Victorian Allied Health Professionals Association

Workplace Committee Policy

This is the Workplace Committee Policy adopted on 25/09/2013 by the Branch Committee of Management of the Victorian Health Professionals Association (HSU No. 3 Branch).

Policy version control

Date	Author/Department	Version number	Summary of changes
13 Feb 2013	Branch Committee	1.0	
10 April 2013	Branch Committee	2.0	
25 Sept 2013	Branch Committee	2.1	
08 Dec 2015	Branch Committee	2.2	Branding and references update

The Union Rules and the provisions of the Fair Work Act 2009 and Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009 will prevail over the terms of the policy to the extent of any inconsistency.

Reference: Health Services Union Rule 66: Workplace Committees (Sub Branches) and Representatives

Nomenclature: The term 'Branch', as used herein, refers specifically to VAHPA—VAHPA is one of nine Branches of the Health Services Union. Whereas the term 'Union', as used herein, refers to the federally registered Health Services Union. The term 'workplace area' refers to a designated division within the broader workplace.

General Statement of Policy and Intent

The Union recognises that one of most effective ways Members can take an active role in the Union and become empowered is through engagement with a Workplace Committee.

The aim of this policy is to ensure all Members, including those in smaller workplaces, can participate in an active Workplace Committee.

1. **Establishment of Workplace Committees**

Workplace Committees may be established by the Branch Committee of Management (hereafter BCOM) at workplaces where fifteen (15) or more employees are financial Members of the Branch. In workplaces with fewer than fifteen (15) financial Members, the Members may be grouped so as to facilitate the formation of a Workplace Committee.

BCOM may establish more than one (1) Workplace Committee in a workplace.

2. **Composition of Workplace Committees**

Workplace Committees comprise all relevant Workplace Delegates, the Workplace Committee President and all other consenting Members of the Branch.

3. **Meetings of Workplace Committees**

Workplace Committees will generally meet quarterly and more often where the relevant Workplace Organiser deems it necessary. An Organiser, Officer or other Branch employee will attend Workplace Committee meetings, where it is reasonable to do so.

It is expected that all meetings will be conducted in a way that is open, transparent and participatory. A person who is not a member of the Union may be invited to attend meetings of the Workplace Committee by the Members of that Committee.

4. **Role of Workplace Committees**

Workplace Committees are active and democratic forums. Workplace Committees should seek to foster member activism to achieve better outcomes for Members.

The role of the Workplace Committee is to:

- Facilitate the orientation of new employees to the Branch and Union, in partnership with the relevant Organiser;
- Be a forum to encourage and recruit employees to join the Union;

- Increase the engagement and activism of all Members through campaigns and organised workplace activities;
- Ensure all Members update their personal details with the Branch on a regular basis;
- Ensure distribution of Branch materials and publicise Branch and Union events;
- Establish and maintain Union noticeboards;
- Be a point of liaison for Members on workplace issues; and
- Ensure there is an active designated Union OH&S representative at the workplace.

It is a goal of the Branch that its Workplace Committees reflect the diversity of its membership. All possible steps should be taken to encourage the inclusion and participation of minority groups.

5. Presidential Elections

Each Workplace Committee will generally elect a Workplace Committee President by and from their number. The Workplace Committee President will assist with the management and governance of that Workplace Committee.

Workplace Committee President elections are typically held on an annual basis at the start of each calendar year. Such elections are to be advertised on the Branch website for a period of at least one (1) week prior to the date of such an election and are subject to the Union's Democracy Policy.

Elections for the role of Workplace Committee President will be conducted by a Branch Returning Officer appointed by the Branch Secretary, and will occur at a face-to-face meeting of Members of that Committee.

A person shall not be elected as a Workplace Committee President unless they are a financial Member of the Union. All positions remain in office until the incoming Workplace Committee President has been declared elected by a Union Returning Officer, or until resignation.

6. Role of Workplace Committee Presidents

The role of the Workplace Committee President is to:

- Organise meetings of the Workplace Committee and, where necessary, of all Members at that workplace;
- Provide a brief agenda for such meetings and maintain records (brief minutes) of those meetings;
- Preside at meetings of the Workplace Committee and preserve order thereat so that business may be conducted in a productive and respectful manner;
- Ensure that all Members in their area are and remain financial;
- Increase the engagement and activism of existing Union Members; and
- Take all reasonable and necessary steps to recruit and sign up as Members all eligible employees in their workplace.

6. Workplace Committee President Training

The Branch recognises the importance of the Workplace Committee President role. The Branch is also cognisant of the challenges associated with this role. As such the Branch will endeavour to provide as much support and training to Members in this role as is practicable.

It is an expectation and requirement of the role that all Workplace Committee Presidents attend relevant training as provided by the Branch, generally on an annual basis.

7. Removal and Termination of Workplace Committee Presidents

Should the Secretary become aware that any Workplace Committee President is not performing such duties or responsibilities as set out in clause 6 or is reported by a Member or Members at their workplace for dereliction of these duties, the Secretary shall report same to the Branch Committee of Management who shall have the power to investigate such reports.

Should such allegations be substantiated, BCOM shall have the power to dismiss any Workplace Committee President and cause another election to take place within 28 days of the dismissal.

The appointment of a person as a Workplace Committee President shall automatically terminate if:

- They resign their Membership of the Union or are expelled therefrom in accordance with the Union Rules.
- They cease to be employed in the workplace in which they were elected to represent.

8. Policy review

The Workplace Committee Policy can be amended by an ordinary resolution of the Branch Committee of Management.

9. Dissemination of policy

A copy of this policy will be published on the VAHPA website.

End of Policy