

	HOUSING & IMPACT
	POLICY

CHILD SAFE ORGANISATIONS			
DELEGATE	CEO	OWNER	EMHI

POLICY

Bric Housing aims to ensure, to the extent that it is able, the safety and well-being of children and young people that interact with Bric. Bric has zero tolerance for any form of harm to a child or young person.

This policy is applicable to:

- Bric staff and volunteers
- Agents conducting work on behalf of Bric (*relevant stakeholders*).

BACKGROUND, PURPOSE & PRINCIPLES

Bric supports the rights of children and young people and will act to create conditions that reduce the likelihood of harm.

All workers and relevant stakeholders of Bric share responsibility for protecting children and young people from harm.

Bric will take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure that all workers and relevant stakeholders are made aware of this policy and their responsibilities.

Bric acknowledges there is a requirement to act (including reporting concerns) if there is any suspicion of harm to children or young people within Bric properties.

The purpose of this policy is to enact key duties under the Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld) and includes:

- Establishing leadership and governance arrangements to ensure child safety is prioritised and integrated into organisational culture and governance as appropriate to the service Bric provides.
- Developing and implementing policies, procedures, practices aligned with Child Safe Standards where applicable and relevant to our services
- Ensuring appropriate screening, supervision, training and ongoing support of staff, volunteers, contractors, as relevant.
- Ensuring physical and online environments are safe and harm-minimising as appropriate
- Ensuring accessible, child-friendly complaint-handling / feedback / reporting mechanisms for applicable services
- Monitoring, reviewing and improving compliance.

CHILD SAFE ORGANISATION SYSTEM

Bric Housing has a responsibility to implement, educate and promote the 10 Child Safe Standards within the context of the Universal Principle and in the context of the services the organisation provides. The Universal Principle is about creating culturally safe environments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families, which broadly means they feel welcome, safe, valued, included and respected.

The 10 Child Safe Standards are outlined below:

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Standard
1. Leadership and culture
2. Voice of children
3. Family and community
4. Equity and diversity
5. People
6. Complaints management
7. Knowledge and skills
8. Physical and online environment
9. Continuous Improvement
10. Policy and procedures

RESPONSIBILITIES

The CEO has an obligation to:

- Promote a culture of safety for children and young people within the Bric portfolio and as relevant to the services Bric provides.
- Ensure all workers are aware of relevant laws, organisational policies and procedures and Bric's Code of Conduct.
- Ensure that all workers are aware of their obligation to report

The Executive Team and Senior Managers have an obligation to:

- Promote a culture of safety for children and young people within the Bric portfolio and as relevant to the services Bric provides.
- Implement this policy in their area of responsibility.
- Assess the risk of harm to children and young people within their area and for relevant services and ensure controls are in place to prevent, detect and respond to incidents.
- Facilitate timely reporting of any suspected harm.
- Ensure that there is appropriate safeguarding training in place for workers for the services Bric provides.
- Fulfill mandatory reporting requirements.

All workers have an obligation to:

- Promote a culture of safety for children and young people within the Bric portfolio.
- Familiarise themselves with this policy, Code of Conduct and Practice Guide for Child Protection Risk Management.
- Report any suspicion of harm to a child or young person to responsible persons in the organisation and authorities.
- Fulfill mandatory reporting requirements

All relevant stakeholders have an obligation to:

- Promote a culture of safety for children and young people within the Bric portfolio.

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- Report any suspicion of harm to a child or young person to responsible persons in the organisation and authorities.
- Fulfill mandatory reporting requirements

DEFINITIONS

In this policy, the following words have the following meanings:

Blue Card is Queensland's "working with children check" administered by Blue Card Services under the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 and Regulation 2020. It ensures individuals working or volunteering with children are eligible and monitored for their suitability to keep kids safe

Blue Card holders undergo ongoing police and disciplinary checks, and organisations are expected to implement child- and youth-focused risk management strategies.

Child means an individual under 16 years or an individual under 18 years with an impairment of mind.

Harm involves any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child or young person's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. Harm can be caused by physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect or sexual abuse or exploitation. Harm can be caused by a single act, omission or circumstance or a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.

Independent Contractor means a person or firm that undertakes a contract to provide materials or labour to perform a service or do a job. It includes consultants and maintenance contractors.

Parent means a mother, father or someone else having or exercising parental responsibility for an individual under the age of 18 (i.e. a long-term or permanent guardian of the child). However, a person standing in the place of a parent of a child or young person on a temporary basis is not a parent of the child.

Reportable Conduct Scheme is an additional reporting obligation that applies to certain organisations and does not currently apply to Bric Housing.

