



Australian Government

AFTRS

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AFTRS Children on Premises Policy and Procedure

Responsible Officer	Director, Corporate and Student Services
Contact Officer	Head of Human Resources
Authorisation	Director, Corporate and Student Services
Effective Date	4 th February 2010
Associated Documents	<i>Sex Discrimination Act 1984</i> <i>Occupational Health and Safety Act 1991</i> (Cwlth) <i>Equal Employment Opportunity (Commonwealth Authorities) Act 1987</i> AFTRS Student Production Guidelines Grievance Procedures (Staff and Students) Equal Employment Opportunity Policy Access and Equity Policy Code of Conduct (Staff and Student) AFTRS Union Collective Workplace Agreement 2007

1. Policy Name

The AFTRS Children on Premises Policy and Procedure.

2. Preamble

This Policy and Procedure has been developed to address concerns over students bringing children on premises and not caring for them appropriately. These concerns are rising given that the student population has increased considerably with the greater number of award courses being offered, and are expected to increase further with the current emphasis on expanding the Open Program both in Sydney and nationally. This Policy and Procedure also addresses the issue of employees bringing children on AFTRS premises, and so supersedes the Children of Staff on AFTRS Premises Policy which was approved in 2004.

3. Policy Scope

This Policy and Procedure applies to all employees, students and visitors at AFTRS. It is not intended to restrict children's access to areas of AFTRS that are open to the public or to other approved AFTRS

activities. Caregivers may bring children into the public areas of AFTRS such as the café and library subject to any regulation or Policy which may apply to the specific area.

4. Definitions

“Caregiver” means a person (employee, student or visitor) who brings a child to AFTRS premises or activities. In the case of a child on the premises for a program involving children (refer provision 6III(f)) the senior AFTRS staff member in attendance is considered the Caregiver if the child’s parent or guardian is not present.

“Supervisor” means the employee who is directly responsible for a place of work, teaching or production activity. This includes the lecturer in charge of a specific class or production activity.

“Child” means a person under the age of 16 years unless stated otherwise in this Policy or Procedure.

5. Policy Statement

AFTRS seeks to provide a “family friendly” working and learning environment. This Policy and Procedure seeks to establish principles which achieve a reasonable balance between:

- a) providing a flexible response to the needs of caregivers;
- b) ensuring health and safety requirements are met, and
- c) protecting the work and study environment of others at AFTRS.

Caregivers may bring their children to work or classes in situations where there are difficulties in childcare arrangements. Approval must be obtained from a supervisor for the child to attend work or classes. Requests must be considered sympathetically, and no reasonable request refused. Approval must be sought in advance wherever possible so that alternate arrangements can be made if necessary. Where it is not possible to seek approval in advance the caregiver must ask the supervisor prior to bringing a child into a workplace or classroom and must be prepared to leave the premises if permission is denied. AFTRS expects that caregivers will not routinely bring children to work or classes as an alternative to regular, organised childcare.

Caregivers are solely responsible for the behaviour of any child they bring onto AFTRS premises and must supervise them at all times. They must recognise that the AFTRS environment is intended for study and work, and take steps to ensure that the presence of their children causes minimal disruption to others. They must not expect or request AFTRS employees or other students to take care of their children.

If the child is under 13 years of age the caregiver must accompany them to the toilet.

Caregivers are required to ensure the children in their care adhere to all AFTRS policies, procedures and guidelines for example footwear must always be worn.

A child suffering from an infectious medical condition which may put others at risk, for example chickenpox, head lice or conjunctivitis, should not be brought onto the premises.

AFTRS reserves the right to restrict specified areas from access by children for safety and security reasons and to direct that a child be removed from the premises where the presence of the child is causing an unacceptable health and safety risk or an unreasonable level of disruption to others. Unsupervised children should be reported to Security who, under the supervision of the Facilities Manager, will be responsible for resolving the situation in accordance with section 6 III (e) of this Policy and Procedure.

Where AFTRS shares premises owned by other organisations, the regulations and policies pertaining to those organisations may override this Policy and Procedure to the extent there are inconsistencies.

AFTRS recognises that care must be taken to ensure that this Policy and Procedure is not implemented in a way that discriminates, directly or indirectly, against an employee or student on the grounds of carer or parental responsibilities. Employees or students who believe they have unreasonably been refused permission to bring children on the premises may seek a review of that decision in accordance with section 6 III (c) of this Policy and Agreement.

6. Implementation/Procedure

I. Roles and responsibilities

Caregivers have the ultimate responsibility for the children in their care. They must seek permission to bring children into work or classes and must take reasonable steps to safeguard the health and safety of the children in premises that are not designed with children in mind. They must ensure the children behave in a way that does not inconvenience or endanger employees, students, other visitors or themselves. Without limiting this, they are also responsible for reimbursing AFTRS for any costs relating to damage caused by the behaviour of the child.

Supervisors have the responsibility for reviewing and deciding whether children may attend work or classes in specific situations taking into account the particular circumstances, the likely impact on students, employees and visitors, and health and safety issues and risks.

