anticipated schedule of annual leave by October of the previous year. This is then given to the Executive Manager who will arrange for collation and review of the schedule to ensure there are sufficient resources to carry out core

services. This process is to ensure that leave is allocated in a fair and equitable manner and to ensure the continued provision of service.

Managing time in lieu (TIL)

TIL may be accrued by the case managers and lifestyle support workers when they are required to work additional hours to meet extraordinary work demands. TIL is not normally available to meet the usual work demands, nor is it available to administrative staff, unless exceptional circumstances exist. In all instances the worker's manager must approve the additional hours being worked **before** they are worked. Approval will not be granted retrospectively.

Staff may not accrue more than one days TIL per fortnight and must use their TIL in the fortnight following its accrual or it may be lost.

A summary of leave entitlements appears on each pay slip. The dates when leave is credited and whether leave accrues from year to year are as follows:

Leave entitlements

The following table must be read in conjunction with the SACS or other relevant award. **arbias** may provide benefits additional to that contained in the SACS or other relevant award. *Entitlement* is calculated on the basis of a full-time employee working 76 hours per fortnight. Entitlements for part-time employees are pro-rata of the full time rate which is calculated on the basis of the number of ordinary hours worked in a fortnight.

Leave	Entitlement*	Circumstances	Date credited	Accrual
Annual leave	20 days paid leave per year	Permission required to accrue more than 30 days annual leave. 17 ½ % leave loading is payable on annual leave taken.	On the anniversary of your arrival to the arbias	Accrues hourly and paid out if employment ceases.
Sick leave	12 days paid leave for the first year of employment. 14 days paid leave for the 2 nd , 3 rd and 4 th year of employment. 21 days paid leave for each year after that.	In each year, employees are entitled to 3 single days paid sick leave without a medical certificate. Periods of 2 or more days sick leave must be supported by a medical certificate.	on the date of their commencement at arbias , and on the anniversary of this date thereafter .	Accrues, but not paid out if employment ceases.
Carer's leave	Using the sick leave credits, up to 5 days paid per year.	May require evidence of illness of person to be cared for.	See Sick Leave	See Sick Leave.
Bereavement leave	Up to 2 days for each bereavement.	May require evidence of death.	Available when required.	Not accrued.
Parental leave	Up to 52 weeks unpaid leave (which can be shared between parents who are both employees of arbias)	Available to ongoing employees with a minimum of 12 months continuous service for maternity, paternity and adoption leave. If both parents are employees of arbias , they are restricted from taking parental leave at the same time except for up to 1 week at the time of birth of the child or up to 3 weeks at the time of placement of the adoptive child.	Available when required.	Not accrued.
Long Service Leave	13 weeks paid leave after 15 years of service (pro-rata after 10 years of service) (This equates to 1 week for every 60 weeks of employment)	As defined in <i>the Long Service Leave Act 1992</i> (Victoria)	Available after 10 years of continuous service.	Accrues and paid out if employment ceases after 10 years of continuous service.
Jury Service Leave	Reimbursed of an amount equal to the difference between the amount paid for jury service and the amount of ordinary salary the employee would have received.	For jury service during ordinary working hours. Requires evidence of attendance at court, the duration of service and the amount received for the service.	Available when required.	Not accrued.

Frequently asked questions

Annual leave

How much annual leave do I get?	Employees are eligible for 4 weeks annual leave each year (pro-rata for part-time employees). This is credited on the anniversary of your arrival. It accumulates per hour that the employee works.
How much notice do I need to give for annual leave?	Wherever possible, employees should provide six weeks notice of their intention to take leave.
How much leave can I accrue?	It is preferable for employees to take their annual leave in the year that it accrues as this assists in providing rest and relaxation for employees. In special circumstances employees may wish to accrue their leave. In this case, employees should seek the permission of their manager. Where annual leave has accrued to more than 30 days (6 weeks) without permission, arbias may direct an employee to take leave. The SACS or other relevant award states that leave can accrue for no more than 2 years without permission (i.e. 8 weeks).
How do I apply for annual leave?	Leave is applied for by filling in an 'application for leave' form and submitting it to your manager.
What happens to accrued leave if I cease work?	When an employee ceases work, they will be paid any outstanding accrued annual leave to which they are entitled.
How is annual leave coordinated or scheduled?	Each manager is to compile an anticipated schedule of annual leave by October of the previous year. This is then given to the Executive Manager who will collate and review the schedule to ensure there are sufficient resources to carry out core services. This process is to ensure that leave is allocated in a fair and equitable manner and to ensure the continued provision of service.
Can I take annual leave when I want?	There are no specific restrictions as to when you may take leave except that it needs to be mutually convenient for the employee and arbias .
How soon can a new employee take leave?	There is no minimum period of service prior to taking leave although it must be accrued prior to being taken.
What is the smallest amount of leave I can take?	The minimum period of leave is half a day, although within each calendar year an employee must take at least one block of 2 week's worth of leave.
Can I take leave on ½ pay?	Yes, subject to operational demands.
Is leave loading payable?	Yes. Leave loading of 17 ½ % is payable.
What happens if I get sick while on annual leave?	Sick leave for periods of five days or more is able to be approved while on annual leave. A medical certificate is required to substantiate this. Your annual leave will then be credited for the days of sick leave.
What happens if my annual leave falls during a public holiday?	Public holidays occurring during annual leave do not count as leave.

Sick leave

Do I need a medical certificate when I am sick?	Employees are eligible for up to 3 days of sick leave in a year without a medical certificate.
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	If sick leave is taken either side of a public holiday, a medical certificate is required.
Does sick leave accrue?	Yes.
What happens if I cease work?	Sick leave credits do not get paid out.
Can I use my sick leave to attend a medical appointment during working hours?	Yes, however, the minimum amount of sick leave granted is ½ a day.
What happens if I don't have any sick leave left and I am sick?	You are able to use other leave credits or where these have been exhausted, employees may be provided with leave without pay.
How do I apply for sick leave?	Leave is applied for by filling in a leave form and submitting it to your manager.
Who do I contact when I'm sick?	You must ring your immediate manager. If you are a shift worker, this must be before your shift commences. If you are predominantly an office worker, this must be within an hour of your normal work commencement time. If your manager is unavailable, then you should contact whomever has after hours responsibility for that day. If they cannot be contacted, then the Executive Manager must be contacted. You must contact your manager yourself unless you are so incapacitated that this isn't possible. This should be by telephone – a fax, email or phone call from a partner or friend will not suffice.

