1. General Principle

(a) The employer recognises that employees sometimes face situations of violence or abuse in their personal life that may affect their attendance or performance at work. Therefore, the VTHC is committed to providing support to staff that experience family violence.

2. Definition of Family Violence

(a) The employer accepts the definition of family violence as stipulated in the Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic). And the definition of family violence includes physical, sexual, financial, verbal or emotional abuse by a family member.

3. General Measures

(a) Proof of family violence may be required and can be in the form an agreed document issued by the Police Service, a Court, a Doctor, District Nurse, Maternal Health Care Nurse, a Family Violence Support Service or Lawyer.

(b) All personal information concerning family violence will be kept confidential. Information will not be kept on an employee's personnel file without their express written permission.

(c) Understanding the traumatic nature of family violence the employer will support their employee if they have difficulties performing their tasks at work. No adverse action will be taken against an employee if their attendance or performance at work suffers as a result of experiencing family violence.

(d) The employer will identify a contact in human resources, union Shop Steward or go to person who will be trained in family violence and privacy issues, for example, training in family violence risk assessment and risk management. The employer will advertise the name of the contact.

(e) An employee experiencing family violence may raise the issue with their immediate supervisor, their union delegate/shop steward or Human Resources.

(f) Where requested by an employee, the contact person will liaise with the employee’s supervisor on the employee’s behalf, and will make a recommendation on the most appropriate form of support to provide in accordance with sub clauses 4 and 5.

(g) The employer will develop guidelines to supplement this clause and which details the appropriate action to be taken in the event that an employee reports family violence.

4. Leave

(a) An employee experiencing family violence will have access to 20 days per year (non-accumulative) of paid special leave for medical appointments, legal proceedings and other activities related to family violence. This leave will be in addition to existing leave entitlements and may be taken as consecutive or single days or as a fraction of a day and can be taken without prior approval.
(b) An employee who supports a person experiencing family violence may take cares leave to accompany them to court, to hospital, or to mind children.

5. Individual Support

(a) In order to provide support to an employee experiencing family violence and to provide a safe work environment to all employees, the employer will approve any reasonable request from an employee experiencing family violence for:

i) changes to their span of hours or pattern or hours and/or shift patterns;

ii) job redesign or changes to duties;

iii) relocation to suitable employment with the employer;

iv) a change to their telephone number or email address to avoid harassing contact;

v) any other appropriate measure including those available under existing provisions for family friendly and flexible work arrangements.

(b) An employee experiencing family violence will be referred to the appropriate support services/agencies and/or other local resources.

(c) An employee that discloses to Human Resources or their supervisor that they are experiencing family violence will be given a resource pack of information of current support and referral services.