Supervisors of areas where children are have responsibility for determining when a child's behaviour is sufficiently disruptive or the

situation is sufficiently dangerous to require a child to be removed from the area.

Head of Human Resources, Student Services Manager and Head of Teaching and Learning (or equivalent roles whatever the position title) are responsible for overseeing the provision of information and advice on bringing children onto the premises and the initial review of complaints in relation to this Policy and Procedure. They may also be consulted on determining when a child may be removed from the premises.

Facilities Manager in their security management role is responsible for ensuring that issues of unaccompanied children are dealt with sensitively and appropriately and that children are removed from the premises when necessary, and by their Caregiver wherever possible.

II. Dissemination of Information

It is important that employees, students and visitors be aware of their responsibilities and AFTRS' expectations when children are brought onto AFTRS premises.

This Policy and Procedure will be provided and explained as part of the staff induction.

This Policy and Procedure will be explained as part of the student orientation.

This Policy and Procedure will be available on the AFTRS website.

Further information can be obtained from Human Resources or Student Services.

Any employee or student wishing to make any comments about this Policy and Procedure may forward their suggestions to the Head of Human Resources.

III. Process

a) Requests and decisions

Employees or students wishing to bring children to the workplace, the classroom or on productions must seek permission from their supervisor. In the case of employees this is their immediate supervisor and in the case of students it is the lecturer or Head of Discipline.

In making a decision the supervisor should avoid assumptions and consider each request on a case by case basis and be mindful of the need to be able to demonstrate the "reasonableness" of their decision.

Requests should be treated flexibly and sensitively, and factors which should be taken into account include:

- length of time involved;
- frequency of attendance;
- age of child;
- subject matter where a class is to be attended;
- available seating and space;
- any risks or hazards;
- material which may be displayed, presented or discussed which is unsuitable or distressing for children;
- any medical conditions or special needs of the child;
- the continued reasonable behaviour of the child, and
- the likely degree of disruption to others.

If a supervisor is concerned that the content of a class may be inappropriate or upsetting for children they should advise the student of what will be covered. The student, as the caregiver, is then responsible for making the decision whether it is appropriate for the child to be present. In these instances, the supervisor should document their concerns, obtain the caregiver's decision in writing and forward the documentation to Student Services for placement on the Student file. Please note that under these circumstances removal of children may still take place in accordance with provision 6III(d).

Any decision not to allow a child attend the workplace, classes or productions should be confirmed in writing to the Caregiver and the reason stated. In the case of a request from a student a copy should be forwarded to Student Services and placed on the student's file. In the case of a request from an employee a copy should be forwarded to Human Resources and placed on the employee's file.

b) Library

The Library is a public access area, a learning environment for students and employees, and a workplace for library staff. All users of the Library are required to respect and uphold the conditions necessary to provide an appropriate atmosphere for study, research and work.

People 13 years of age and over are permitted to work in the public areas of the Library without supervision provided their conduct is appropriate. Children under 13 years of age must be supervised at all times. Library staff are authorised to determine if a child's behaviour is appropriate.

c) Request for Review

Employees who believe that they have been unreasonably denied permission to bring a child into the workplace should refer the matter to their Divisional Director or the Head of Human Resources (or equivalent role) for review.

Students who believe that they have been unreasonably denied permission to bring a child into a class or production environment should refer the matter to their Head of Discipline, the Student Services Manager, the Head of Teaching and Learning or the Head of Human Resources (or equivalent role).

Grievance or Misconduct Procedures may be initiated by a Caregiver if it is alleged that the decisions were unfair or unreasonable.

d) Removal of Children from AFTRS premises

Caregivers may be required to remove a child from AFTRS premises if in the judgement of a relevant supervisor or area supervisor, or other senior member of staff:

- the health or safety of the child is at risk;
- the child presents a health or safety risk to others;
- the child's behaviour is causing undue disruption to the work of employees, students or visitors;
- the child is not being appropriately supervised, or
- the Supervisor or other senior member of staff considers the presence of the child is inappropriate.

e) Unsupervised Children

An employee or student who observes an unsupervised child on AFTRS premises who they believe may be at risk or who is engaging in disruptive or inappropriate behaviour should report the matter to Security staff. Security staff will advise the Facilities Manager and will take action to determine and locate the child's caregiver and ensure that the situation is resolved appropriately.

f) Programs involving Children

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that when programs involving the presence of children on AFTRS premises are arranged there are adequate measures to protect the health and safety of the children. This also applies to children on productions.

g) Public Screenings

In the case of public screenings on AFTRS premises all marketing documentation will state the applicable ratings (if rated) or that the content is not rated and may contain adult content. AFTRS reserves the right to determine that the content is inappropriate for children and to prohibit them from attending.

h) Responsibility

At all times whilst on AFTRS premises, a visiting child is the sole responsibility of the caregiver. It should be noted that if an accident occurs only normal public liability provisions will apply.

7. Review

It is the responsibility of the Head of Human Resources to review this Policy and Procedure as required by changes to legislation, Australian government Policy, or the structure, policies or any other aspect of AFTRS.