Carer's leave (utilises available sick leave)

What is carer's leave?	Carer's leave is leave provided to assist you in caring for a family member. Carer's leave is taken from your 'personal sick leave' credits.
How much carer's leave can I take and is it paid leave?	Up to 5 days, paid per year (pro-rata for part time employees).
Who can I use carer's leave for?	You can use carer's leave when caring for your immediate family. This means your: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spouse or de-facto spouse (including a former spouse / de facto spouse or life partner). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A life partner is someone with whom the employee lives with on a bona fide domestic basis. • A child or adult child (including an adopted child, a step child or an ex-nuptial child, grandchild or child of a life partner). • Parent or grandparent. • Sibling.
Do I need to provide a medical certificate if the person is sick?	arbias may require evidence such as a medical certificate that a person requires care. If carer's leave is taken either side of a public holiday, a medical certificate is required.
How do I apply for carer's leave?	Leave is applied for by filling in a leave form and submitting it to your manager.

Bereavement leave

When can I use bereavement leave?	Bereavement leave is available to employees who have experienced a death within Australia of a family member. A family member is a wife or separated wife, husband or
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separated husband, de facto wife, de facto husband, life partner, father, mother, child, stepchild, brother, sister, father-in-law or mother-in-law.

How much bereavement leave can I take? Up to 2 days leave is available up to and including the funeral.

How do I apply for bereavement leave? Leave is applied for by filling in a leave form and submitting it to your manager.

arbias will require satisfactory evidence that the death has occurred. Bereavement leave is not available where the employee is already on leave.

Parental leave (maternity and paternity leave)

What can I use parental leave for? Parental leave is available for maternity, paternity or adoption. Employees must have 12 months service prior to taking parental leave.

How do I apply for parental leave? Leave is applied for by filling in a leave form and submitting it to your manager.

Is parental leave paid leave? No.

How much leave can I take? Up to 52 weeks unpaid parental leave is available. Parental leave is available to only one parent at a time, although leave may be shared for up to one week at the time of the birth of the child or up to three weeks at the time of the placement of the adoptive child.

When can I take maternity leave? Up to six weeks before the expected date of birth. A medical certificate may be required where the employee wishes to continue work within the 6 week period immediately prior to the expected date of birth or where the employee wishes to resume work within 6 weeks of the birth.

What information do I have to provide for maternity leave? A medical certificate, which states the expected date of confinement, is required at least 10 weeks prior to the expected date of confinement.

When can I take paternity leave? Paternity leave is available in the first year of the birth of the child. Notice of paternity leave must be provided as early as possible and preferably 10 weeks prior to the proposed period of leave. Information on the date of the child's birth, the partner's name and the proposed period of leave will be required.

How can I take adoption leave? Notice of adoption leave must be provided at least 10 weeks prior to the proposed period of leave. Information on the proposed period of leave will be required. **arbias** may require confirmation of the placement.

Long service leave

How long do I need to work before I can have long service leave? Long service leave is available after 10 years continuous service.

How do I apply for long service leave? Leave is applied for by filling in a leave form and submitting it to your manager.

What happens if I leave work? If you have worked for at least 10 years, long service leave will be paid out.

Procedure

Purpose:

To outline the responsibilities of managers and staff in handling leave requests.

Scope:

This procedure applies to all employees.

Process Steps:

Annual Leave

- 1 Employees should provide at least six weeks notice of their leave. Using an 'application for leave' form, the employee submits the request to their manager for approval.
2. The manager assesses the request for leave taking into account:
 - Service delivery needs during the period requested.
 - Balance in opportunities for all staff for taking leave during high demand periods (e.g. Christmas, Easter, and school holidays).
 - Other requests for leave across the organisation at or about the same time (the manager will need to consult with the Executive Manager about this).
3. Where the manager approves the leave, the form is submitted to the Accounts Manager for processing. The manager notifies the employee.
4. Where the manager does not approve the leave, a discussion occurs with the employee about reaching an agreed period of leave and time frame.

Sick leave / Carer's leave / Bereavement leave

- 1 Employees should notify their manager as soon as they know that they are not able to be at work. Employees complete an Application for Leave form as soon as they return to work and submit this to their manager for approval. A medical certificate should be attached to the sick or carer's leave application where required.
2. The manager assesses the request for leave taking into account the circumstances of the leave consistent with the requirements of the SACS or other relevant award.
3. Where the manager approves the leave, the form is submitted to the Accounts Manager for processing. The manager notifies the employee and the employee records the personal leave on the fortnightly timesheet.
4. Where the manager does not approve the leave, a discussion occurs with the employee about alternative leave options.

Parental leave

1. Employees should notify their manager as soon as they know the confinement date and expected dates of leave. This should occur as early as possible and preferably 10 weeks before the leave is taken. Employees complete an Application for Leave form.
2. The manager assesses the request for leave taking into account the circumstances of the leave consistent with the requirements of the SACS or other relevant award.
3. Where the manager approves the leave, the form is submitted to the Accounts Manager for processing. The manager notifies the employee and the employee records the leave on the fortnightly timesheet.

Long service leave

Similar to the annual leave process:

1. Employees should provide at least six weeks notice of their leave. Using an 'application for leave' form, the employee submits the request to their manager for approval.
2. The manager assesses the request for leave taking into account:
 - Service delivery needs during the period requested.
 - Balance in opportunities for all staff for taking leave during high demand periods (e.g. Christmas, Easter, and school holidays).
 - Other requests for leave across the organisation at or about the same time (the manager will need to consult with the Executive Manager about this).
3. Where the manager approves the leave, the form is submitted to the Accounts Manager for processing. The manager notifies the employee.
4. Where the manager does not approve the leave, a discussion occurs with the employee about reaching an agreed period of leave and time frame.

Salary packaging

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to detail **arbias**' salary packaging processes.

Scope

This policy applies to all **arbias** employees.

Policy Statement:

Entitlement to salary packaging is at the discretion of **arbias**. Casual employees are not entitled to salary packaging.

Employees become eligible to participate in the program after successful completion of their probation period, unless otherwise arranged. Once an employee approaches the Accounts Manager expressing an interest in participating in the Salary Packaging Program, the Accounts Manager refers the employee to the outsourced provider to ensure all aspects of the package comply with current legislation and eligibility requirements.

On instruction/confirmation from the authorised provider, salary packaging will then commence. The package may be amended from time to time on the instruction of the outsourced provider.

If there is any increase in the cost to **arbias** of the employment benefits being provided pursuant to the policy, including changes to the *Fringe Benefits Tax Assessment Act 1986* or *the Income Tax Assessment Act*, **arbias** may cease salary packaging altogether or in any event adjust the benefits provided to ensure that there are no additional costs to **arbias** in terms of the total remuneration provided to the employee.

Code of Conduct

Policy

Purpose:

The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to provide a public statement of the standards of conduct and integrity expected of staff members of **arbias**. It aims to guide employees in identifying and resolving issues of ethical conduct which may arise in the course of their duties and, in so doing, maintain public trust and confidence in the integrity and professionalism of **arbias** and its services.

