

## G.24 Plant/Equipment Policy

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

Mercy Services is engaged in requires an equally wide range of items of plant and/or equipment.

### 2.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to the acquisition, use and maintenance of any plant/equipment used during Mercy Services' activities.

### 3.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Mercy Services aims to ensure the safety of people, service effectiveness and service efficiency by taking due care in the acquisition, use and maintenance of plant/equipment.

### 4.0 PROCEDURE

#### 4.01 Risk assessment

Mercy Services will attempt to ensure that new risks are not introduced into the workplace by requiring a pre-purchase assessment to be completed when new or different equipment are introduced (D.04 Payments and Purchasing Policy Appendix 1 and G.05 Risk Management Policy Appendix 6).

A risk assessment will also be completed when an incident report indicates a possible issue with plant/equipment.

#### 4.02 Office Equipment

Mercy Services will purchase Australian Standard approved furniture and equipment to minimise the risk of injury or strain.

It is the responsibility of personnel to ensure that they use the equipment appropriately and that it is appropriately maintained.

##### a. Office workstations

An office workstation usually includes: a desk, a chair, desktop computing equipment including a keyboard, a mouse, a hard disk drive and a screen, a telephone, and other furniture/equipment used to perform office tasks. Regular computer users must be competent in the Computer Use Safe Work Practice. The design of office workstations needs to allow for individuals to control how their workstation is set up and organised to meet the changing demands and variety of tasks they perform.

**b. Chairs**

It is essential that office seating is comfortable, appropriate to the task being undertaken and easy for the operator to adjust. Key factors to consider when determining if the chair is appropriate for the person and the job are listed as follows:

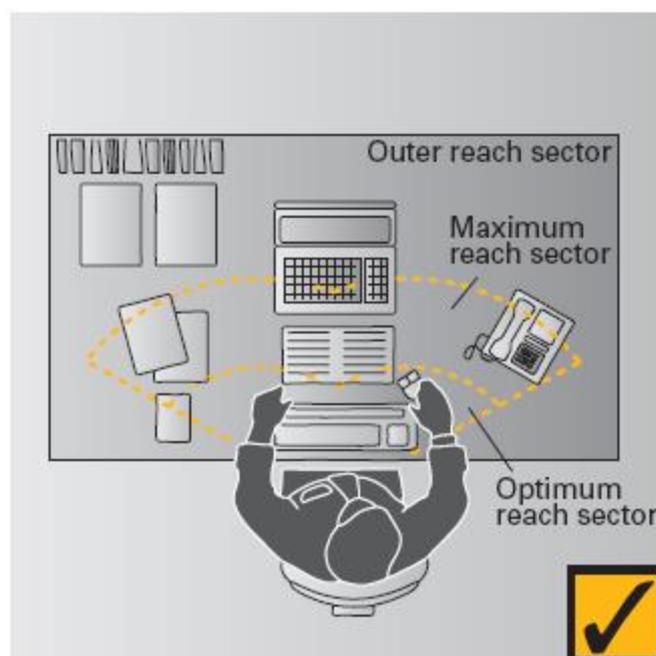
- the seat should be height-adjustable, preferably utilising a gas lift for ease of adjustment;
- the seat should have a curved front edge, to minimise pressure on the underside of the thighs;
- the seat should be able to tilt slightly backwards or forwards;
- it should have a supportive backrest that is adjustable in height, angle and depth;
- both the seat and backrest should be covered by cloth or some other type of material that breathes;
- it should have a five-star base for stability; and
- armrests are optional; they help decrease the forces on the shoulders and back during rest from keying. If provided, armrests should preferably be adjustable in height.

Mercy Services will not allow alternative seating (kneeling chair or fitness ball) unless it has been assessed for risks to users or is required by a medical or rehabilitation plan.

**c. Footrests**

If a desk is too high and it cannot be lowered, it is appropriate to raise the height of the chair and use a footrest to raise the height of the floor by the same amount. Footrests should have height and angle adjustability and be large enough to permit some movement while supporting the feet.

