



Tiwi Islands Regional Council

Title: Children in the Workplace Policy
Policy No: 61
Adopted By: Tiwi Islands Regional Council (TIRC)
Next Review Date: March 2024
Responsibility: Manager Organisational Change and Development
Magiq ID: 232709

Version	Decision Number	Adoption Date	History
1	Resolution 52 of 25-3-20	Wednesday 25 March	Version 1

Background

Tiwi Islands Regional Council (TIRC) has supports employees to balance the various challenges they face as people with family responsibilities. TIRC understands that childcare arrangements may not be possible in some situations and there may occasionally be the need for staff to bring their children into the workplace. In these circumstances, employees are to follow the steps outlined in the procedure.

Policy statement

- All employees need to be aware that what constitutes a safe work environment with appropriate safeguards for employees may not be equally safe for children. For this reason any employee that brings a child to the workplace is responsible for their supervision at all times.
- While Council does have liability insurance covering its properties, employees who bring children onto Council premises do so entirely at their own risk. Before seeking to bring a child in the workplace, employees should consider the age of the child and the agreed duration of the temporary arrangement. Importantly they should first seek permission from their Line Manager in the first instance, before bringing a child to work.
- A manager should treat requests for children to be in the workplace sensitively and make a decision on a case by case basis having regard to the reason for the request. The manager must be satisfied that the child will be supervised by the care giver at all times and that having a child in the workplace is on a temporary basis.



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Procedure

1. Notification

Circumstances may arise when employees need to bring their children into the office. This may be because of the unavailability of a childcare centre. Employees are required to request permission from their manager on each occasion that they bring a child into the workplace.

It is important for all employees to have an understanding that when permission is granted, having a child in the workplace is a temporary condition until a permanent caring arrangement is in place for the child/ren. TIRC will endeavour to better support the parent/s whilst caring arrangements are being explored, noting the child's placement in the workplace is temporary.

2. Assessment

The staff member's line manager will discuss the request with the employee to assess the suitability of bringing the child into the workplace.

The line manager will consider the suitability and make a recommendation to the CEO outlining the situation, available options to support the employee and impacts on council business.

The CEO will assess all aspects of each case and has ultimate decision making authority.

3. Supervision of Children

At all times children under the age of 16 years remains the sole responsibility of their parent/carer.

Employees are fully responsible for the behaviour and actions of their children whilst on the premises. Such responsibility includes supervision, which is close enough to prevent accidents.

Parents/carers must:

- continually assess the risks to which their children are/could be subjected and attempt to minimise these
- take into account that children will be unfamiliar with the working environment
- Accompany their children at all times.

4. Access

Children under the age of 16 years in the office are prohibited at all times in the following areas unsupervised:

- kitchens
- storage rooms
- any areas where chemicals, dyes, cleaning fluids and any other potentially hazardous substances are in use or stored
- any areas where tools or machinery are located or used – even when these are not in use.



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5. Car parks and other outdoor areas

This policy applies across all Council premises, including car parks and other outdoor areas.

6. Facilities and equipment

Children should not have access to any of Council equipment including computer equipment, and if they are of school age permission to be sought from the CEO.

7. Limitations

- The Chief Executive Officer / immediate supervisor should ensure that a child being present in the workplace is not an ongoing arrangement, but to support parents through a temporary situation where there is justifiable cause not to organise alternative arrangements for the child.
- Employees cannot do a full time job and care for children full time on the work site. For these reasons and the above discussion of liability, Council staff must commit to finding alternative childcare arrangements within an agreed time.
- Any baby furniture used at work must comply with WHS standards and it must not interfere with the free movement of staff through the office. If staff are unsure regarding this they can check with HR, Infrastructure or their WHS Representative. Any electrical equipment must be tested and tagged by Council electrician before being brought to the work site.
- TIRC seeks that your child/ren is of good health particularly not suffering with infectious disease and as a duty of care for safety and wellbeing of other employees.
- The TIRC does not encourage employees to bring children to workshops and meetings.

Associated Resources

Fairwork Ombudsman

<http://www.fairwork.gov.au/>

Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011

<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/>