The principles and standards outlined in the Code of Conduct will assist **arbias** employees, clients and other interested parties to:

- Identify the values which underpin **arbias** work practice.
- Identify the professional obligations of staff.
- Identify what constitutes ethical and professional work behaviour.

Scope:

The Code of Conduct applies to all employees.

Policy Statement:

arbias expects its employees to achieve and maintain a high standard of ethics, professional conduct and work performance to ensure the delivery of high quality service to its clients. Where staff conduct falls below the standards outlined in the Code of Conduct, employees may be counselled as part of **arbias** normal performance management process. Serious breaches of the Code of Conduct may result in termination of employment.

Values that underpin **arbias**' services to its clients and ultimately the Code of Conduct are:

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| Commitment: | We do whatever it takes to enable our clients to live to their full potential in the community. |
| Empowerment: | We encourage our clients to participate in decisions that promote maximum independence. |
| Justice: | We ensure our clients are working towards a greater sense of belonging in the community. |
| Dignity: | Through listening and accepting we keep the person rather than the problem in focus. |
| Respect: | We acknowledge the strengths of our clients and build relationships based on trust and mutual respect. |

All employees are required to become familiar with the Code of Conduct and act in accordance with its requirements.

While **arbias** is a non-government incorporated organisation, it has nonetheless decided to adopt the *Victorian Public Sector (VPS) Code of Conduct 2003* along with a number of **arbias** specific requirements. Where there are any differences, the **arbias** code prevails.

The VPS Code of Conduct includes detailed statements on:

- Personal and professional behaviour.
- Use and release of information.
- Conflict of interest.
- Financial probity and accountability.
- Outside employment.
- Employment after leaving the public service.

[http://www.ssa.vic.gov.au/CA2571410025903D/WebObj/code2003/\\$File/code2003.pdf](http://www.ssa.vic.gov.au/CA2571410025903D/WebObj/code2003/$File/code2003.pdf)

The **arbias** specific requirements are:

In the course of their employment with **arbias**, employees will:

Commit to *arbias* and colleagues

1. Carry out the mission, uphold values and comply with all policies and procedures of **arbias** and comply with all lawful directions by supervisors and managers.
2. Implement and administer the policies and programs of **arbias**, striving for and promoting best possible standards of service provision.
3. Work to improve policies, procedures and work practices that are in the best interest of clients, are equitable, empowering and culturally appropriate.
4. Treat colleagues with respect, courtesy and sensitivity, using the expertise of team members for the benefit of clients.
5. Work cooperatively with other program areas and organisations to make use of specialist skills, knowledge and different perspectives for the improvement of professional expertise and service provision.
6. Not discriminate against, bully, harass (including violence or threatening behaviour against) anyone.
7. Devote your entire time and attention during working hours and your best energies and abilities to the performance of your duties.
8. Serve **arbias** faithfully and diligently and use best endeavours to protect and promote the reputation and interests of **arbias**.

Professional integrity and competence

9. Ensure private conduct will not compromise the fulfilment of professional responsibilities and ensure conduct is appropriate to the position and the reputation of **arbias** at all times.
10. Not solicit **arbias** clients for private practice and engage in external employment or private practice only with the written permission of the Executive Manager.
11. Ensure professional relationships are not used to gain personal, material or financial advantage and raise with the Executive Manager where there is any potential conflict of interest.
12. Represent the official views of **arbias** in professional dealings, including at conferences or forums.
13. Make public or media comments only with the written permission of the Executive Manager.
14. Uphold the professional standards and practices required of their specific profession.
15. Possess and maintain the necessary knowledge base and skills to perform job tasks competently.
16. Access debriefing, crisis support and professional supervision especially during difficult or traumatic circumstances.
17. Not consume alcohol, drugs or other substances that affect the ability to perform work or official conduct. This includes behaviour at official functions where alcohol is served and whilst on-call.
18. Dress appropriate to the work environment adhering to occupational health and safety requirements.

Commitment to clients

19. Be professional in relationships with clients with the nature of the relationship strictly determined by the position description. Employees will not engage in any sexual relationship with clients.
20. Provide clients with honest and accurate information on the nature of the service being offered, the recording of and access to information, the right to obtain a second opinion or to refuse or cease a service and how to make a complaint if they are not satisfied with a service.
21. Respect and facilitate the rights of clients to make informed decisions about their wellbeing and service delivery options and ensure clients or their authorised representatives participate in decision making processes.

22. Demonstrate respect for clients and seek to preserve and promote their dignity, individuality, rights, responsibilities and cultural affiliation.

23. Recognise, be sensitive to the diversity within and among communities, cultures, families, groups and individuals and seek to address these in providing services.

Privacy and confidentiality

24. Treat client information confidentially taking care not to intrude unnecessarily on client's privacy when seeking information, obtaining informed consent from clients or their authorised representatives to use their information, using information only for the intended purpose.

25. Not disclose to any unauthorised person confidential information relating to the business, employees or clients of **arbias** whilst employed by **arbias** and after employment has ceased.

26. Maintain up to date and accurate information related to clients that reports only the essential and relevant details, does not use emotional or derogative language and acknowledges the basis of subjective opinion.

I..... have read, understand, and agree to comply with the **arbias** Code of Conduct as above.

..... (signature)

..... (Date)

Equal Opportunity

Policy

Purpose:

The objective of the Equal Opportunity Policy is to support the attraction and retention of employees to enable the most effective delivery of **arbias'** services to its clients.

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees.

Policy Statement:

arbias is committed to providing equal employment opportunity to all employees, including prospective employees without discrimination on the basis of age, sex, race, disability, marital status or religion in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. **arbias** will make reasonable job accommodation for persons with disabilities who can perform the essential functions of the position for which they are qualified and selected.

All employment and promotion decisions will be based solely upon individuals' qualifications, experience, prior contribution and demonstrated capacity to perform at higher or improved levels of performance and will be in accordance with the principle of equal employment opportunity. **arbias** will take whatever affirmative action is necessary to attract and retain qualified persons.

In order to meet its obligations and demonstrate its commitment, **arbias** will:

- Promote equal opportunity in all its services.
- Promote an environment in which all staff can work free from discrimination and harassment.
- Comply with State and Federal laws, and eliminate direct and indirect discrimination on the grounds of sex, marital status, pregnancy, or potential pregnancy, parenthood or family responsibilities; race, colour, nationality or national or ethnic origin; disability, handicap or impairment, age; religious or political belief or activity; lawful sexual activity; trade union activity; or any other personal attribute irrelevant to the work to be performed.
- Provide a process to resolve complaints of discrimination and harassment.
- Ensure that the appointment and advancement of staff are based on merit.

