

Policy Title	Trauma Policy
Policy Category	Operational
Number & Version	SVC-MSO-PO-103-01
Policy Owner	Community Services
Approval by	CEO
Effective date	
Date for review	September 2021

1. STRATEGIC PURPOSE

Snowy Valleys Council is committed to ensuring the health and wellbeing of its clients and work participants.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

Council recognises that work participants may occasionally suffer from trauma / grief as a result of their work. The program is committed to providing help and / or assistance for work participants delivering community services, should the need arise.

3. DEFINITIONS

Work Participant:

Any employees, labour hire staff, volunteers, work experience and contractors of the Council.

Trauma:

A deeply distressing or disturbing experience.

Grief:

A feeling of loss which can occur after losing someone or something that the person cares about. This may be the death of a loved one or the loss of a relationship, a job, health, possessions or a way of life.

4. CONTENT

Council Management shall ensure that all work participants, paid and unpaid, are provided with the necessary support needed if an experience leaves them traumatised and / or grieving.

Examples of situations that may leave a person traumatised include:

- Finding a client hurt or dead in their home
- Hearing of the death of a client
- Being a victim of abuse within the workplace
- Involvement in a car accident while carrying out duties for the Multi Service Outlet
- Conflict with other work participants or clients may affect some worse than others

Support and help that can be offered include:

- Training days covering 'Grief and Loss'
- Debriefing session with supervisor or co-worker / volunteer
- Providing choice to the person as to who they wish to speak to
- Providing information and referral to appropriate support agencies
- Ensuring confidentiality
- Allowing time away from usual duties if necessary
- Changing usual duties. In the case of volunteers, he / she may prefer to deliver meals or drive on another run, away from the area where the incident took place. For paid employees, they may feel comfortable dealing with less stressful tasks for a while
- Arbitration or mediation may help with severe conflict between workers / volunteers and clients

Support Agencies may include:

- Independent counsellors or a Trauma Psychologist
- Workers in the same position in different organisations
- Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) Development Officer
- Members of Peak Bodies e.g. NSW Meals on Wheels Association, Community Transport Organisation.

Any traumatic experience, grief or loss suffered by an employee or volunteer that requires assistance from outside agencies should be documented. This is necessary in case the experience causes problems again for the person concerned at a later date. It is particularly essential that such incidents are documented by completing an *Incident/Accident Report Form* for Worker's Compensation and Insurance Purposes.

Employees and volunteers will not make any personal judgements regarding trauma experienced by others. All people experience trauma in a variety of ways. What affects one person may not affect another.

5. ASSOCIATED LEGISLATION

Work, Health and Safety Act (2011)

6. ASSOCIATED COUNCIL DOCUMENTS

Public Incident Report Form – SVC-RM-F-252-01

Incident / Accident Report Form – SVC-RM-F-007-01

7. HISTORY

Date	Action	Name	Policy Number	Resolution Date	Resolution Number
	Superseded	Trauma Policy	TSC-MSO-PO-16-0 (Former Tumbarumba Shire Policy)		