**Figure 3. Reach sectors on a desk.** From: Worksafe Victoria (2006:23) Officewise – A Guide To Health & Safety in the Office



**d. Telephones**

Telephones should be situated so that the user can perform simple tasks, such as taking notes, without the need to twist or support the telephone on the shoulder (see Figure 3). Headsets should be used where the person has to regularly perform tasks such as keying information or taking notes while using the telephone.

**e. Monitor stands**

The top of the screen should generally be level with the user's horizontal eye level and at a distance of approximately one full arm length when the operator is sitting in their usual position for keying. A variety of stands are available to raise screens above desk height.

**f. Information technology**

The acquisition, maintenance and use of information technology is addressed in Mercy Services Policy D.13 Information and Communication Technology.

**g. Copying and similar equipment**

Worksafe Victoria (2006) says photocopiers, facsimile machines and laser printers and their toners pose little risk to employees' health and safety under normal circumstances provided:

- exposure to the bright light of a photocopier is avoided;
- adequate ventilation ensures atmospheric contaminants do not build up;
- care is taken when clearing paper jams near hot machine components;
- noise from equipment, where it is a concern, is isolated or the noise is insulated; and
- equipment is regularly serviced and replaced.

**4.03 Catering equipment**

Microwave ovens will be tested every two years for radiation leakage by a specialist service.

Other catering equipment will be used and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's guidance.

**4.04 Home maintenance equipment**

At least once a fortnight basic maintenance will be conducted on lawn mowers, edgers, etc by Mercy Services maintenance staff.

Significant repairs will be conducted by a specialist repairer.

**4.05 Other equipment**

Other equipment will be used and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's guidance.

#### **4.06 Electrical safety**

All electrical equipment is to be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. All electrical equipment will be tagged at appropriate intervals. Electrical cords should be secured if they are likely to be a trip or contact hazard. Additional power points should be installed if power boards are becoming overloaded or excessive extension cords are needed.

#### **4.07 Fire Fighting and Detection Equipment**

The maintenance and testing of fire fighting and detection equipment is addressed in G.16 Emergency Response.

#### **4.08 Personal care or mobility equipment**

Wherever suitable the usual option for clients needing personal care or assisted mobility equipment will be for the client to be assessed by an Occupational Therapist or Physiotherapist and for the equipment to be hired from an organisation that is responsible for maintaining the safety of the equipment.

When Mercy Services has supplied personal care or assisted mobility equipment the relevant Coordinator, Nurse or Director of Care is responsible for ensuring that it is well maintained and not a significant infection, health or safety risk to client/volunteers/staff.

#### **4.09 Use of non-Mercy Services equipment**

At times staff are required to use non-Mercy Services equipment, such as client cooking, cleaning, transfer and personal care equipment. The Coordinator will assess the suitability of this equipment before agreeing that Mercy Services will use it. If the client does not have suitable equipment the Coordinator will ensure that better equipment is provided by the client, Mercy Services or some other source.

If staff later identify problems with non-Mercy Services equipment they are to notify the Coordinator who will ensure the problem is rectified.

#### **4.10 Compliance**

Compliance with this Policy is being measured by

- a) the person completing the Workplace Site Inspections every three months checking that regular repairs are completed:
  - Exit/emergency lighting = every six months
  - Fire fighting equipment = every six months
  - Air conditioners = every three months
  - Pest control = every three months
  - Rainwater tank maintenance = every month

#### **4.11 Evaluation**

The performance indicator for the evaluation of this Policy is:

- a) No person is injured as a result of plant or equipment issues

## 5.0 REFERENCES

<b>1. Current issues</b>	a) None identified
<b>2. Australian Standards</b>	a) AS/NZS 4360:2004 - Risk Management b) AS/NZS 4443:1997 - Office panel systems – Workstations c) AS/NZS 4438:1997 - Height adjustable swivel chairs d) AS/NZS 4438:1997/Amdt 1:1999 - Height adjustable swivel chairs e) AS/NZS 1961.4.2004 - Castors and Wheels- Castors and Wheels for Furniture - Castors for Swivel Chairs
<b>3. Legislation</b>	a) Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW) b) Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011 (NSW)
<b>4. Professional guidelines</b>	a) nil
<b>5. Codes of Practice</b>	a) Safe Work Australia (2011) Code Of Practice: How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks <a href="http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/AboutSafeWorkAustralia/WhatWeDo/Publications/Documents/633/How_to_Manage_Work_Health_and_Safety_Risks.pdf">http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/AboutSafeWorkAustralia/WhatWeDo/Publications/Documents/633/How_to_Manage_Work_Health_and_Safety_Risks.pdf</a>
<b>6. Codes of Ethics</b>	a) Australian Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics 2010 <a href="http://www.aasw.asn.au/document/item/1201">http://www.aasw.asn.au/document/item/1201</a> b) Australian Psychological Association Code of Ethics <a href="http://www.psychology.org.au/Assets/Files/APS-Code-of-Ethics.pdf">http://www.psychology.org.au/Assets/Files/APS-Code-of-Ethics.pdf</a> c) Code of Ethics for Nurses in Australia 2008 <a href="http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/Codes-Guidelines-Statements/Codes-Guidelines.aspx#codesofethics">http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/Codes-Guidelines-Statements/Codes-Guidelines.aspx#codesofethics</a> d) Integrity in the Service of the Church <a href="https://www.catholic.org.au/media-centre/media-releases/cat_view/10-organisations/38-national-committee-for-professional-standards">https://www.catholic.org.au/media-centre/media-releases/cat_view/10-organisations/38-national-committee-for-professional-standards</a> e) Mercy Services Code of Conduct
<b>7. Evidence</b>	a) nil
<b>8. Mercy Services Values</b>	a) Justice, Respect, Care, Unity, Service

## 6.0 OTHER RELATED POLICIES

- A.03 Code of Conduct
- A.04 Environmental Responsibility
- C.01 Management Roles and Responsibilities
- C.02 Strategic Planning
- C.03 Operational Planning
- C.05 Quality Improvement
- D.04 Payments and Purchasing
- D.07 Asset purchase and maintenance
- D.09 Use of Facilities & Equipment
- D.10 Security
- F.3 Learning and development
- G.04 WHS Training
- G.05 Risk Management
- G.08 Infection Control
- G.09 Manual Handling
- G.10 Hazardous Substances

- G.11 Security at Mercy Services Centres
- G.12 Stress Management
- G.14 WHS for Contractors
- G.19 Office and Buildings

## 7.0 RELATIONSHIP WITH STANDARDS

<b><i>Aged Care Accreditation Standards</i></b>	<b><i>Home Care Standards</i></b>	<b><i>Disability Standards</i></b>	<b><i>EQulP Standards</i></b>
1.3, 1.4, 1.6, 2.3, 3.3, 3.4,	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.5	1.1, 1.2, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4,	1.3.1, 1.5.2, 1.5.4, 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.2.1, 3.2.2, 3.2.4, 3.2.5

## 8.0 DOCUMENT CHANGES RECORD

<b><i>Dates of change</i></b>	<b><i>Section altered</i></b>	<b><i>Natures of changes made</i></b>
02/11/2011	all	First record of policy creation
14/11/2011	a) 4.08 b) 4.09 c) 4.10	a) New section on non-Mercy Services equipment b) Previously was 4.08 c) Previously was 4.09
06/02/2012	a) All sections b) 5.0 References	a) Updated new WHS terms b) Update with new WHS laws and Codes of Practice
27/11/2012	All Sections	Organisation name updated
01/07/2015	a) 1.0 Introduction b) 4.08 Personal Care or Mobility equipment c) 5.0 References d) 7.0 Relationship with Standards	a) Delete previous first sentence b) New section c) Update Codes of Ethics and Evidence d) Update Disability Standards and include Aged Care Accreditation Standards
20/01/2016	e) 4.01 Risk Assessment	e) Clarification of when a Pre-Purchase Risk Assessment is needed
Review due 20/01/2019		