Process

The Equal Opportunity Employment process is reflected throughout **arbias'** staff recruitment and retention processes and in the delivery of its services.

Sexual harassment, Bullying and Workplace Violence

Policy

Purpose:

To foster a safe and healthy workplace, free of sexual harassment, bullying, intimidation and violence.

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees and volunteers.

Policy Statement:

Sexual harassment, bullying, intimidation and violence is unacceptable and will not be tolerated under any circumstances at **arbias**. It is also unlawful. All complaints of such behaviour will be treated seriously and promptly, with due regard to confidentiality. Disciplinary action will be taken against any employee who breaches the policy.

Sexual harassment, bullying, intimidation and violence is not just unlawful during working hours or in the workplace itself. The behaviour is unlawful in any work-related context, including conferences, work functions, business or field trips and interactions with clients.

Sexual harassment is any unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited behaviour of a sexual nature which makes a person feel humiliated, intimidated or offended. Sexual harassment can take many different forms and may include physical contact, verbal comments, jokes, propositions, the displaying of offensive material or other behaviour which creates a sexually tense or hostile working environment. Sexual harassment can occur between an employee and a co-worker, supervisor, manager, client, consultant or contractor.

Workplace bullying is repeated unreasonable behaviour directed towards an employee or group of employees that creates a risk to health or safety. The following types of behaviour, if repeated, could be considered bullying:

- Verbal abuse.
- Excluding or isolating particular employees.
- Harassment or intimidation.
- Assigning meaningless tasks unrelated to the employee's job.
- Assigning tasks that are impossible for the employee to successfully complete.
- Changing work rosters with the deliberate intention of inconveniencing particular employees.
- Intentionally withholding information that prevents an employee from effectively carrying out the job.
- Threats of dismissal.

While a single incident does not constitute bullying, one-off incidents should not be ignored.

'Unreasonable behaviour' means behaviour that a reasonable person, having regard to all the circumstances would expect to victimise, humiliate, undermine or threaten.

Occupational violence includes incidents where employees are physically attacked or threatened including any statement or behaviour that causes them to believe they are in danger of being physically attacked. The term 'occupational violence' applies to all forms of physical attack on employees, including:

- Striking, kicking, scratching, biting, spitting or any type of direct physical contact.
- Pushing, shoving, tripping, grabbing.
- Throwing objects.
- Attacking with any type of weapon.
- Any form of indecent physical contact.

A 'physical attack' can occur regardless of the attacker's intent and includes situations where an employee is attacked by a person who may not be able to form intent, but their behaviour can cause harm. This may include **arbias** clients.

Occupational violence may also be perpetrated by co-employees (including managers, supervisors or employers), people known to the **arbias** (such as family members of clients) and intruders.

In some circumstances, violence can be a crime and incidents should be reported to the police. Occupational violence that will not be considered offences under criminal law include where an employee is physically attacked by a person such as a client with an acquired brain injury, who is incapable of forming the necessary intent.

arbias has a legal responsibility to prevent sexual harassment, bullying, intimidation and violence.

Therefore, managers and supervisors have a responsibility to:

- Ensure all staff are aware of our policy and the implications for staff who do not conduct themselves appropriately.
- Monitor the working environment to ensure acceptable standards of conduct are observed at all times.
- Model appropriate behaviour themselves.
- Treat all complaints seriously and take immediate action to investigate and resolve the matter.
- Refer complaints to the Executive Manager if they do not feel they are the best person to deal with the case (e.g. if there is a conflict of interest or if the complaint is particularly complex or serious).

All employees have a responsibility to:

- Comply with the **arbias**' policy.
- Conduct themselves professionally by treating fellow employees, clients and other people to whom they come into contact while performing their duties with respect.
- Maintain complete confidentiality if they provide information during the investigation of a complaint (employees who spread gossip or rumours may expose themselves to defamation action).

arbias

arbias encourages any employee who feels they have been sexually harassed, bullied, intimidated or experienced violence to contact their manager.

Any complaints or reports of sexual harassment, bullying, intimidation and violence will be treated promptly, seriously and sympathetically. They will be investigated thoroughly, impartially and confidentially. Managers must act immediately on any reports of such behaviour. Employees will not be disadvantaged in their employment conditions or opportunities as a result of lodging a complaint.

arbias recognises comments and behaviour which do not offend one person can offend another. Management accepts individuals may react differently and expects this right to be generally respected.

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against anyone in **arbias'** employment who is found to have sexually harassed, bullied, intimidated or assaulted (or threatened to assault) a co-worker. Depending on the severity of the case, consequences can include an apology, counselling, transfer, dismissal, demotion or other forms of disciplinary action. Immediate disciplinary action will also be taken against anyone who victimises or retaliates against a person who has complained of sexual harassment, bullying, intimidation and violence.

Procedure

Purpose:

To outline how staff may make complaints of sexual harassment, bullying and workplace violence and how managers will deal with such complaints.

Scope:

This procedure applies to all employees and volunteers.

Process Steps:

Making a Complaint:

If you believe you are being, or have been, harassed, bullied or have experienced violence, follow the procedure below:

1. Inform the offender that the behaviour is offensive, unwelcome, and against **arbias** policy and should stop (if appropriate and only if you feel comfortable enough to approach them directly).
2. Keep a record of the incident(s).
3. If the inappropriate behaviour continues, contact your manager for support.
4. If this is inappropriate, you feel uncomfortable, or the behaviour still persists, contact the Executive Manager.

Receiving a Complaint:

When a manager receives a complaint, he/she should follow the procedure below:

1. listen to the complaint seriously.
2. treat the complaint confidentially.
3. allow the complainant to bring another person to the interview if he/she chooses to.
4. ask the complainant for the full story, including what happened step by step.
5. take notes, using the complainant's own words.
6. ask the complainant to check your notes to ensure your record of the conversation is accurate.
7. explain and agree next action with the complainant.
8. When an investigation is conducted:
 - a. act promptly.
 - b. maintain confidentiality.
 - c. Pass your notes on to the Executive Manager.

Investigating a Complaint:

1. When a manager investigates a complaint, he/she should follow the procedure below:
2. Interview all relevant people, separately.
3. Interview witnesses, separately.
4. Keep records of interviews and investigation.
5. Do not assume guilt.

-
6. Interview the person subject to the allegation, separately and confidentially.
 7. Let the person subject to the allegation know exactly what he/she is being accused of.
 8. Give him/her a chance to respond to the accusation.
 9. Listen carefully and record details.
 10. Ensure confidentiality.
 11. In consultation with the Executive Manager, determine the appropriate action based on the investigation and evidence collected.

Outcomes that directly affect the complainant should be discussed with the complainant, where appropriate.