Staff member or **Staff** means an employee or a volunteer of Bric.

Suspicion of harm means a reasonable and honest suspicion that a child or young person may have suffered, may be suffering or may be at risk of suffering significant harm as a result of any type of abuse, neglect or exploitation and may not have a parent able and willing to protect the child or young person from harm.

Worker means an employee, a volunteer of Bric.

Young person means an individual aged between 16 and 18 years.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

1. Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct outlines expectations regarding appropriate behaviour and professional discharge of duties in relation to working with others including children and young people and their guardians

The Code of Conduct is provided to all Bric workers and relevant stakeholders

The Child Protection Guide (Queensland State Government) provides further guidance including

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information for identifying risk of harm and handling disclosures or suspicions of harm.

2. Safe Recruitment and Selection

Bric will conduct pre-employment screening (including a police check and a thorough reference check to ensure employees who are reasonably expected to work with or have contact with children and young people in the course of their role, are suitable to do so.

Bric will identify Blue Card holder requirements for certain positions. Blue Cards are applied for and regulated by Blue Card Services Queensland.

3. Training and Awareness

Bric will ensure an appropriate level of training is available to staff to equip them to promote the safety and well-being of children and young people.

5. Unsupervised Contact

Bric workers should not be alone with children or young people and should always have at least one other adult present (preferably the child or young person's parent).

6. Images and Consent

Bric will at all times portray children and young people in photographs or other media in a respectful, appropriate and consensual way.

Informed consent from the child or young person's parent must always be obtained and documented for the use of the child or young person's story or image.

7. Mandatory Reporting Requirements

It is mandatory for all adults to report sexual offending against children to the Queensland Police Service (**Police**) unless they have a reasonable excuse. A reasonable excuse may include that the person:

- Has already reported the offence to an appropriate authority or knows another person has or will report it;
- Believes the information has already been given to the Police;
- Has received information about the victim, who is now an adult and reasonably believes they don't want it revealed to the Police; or
- Believes the offence would endanger themselves or another person (other than the alleged offender) and that failure to give the information to the Police is reasonable.

8. General Reporting Requirements

Bric workers are also expected to report harm or suspected harm of a child or young person to either the Queensland Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services (Child Safety Services) or the Police who will decide on an appropriate course of action. A senior manager may assist with reporting responsibilities if required.

As soon as possible, the individual who has reported the matter must notify the Executive Manager Housing and Impact (EMHI). The EMHI will alert the CEO.

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9. Responding Suspected Incidents Involving a Bric Worker

Where an allegation of harm involves a Bric worker, the normal protocols for reporting of harm will occur. Additionally, the CEO is to be notified immediately and take appropriate action for the circumstances, which may include:

- Suspending or standing down the alleged offender (with or without pay);
- Ensuring appropriate assistance is provided to the Police or Child Safety Services representatives;
- Ensuring Bric insurers are notified;
- Considering an appropriate response to the family.

Further action will depend upon the outcome of the Police investigation.

10. Compliance

Disciplinary action in line with the *Employee Discipline Policy* may be taken against an employee or volunteer who is found to have:

- Failed to report a child protection concern;
- Intentionally made a false allegation; or
- Seriously breached this policy or the Code of Conduct.

11. Privacy and Confidentiality

Bric expects all workers, directors and relevant stakeholders to maintain confidentiality (subject to any statutory obligation to report Harm).

All personal information identified or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved unless there is a risk to someone's safety (refer to the *Privacy Policy*).

However, information will be shared with relevant authorities (including the Police) if a child or young person is deemed to be at risk of harm, in immediate danger or a crime has been committed.

12. Additional Resources

The Queensland Family and Child Commission website (www.qfcc.qld.gov.au/supporting-our-sector) provides information on relevant topics including, descriptions of child abuse, responding to child abuse and reporting Harm.

13. Review

The Child and Young Person Protection Policy and its related documents are reviewed periodically

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RELATED LEGISLATION & DOCUMENTATION

Legislation	Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld) Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000
External Documents	Child Safe Standards Queensland Family and Child Commission Blue Card Services Your rights, crime and the law Queensland Government
Internal Documents	GOV_P Code of Conduct HR-Pr Employee Discipline Procedure PEOPLE_P Employee Performance Development GOV_P Incident Management Policy ICT_P Information Security GOV_P NRSCH Notifiable Incidents GOV_P Privacy Policy PEOPLE_P Recruitment Policy PEOPLE_P Induction and Probation GOV_P Risk Management Policy GOV_P Whistleblower ProtectionPolicy PEOPLE_P Workplace Health and Safety Framework HR_Pr Grievance Handling Procedure