Potential Outcomes:

If the complaint is substantiated actions consistent with **arbias'** misconduct policy may be taken against the offender.

The complainant may be entitled to any or all of the following:

The complainant may receive:

- commitment the behaviour will cease.
- private apology (verbal or written).
- re-credit of any leave taken due to the harassment.
- payment of medical and counselling expenses.
- transfer, with no job disadvantage.
- other compensation.

If the complaint is not substantiated the Executive Manager should undertake the following actions:

- A record placed on the complaint file that the matter was not substantiated.
- Written notification to the relevant parties of the outcome.

Discipline

Policy

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to outline **arbias'** approach to unacceptable behaviour in the workplace.

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees.

Policy Statement:

Discipline is a remediation process aimed at changing unacceptable behaviour through the application of an agreed and accepted process.

Unsatisfactory performance

Wherever possible, the Performance Development System should be used to manage employee performance. However, where all other corrective actions have failed to achieve the desired result, the discipline process may be used.

Misconduct

Where an employee has breached the **arbias** Code of Conduct, other policies or procedures, or engaged in misconduct, the disciplinary process will be used.

Natural justice and procedural fairness

Employees who undergo a discipline process will be treated fairly and the proper procedures will be followed. In cases of unsatisfactory performance or minor misconduct, employees will be made aware of their responsibilities, provided with a warning and given the opportunity to reach the standards expected of them. In cases of serious misconduct, employees may be provided with either a final warning or a notice of dismissal without initial warning. In all cases, employees will have a chance to respond to disciplinary concerns before outcomes are applied.

Examples of serious misconduct

This list is by no means comprehensive, but it provides some examples of serious misconduct which might warrant instant dismissal:

- Theft
- Violence (toward a co-worker or client)
- Sexually inappropriate behaviour

Warnings

Warnings provide the employee with formal notice of the need to reach a certain standard of performance. Employees who have received three warnings are subject to dismissal. Warnings remain current for 12 months. If after a period of 12 months there have not been any recurrence, the warning will not be used in further instances if they arise.

In some cases of serious misconduct, a final warning may be provided without the need to provide a first or second warning. In more serious cases, immediate dismissal may occur without any warnings provided.

Outcomes

Possible outcomes associated with a warning are:

- Continuation of normal duties.
- Task or job reassignment.
- Loss of responsibility.
- Termination of the employment.

A disciplinary process which results in the termination of employment or impacts unfavourably on the employees interests or benefits must stand the test of whether, given all circumstances, the process was 'fair and reasonable'.

The Executive Manager must be consulted in relation to any intention to embark on the formal application of this policy and procedure.

Right of review

Employees who consider that the disciplinary process applied was unfair or unreasonable have the right of review by the Executive Manager consistent with the **arbias** grievance process.

Procedure

Purpose:

This procedure is designed to assist staff and their managers to achieve desired change through the use of a structured process of review. The process should not be approached as a threat but rather as a fair and equitable opportunity for change.

Scope:

This procedure applies to all employees.

Process Steps:

1 documentation

It is essential to have documentation in any disciplinary matter. As it has the potential to become public record, such documentation should meet the following criteria:

- Be accurate and specific.
- Document facts not opinions.
- Record direct performance observation of actions and results; it should not include hearsay unless capable of being investigated and substantiated.
- Notations should not be from memory but as actions occur.
- Focus on behaviour not attitude unless attitude has a specific and demonstrable effect on work performance.
- Be consistent.
- Appropriate information only is documented.

2 consultation with Executive Manager

Where disciplinary action is considered necessary, the relevant manager will consult with the Executive Manager. Anonymous allegations will not normally be dealt with under these procedures.

3 first warning

The relevant manager will meet with the employee and advise him/her of the reason for the warning. The local union representative or other nominee may be present at the interview if desired by either party. The employee will be given the opportunity to respond.

A record of the first warning will be placed in the employee's Personnel File. It will detail the expected standard, the necessary remedial action and a date for review, if appropriate. A copy of that record must be provided to the staff member.

4 second warning

If the problem continues after the first warning, the matter will be discussed with the employee again by the relevant manager. The local union representative or other nominee may be present if requested by either party. The employee will be given the opportunity to respond.

This second warning will be in writing and will be placed in the employee's Personnel File. The written warning will stipulate the expected standard, the required remedial action and, if appropriate, a date for review. It shall be signed by the Executive Manager. A copy of the written second warning shall be given to the employee.

5 final warning

If the problem continues or involves serious misconduct, the employee will be seen by the Executive Manager. The local union representative or other nominee may be present if desired by either party. The employee will be given the opportunity to respond.

If a final warning is to be given, it shall be in writing, issued by the Executive Manager, and placed in the employee's Personnel File. It should define the problem, stipulate the expected standard and the necessary remedial action and, if appropriate, a date for review. A copy shall be sent, if appropriate, to the relevant union. A copy shall be given to the employee.

6 investigation and possible dismissal

In the event of the unsatisfactory performance or misconduct, the employee may be suspended and the matter investigated. This will depend on the nature of the misconduct or unsatisfactory performance and whether it is of a repetitive nature.

7 dismissal

Dismissal may occur where a repetition of behaviour has occurred after a final warning or in instances of serious misconduct. If dismissal is the outcome, it may only occur with the approval of the Executive Manager.

None of the foregoing points precludes the right of **arbias** to immediately dismiss or suspend a staff member for acts of serious or wilful misconduct.

8 review of disciplinary action

In the event that an employee lodges a grievance about the disciplinary process used, the matter shall be referred to the Executive Manager for resolution consistent with the **arbias** grievance process.

Grievances

Policy

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to outline **arbias'** commitment to effective resolution of employee grievances.

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees. Occupational Health and Safety and WorkCover matters are exempt from this policy and will be dealt with in accordance with the relevant legislation and policies. This policy does not cover instances of worker to worker conflict. These matters should be dealt with under the **arbias** Conflict Resolution Policy.

Policy Statement:

A grievance is a complaint concerning an alleged unfair or unreasonable decision or inaction by **arbias** that directly affects the employee's employment. These may include, but are not restricted to, management decisions about:

- Performance.
- Classification.
- Leave.
- Training and development.

The **arbias** grievance process is designed to:

- Provide all employees with the opportunity to have their complaints addressed in a respectful, confidential, objective and timely manner.
- Support the achievement of constructive outcomes for all concerned, by focussing on problem solving.
- Consider and pursue alternative options for resolution where appropriate.

Work must continue while a grievance is being resolved.

What cannot be dealt with by the grievance process

arbias' grievance process cannot deal with grievances that concern:

- Decisions made by the Board.
- Another employee.
- Matters that are outside the authority of **arbias**, such as interpretation of awards or the actions of other organisations.
- Matters that have been referred to or have already been dealt with by an external forum such as the Australian Industrial Relations Commission, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission or the Victorian Civil and Administrative Appeal Tribunal.

Procedures

arbias supports the speedy local resolution of employee grievances through open and respectful discussion between employees and managers on matters of concern. Detailed procedures are available to support the grievance policy.

At any time during the process, an employee is able to be supported by a support person. Where the grievance remains unresolved after following this process, the matter may be referred by either party to the Australian Industrial Relations Commission.

External forums

arbias is committed to resolving employee grievances internally, however employees have the right to have their grievances heard by external forums. There are a number of external forums for resolving employee grievances. These are:

Forum	Matters
The Australian Industrial Relations Commission	Industrial disputes concerned with breaches of workplace agreements, contracts of employment or awards.
The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission	Discrimination on the basis of race, sex (including sexual harassment), disability or age under Commonwealth law.
The Victorian Civil and Administrative Appeal Tribunal	Matters referred to it by the Victorian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (discrimination, sexual harassment, racial and religious vilification) under Victorian law.

Procedure

Purpose:

To outline the process for the handling of a grievance.

Scope:

This procedure applies to all employees.

Process Steps:

Local resolution

- 1 The employee identifies the specific decision or inaction that they consider is unfair or unreasonable and the outcome they wish to achieve. The employee raises the issue with their manager.
- 2 The manager arranges a mutually convenient time to discuss the employee's concerns. Discussion should include:
 - The rationale for the decision/inaction.
 - Seeking to understand the employee's perspective.
 - Options for resolving the grievance, including mediation.
- 3 Where an agreement has been reached to pursue other options for resolving the grievance, the manager will document these, specifying timelines and follow up processes. Where these options result in a resolution, this should be documented if appropriate and placed on the employee's personnel file.
- 4 If a resolution has not been reached, the manager will document the issues and the process undertaken (attaching all relevant material) and refer the grievance as soon as practical to the Executive Manager.

Executive Manager actions

- 5 The Executive Manager will arrange a meeting with the employee and the manager to consider the matter further. The employee may bring a support person if they wish.

The Executive Manager will convene a meeting of all parties to hear the views about the matter. The Executive Manager will then decide whether to confirm the decision, change the decision or consider other options for resolution. This may include engagement of an external consultant to attempt to resolve the matter.

- 6 The Executive Manager will notify the parties of the outcome which should be documented and placed the employee's personnel file.

Steps 1 – 6 should occur within 7 days.

-
- 7 If the grievance remains unresolved, the Executive Manager will advise the Board of the grievance. At this stage the matter may also be referred by either party to the Australian Industrial Relations Commission for determination.

Conflict management between employees

Policy

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to outline **arbias'** commitment to effective resolution of employee grievances.

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees. This policy does not apply to grievances that employees may have about a management decision that affects them, to issues that potentially fall under the *Sexual Harassment, Bullying and Workplace Violence* policies or to occupational health and safety issues.

Policy Statement:

Within any workplace, disagreements or tensions between employees may arise. **arbias** is fully committed to supporting cooperative and positive relationships between its employees and encourages resolution of any conflict at the local level.

Interpersonal or workplace conflict

Interpersonal or workplace conflict is part of human interaction and occurs in all workplaces. We all work with people who we get on better with than others. Conflict can result from differences in personality or style or personal problems. Organisational factors may also contribute. Productivity and efficiency tend to decrease as people focus on their distress rather than their work. Signs of workplace conflict may include:

- Negative attitudes.
- Unresolved misunderstandings or arguments.
- Low morale.
- People feeling that they or their work are not, respected or valued.
- High tension.
- Illness or absences from work.
- Reduced work performance due to loss of motivation, concentration or self-confidence.

Workplace conflict also affects the organisation. Some of these effects include:

- Employee turnover with costs associated with recruitment, selection and training.
- Reduced service delivery, productivity.

Avenues of support

Informal or local resolution between the employees concerned or with the manager is often more effective than formal processes. It is also more time and cost effective to resolve issues at the local level. **arbias** offers its employees a number of avenues for dealing with workplace conflict. These are:

- Discussion between the parties in conflict.
- Discussion between the parties in conflict facilitated by the manager or another person.
- Mediation between the parties in conflict with the approval of the Executive Manager.
- Individual personal counselling with the approval of the Executive Manager.
- Individual coaching with the approval of the Executive Manager.

All mediation, counselling and coaching services are confidential and voluntary. Employees may access these services by contacting the Executive Manager. Generally there is a limit to the number of sessions available. The cost is borne by **arbias**.

Non resolution of workplace conflict

Where workplace conflict between employees has not been resolved and it affects the efficiency and performance of **arbias** services, including the well-being of other employees and team members, **arbias** will require the parties in conflict to fully adhere to the **arbias** Code of Conduct and the directions of managers.

Procedure

Purpose:

To outline the procedure for the handling of conflict between employees.

Scope:

This procedure applies to all employees.

Process Steps:

local resolution

1 The employee raises the issue directly with the person they are in conflict with. It is important that the matter is raised in a calm, professional and confidential manner. In raising the matter, employees should consider:

- What they are upset about and what might resolve the issue.
- How they may have unwittingly contributed to the situation.
- The perspective of the other person and what the other person may wish to achieve.
- The confidentiality and privacy of the conversation.
- Being open and flexible about options for resolving the issue.
- Actively listening to the other person and seeking to understand their needs.

Employee raises issue with manager

2 If local resolution is not appropriate or has been unsuccessful, the employee raises the issue with the manager.

3 The manager will seek to:

- Listen and understand the concerns of the employee.
- Identify specific issues, people concerned and details of events.
- Identify how the person would like the situation resolved.
- Consider any underlying issues and whether other employees may have similar concerns.
- Build trust by maintaining confidentiality.

Options for resolution

4 The manager will explore and seek agreement to options for resolving the conflict between the employees. These may include:

- Speaking individually with the parties in conflict to obtain a better understanding of the situation and perspectives and to identify possible solutions.
- Facilitating a discussion between the parties in conflict or arrange to have another manager facilitate the discussion.

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- Arranging mediation between the parties in conflict with the approval of the Executive Manager.
- Arranging individual personal counselling with the approval of the Executive Manager.
- Arranging individual coaching with the approval of the Executive Manager.
- Where there is no agreed way forward and the behaviours affect the efficiency and performance of **arbias** services, including the well-being of other employees and team members, directing the parties in conflict to behave in a manner consistent with the Code of Conduct.

Change and redundancy

Policy

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to outline **arbias'** commitment to the effective use of its employees to meet strategic directions.

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees with the exception of employees engaged on a short term contract for a specific period or project or casual employees. This policy applies when significant changes occur to employees duties.

Policy Statement:

arbias may make decisions consistent with its strategic objectives which result in changes to its services. This may be a result of funding changes or it may be a new policy direction. When this happens and it results in a function significantly changing or ceasing, **arbias** will consider redeployment of its employees where possible and will only use redundancy of its employees as a last resort.

Redeployment is when an employee is moved to another role within **arbias** that is consistent with their skills and abilities. Redundancy will occur where redeployment is not possible and this will result in the employee ceasing employment with **arbias**. Where redundancy occurs, severance pay will be paid according to the SACS or other relevant award. Where redeployment occurs, the employee will be offered a new contract in the position to which they have been redeployed.

arbias acknowledges that at time when redeployment or redundancy is proposed, that staff may wish to seek the assistance of a support person or union.

Procedure

Purpose:

To outline the procedure for managing change and redundancy.

Scope:

This procedure applies to all employees, with the exception of those on short term contracts as outlined in the policy.

Process Steps:

1 notice of significant change

When a significant change occurs, the Executive Manager will identify which employees are affected and determine whether there are opportunities for redeployment or whether redundancy will occur.

2 discussion with affected employee/s

The Executive Manager will notify the affected employees of the reasons and details of the change at least four weeks prior to the change occurring. Opportunities for redeployment will also be provided if possible.

3 redeployment

Where a redeployment opportunity is identified and an employee is moved into the new role, they will commence on or before the nominated date and will be offered a new contract in the position to which they have been redeployed.

4 redundancy

If there are no opportunities for redeployment, employees will be made redundant and their employment will cease on the nominated date. The Accounts Manager will notify the superannuation scheme and pay severance pay and entitlements according to the SACS or other relevant award.

Employment assistance and exit interviews will be offered to employees during the intervening period.

7. LEARNING CAPACITY

Training and Development

Policy

Purpose:

To develop a highly skilled and motivated workforce by providing opportunities for employees to develop job related skills and enhance their career opportunities or enhance service delivery.

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees.

Policy Statement:

arbias is committed to providing employees with staff development opportunities and training programs consistent with its mission and its current and future skills and knowledge needs. **arbias** is committed to the promotion of equitable access to training and development opportunities. Where appropriate, consumers of the service may be involved in developing or delivering such training.

Examples of training and development activities are:

- On the job and formal training provided by **arbias**.
- Off the job training provided by another organisation.
- Study at training or educational institutions.
- Clinical supervision.
- Coaching.
- Mentoring.
- Job rotation.
- Higher duties assignments.

At times, **arbias** will require its employees to attend training. The costs of this training will be borne by **arbias**. Salary will be paid for any employee attending this training during working hours. If this training occurs outside working hours, employees will be eligible for time in lieu. Its possible for staff who undertake studies they believe are related to work, of their own volition, to seek approval from **arbias** to access leave to fulfil some of the study requirements that cannot be undertaken outside of work hours. Such requests will be made in writing to through the manager to the Executive Manager. These requests will be considered on a case by case basis.

Training and development should ideally form part of an employee's work plan which is approved by the Executive Manager. Adhoc requests for training are to be submitted to the Executive Manager for consideration.

Procedure

Purpose:

To outline the process for submitting requests for training and development opportunities.

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees.

Process steps:

identifying training and development needs

- 1 Employees together with their manager should identify their training and development needs and document these in the PDS training and development plan. They should take into account:
 - The key tasks outlined in their annual work plan.
 - **arbias'** strategic directions and needs for skills and knowledge.
 - The career aspirations of the employee.

- 2 Ad hoc requests for training and development opportunities may arise and employees are to submit these to the Executive Manager outlining:
 - The nature of the training and development opportunity.
 - The relationship between the training and development opportunity and the needs of the employee's work and the benefits to **arbias**.
 - Details such as when the training will occur, the location of the training, the cost and the duration.

Executive Manager actions

- 3 The manager submits the training and development plan or the ad hoc request to the Executive Manager for decision.

Clinical supervision

Policy

arbias is committed to providing clinical supervision to all case management staff, and to Lifestyle support workers on an as needed basis.

Difference between professional development or supervision and clinical supervision

arbias provides clinical supervision for staff involved in client services. Clinical supervision is different from management supervision or performance development. Clinical supervision is defined by NCETA (Australia's national research centre on AOD Workforce Development) as 'directed at developing a less experienced worker's **clinical practice skills** through the provision of support and guidance from a more experienced supervisor. The clinical supervision relationship is characterised by regular, systematic and detailed exploration of a supervisee's work with clients or patients'.

http://www.nceta.flinders.edu.au/pdf/TIPS/02-Clin_Supervision.pdf

Performance development, on the other hand, is guided by the work plan in the PDS (described elsewhere in this document) and is a means to provide guidance to staff in the pursuit of their agreed position objectives. It occurs on a regular basis (usually fortnightly) and is provided by the line manager.

How to access clinical supervision

Clinical supervision is to be arranged by the Manager, Case Management for the case managers and by the Team Leader, Lifestyle Support for the Lifestyle Support Workers. For the case managers it will be provided monthly, within standard working hours, by either the Principal Researcher or by a supervisor external to the organisation. For Lifestyle Support Workers it will be provided as needed. The need is to be discussed on a case by case basis with the Team Leader, Lifestyle Support.

Managing conflict of interest

There will be times when issues arise in the course of clinical supervision that are best dealt with in the context of performance development with the line manager. It is up to the staff member and the clinical supervisor to identify when this happens and ensure the matters are more appropriately dealt with by referring them to the staff member's line manager.

8. MISCELLANEOUS

Personal and Professional Communication

Policy

Purpose:

The purpose of the Personal and Professional Communication Policy is to provide employees with a clear standard in relation to the use of **arbias** resources for personal and professional communication.

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees.

Policy Statement:

Phone Calls

It is acknowledged that personal communication is inevitable and sometimes necessary. It is expected this will be kept to appropriate or reasonable levels.

Email

Email has legal status as a document and is accepted as evidence in a court of law. Even when it is used for private purposes, **arbias** can be held responsible for the contents of email messages, including any attachments. Access to emails can be demanded as part of legal action in some circumstances.

It is therefore important that email is used within the following guidelines:

- Email should mainly be used for official **arbias** correspondence and care should be taken to maintain the confidentiality of sensitive information. Formal memos, documents and letters for which signatures are important, should be issued on **arbias** letterhead regardless of whether a physical or electronic delivery method is used.
- If electronic messages need to be preserved, they should be printed out and filed.
- Limited private use of email is permitted, provided that it does not interfere with or distract from an employee's work. However, **arbias** has the right to access incoming and outgoing email messages to determine whether staff usage or involvement is excessive or inappropriate.
- Non-essential email, including personal messages, should be deleted regularly from the 'Sent Items', 'Inbox' and 'Deleted Items' folders to avoid congestion.
- All emails sent should include the approved **arbias** disclaimer.

In order to protect **arbias** from the potential effects of the misuse and abuse of email, the following instructions are to be observed by all users.

- No material is to be sent as email that is defamatory, in breach of copyright or confidentiality, or prejudicial to the good standing of **arbias** in the community or to its relationship with staff, clients and any other person or organisation with whom it has a relationship.
- Email is not to contain material that amounts to gossip about colleagues or that could be offensive, demeaning, persistently irritating, threatening, discriminatory, involves the harassment of others or concerns personal relationships.
- The email records of other persons are not to be accessed except by management (or persons authorised by management) engaged in ensuring compliance with this policy, or by authorised staff who have been requested to attend to a fault, upgrade or similar situation. Access in each case will be limited to the minimum required to complete the task.
- When using email a person must not pretend to be another person or use another person's computer without permission.
- Excessive private use, including mass mailing, "reply to all" etc. that are not part of the employee's duties, is not permitted.

Failure to comply with these instructions is a disciplinary offence and will be subject to appropriate investigation. In serious cases, the penalty for an offence, or repetition of an offence, may include dismissal. Staff need to be continually aware some forms of email conduct may also be open to criminal prosecution.

Internet

The internet is a facility provided by **arbias** for business use. Limited private use is permitted provided the private use does not interfere with or distract from a person's work. **arbias** has the right to access the system to determine whether private use is excessive or inappropriate.

The following activities, using **arbias'** internet access are not permitted:

- Attending to personal activities of a business nature.
- Viewing, other than by accident, sites of incoming emails portraying obscene, violent, defamatory and unlawful material and material that could cause **arbias** to be in breach of equal opportunity or anti-discrimination legislation, verbally, in writing or pictorially.
- Downloading or printing material as described above.
- Showing to others, or allowing to be seen by others, items as described above.
- Repeated or prolonged use that is not directly relevant to the user's work.
- Introducing computer viruses by failing to follow company IT procedures.
- Downloading software from the internet or from unauthorised disks and CD ROMs on to the internal network.

Failure to comply with these instructions is a disciplinary offence and will be subject to appropriate investigation. In serious cases, the penalty for an offence, or repetition of an offence, may include dismissal. Staff need to be continually aware some forms of internet conduct may also be open to criminal prosecution.

Dress standards

Policy

Purpose:

The purpose of the Dress Standards policy is to provide employees with a clear standard in relation to the appropriate dress at work.

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees.

Policy Statement:

arbias is committed to its employees promoting a positive and professional image to our clients and the general community. Through implementing a dress standard, **arbias** also seeks to minimise risks to occupational health and safety.

Appropriate dress

All employees are expected to dress appropriate to their working environment taking into account the following considerations:

- Personal presentation - clothing should be neat, tidy and clean and professional (appropriate to the circumstances – for instance, overdressing should be avoided when working one on one with clients. Casual clothing is more appropriate on these occasions. However when appearing in court with a client a more professional appearance would be appropriate).
- Occupational health and safety – clothing should be practical for the work environment and not pose risks for slips, trips or falls and not be provocative. When providing direct care to clients (in the field) foot ware should be flat, low heeled and closed toed. Lose jewellery or ties that could be grabbed or torn should not be worn in one on one situations with clients.
- Community standards – consistent with the **arbias** client disability, cultural, age and linguistic diversity, choice of clothing should recognise the need for discretion and sensitivity in avoiding offence, provocation or distress to others.

Employees are encouraged to discuss any concerns or uncertainty regarding appropriate dress standards with their direct manager.

Disclosure of Gifts

Policy

Purpose:

arbias is committed to ensuring all relationships, including with clients, are legal and based on professional integrity. The purpose of the Gifts policy is to provide guidance in ethical conduct and avoidance of conflict of interest.

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees.

Policy Statement:

Employees, in the course of their duties, may be offered gifts from clients and work colleagues from other service providers. These gifts may include:

- Alcohol.
- Chocolates.
- Tickets to events.

arbias does not support or encourage the acceptance or provision of gifts.

Exceptions to this may include where **arbias** endorses the provision of gifts, for example a Christmas hamper to a group of clients.

Managers should be notified when a gift has been received to determine the appropriate action.

Access to personnel files

Policy

Purpose:

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees.

Policy Statement:

Access to personnel files is limited to the following:

- Executive Manager.
- Managers at the discretion of the Executive Manager on a “need to know” basis.
- Individual staff member and/or authorised nominee (must be in writing).

Apart from those occasions where it is required by law, personnel file information may only be released outside **arbias**:

- To confirm either current or past employment with **arbias** (written authorisation from the staff member is required).
- To provide required employment details to establish a former staff member’s entitlement to recognition of employment, sick leave, etc.
- To **arbias**’ legal, industrial, or other advisers.
- In an emergency but, at the discretion of the Executive Manager or representative, only sufficient information to deal with the emergency.

Information may only be removed from the personnel file by the Executive Manager.

A staff member may make arrangements with the Executive Manager to examine their personnel file.

In relation to applicants for appointment or promotion, information communicated in confidence by referees may be exempt from access under Freedom of Information legislation. Denial of access is recommended on the basis that by disclosing the information, it is reasonably likely to impair the ability of **arbias** to obtain similar information in the future.

Referee reports should not be confused with reports written by managers which would, as a matter of course, be discussed with the staff member concerned and therefore be accessible as a legitimate part of their employment history.

Authority to grant access

Authority to grant access to personnel files in accordance with this policy and to release information from files in an emergency rests with the Executive Manager or representative.

Limitations

Nothing in this policy statement will constrain managers from maintaining general staff records, eg, supervisory notes.

Personnel files may not be removed from the vicinity of their primary storage without the express approval of the Executive Manager.

Information may only be removed from a staff member's personnel file with approval from the Executive Manager.

Procedure

Purpose:

The purpose of this procedure is to outline how staff may access their human resources file.

Scope:

This procedure applies to all direct employees of *arbias*.

Process Steps:

1 initial request

The staff member, or anyone representing the staff member (with the written authorisation of that staff member), may access their file by making such a request of the Executive Manager.

2 access arranged

The Executive Manager will arrange a mutually convenient time with the staff member for supervised access to occur.

3 removal of documents

Documents may only be removed from any personnel file by the Executive Manager of *arbias*.

4 copying of documents

Documents may be copied (but not removed) under the watch of the Executive Manager .

5 return of file

At the completion of the employee's access to the file, the Executive Manager will return the file to secure storage

6 other forms of access

Any other access to personnel files will only occur in accordance with the approved policy.