

# Community Living Association

## POLICY AND PROCEDURES

### Trauma, Vicarious Trauma, Burnout and Self-Care

#### **PREAMBLE**

Work in community services and at CLA can be stressful and tiring as well as fulfilling and rewarding. The work at CLA can also involve working with people who have experienced trauma and may be experiencing trauma on a continuing basis. Work at CLA can also at times include involvement in situations where workers (paid staff) and volunteers may feel personally threatened. This happens rarely but can happen.

CLA identifies these potential not as a way of deterring people from working in the organisation but as a reality which people should be prepared for.

We encourage prospective workers, including students at CLA to reflect on their personal history of trauma and whether a) this might prevent them applying for a job at CLA or b) whether it is something they consider in their self-care plans. Prospective workers are encouraged to reflect on how they will plan for an appropriate work/life balance, monitor their sleep and self-care plans; if you are successful in being offered a position at CLA we will support you to reflect on these matters.

#### **POLICY**

CLA recognises the potential for burnout, vicarious trauma and trauma impacts of this work and will work with its workers to maintain appropriate self-care.

#### **PROCEDURE**

- Applicants for work at CLA will receive a copy of this policy and procedure as part of the Application Pack – included in Recruitment Checklist.
- Interview processes will include questions related to potential for exposure to vicarious trauma and trauma.
- This policy will be included in Induction Checklist.
- Supervision will include checking with workers on self-care plans and strategies. This will be written into every supervision agreement. (See Supervision Agreement)
- Workers are encouraged to consult resource material on burnout/vicarious trauma and trauma/self-care and sleep hygiene. (See Related Documents)
- Team Leaders and workers are reminded that if there are concerns about worker safety then safety plans need to be established. (See Section 2.4.12 Outreach Worker Safety Policy)
- It is not an expression of personal failure for workers to experience fatigue, apprehension or distress. It can be a natural reaction to stresses on the job. We encourage workers to be open about these feelings with their supervisor.

## Section 3.30

- Where workers are experiencing negative impact due to the work, team leaders will engage with them around remedial actions. These may include: self-care plans, safety plans, counselling, critical incident responses, disengagement from certain situations.

### ATTACHMENTS

Supervision Agreement

### RELATED DOCUMENTS

- [10 Phrases you hear in resilient families](#)
- [10 Reasons You Should Stop Working Long Hours Today](#)
- [Self-Care Plans and Well Being Scales](#)
- [SMART Selfcare Template](#)
- [Top Up Sheet - Healthy Mind Platter](#)
- [Vicarious Trauma](#)
- [What About You A Workbook For Those Who Work With Others](#)
- [10 Resilience and Bounce Back](#)

# Supervision Agreement

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

## 1. Goals of supervision

Include a detailed list of the knowledge and skills that the supervisee and supervisor would like the supervisee to develop in supervision sessions. This will require regular review and renegotiation as the needs and skills of the supervisee change over time.

a) Supervisor

---

---

---

---

b) Supervisee

---

---

---

---

Expected Outcomes

a) Supervisor

---

---

---

---

b) Supervisee

---

---

---

---

c) Shared objectives

---

---

---

---

**2. Mutual Obligations**

a) Obligations of Supervisor

---

---

---

---

b) Obligations of Supervisee

---

---

---

---

**3. The Structure of Supervision**

a) Frequency: \_\_\_\_\_

b) Duration: \_\_\_\_\_

c) Location: \_\_\_\_\_

d) Resources required:

---

---

e) Preparation prior to each session:

---

---

f) Setting agendas:

---

---

---

g) Availability between sessions:

---

---

---

**4. External Professional Development:**

a) Is the supervisee accessing external professional development?

---

---

---

b) If yes, how will different forms of professional support be integrated?

---

---

**5. Addressing Issues and Concerns**

Utilise this section to establish boundaries for how issues and concerns will be addressed when they arise. Including; conflict between the supervisor/supervisee, conflict between the supervisee and other team members, concerns around management of work and practice issues.

- a) How will the Supervisor and Supervisee address conflict in the supervisory relationship?

---

---

---

---

---

- b) How will team/collegial conflict be managed? What are the expectations of the supervisor and supervisee?

---

---

---

---

---

- c) How will the Supervisor raise their concerns around the Supervisees work- including management of the work, direct practice concerns, performance management issues?

---

---

---

---

---

**6. Managing Stress in the Workplace**

Workplace stress is a significant factor impacting social work practice and self-care and stress management should play an important role in the supervision of social workers. Utilise this section to begin discussion and set boundaries around how to manage stress and set up expectations around self-care at the beginning of the supervision relationship. Self-care will be regularly visited in supervision sessions.

- a) What are the signs your supervisor should look for to show you are stressed or beginning to not manage?

---

---

---

- b) What strategies can your supervisor utilise to effectively discuss workplace stress and self-care with you during supervision?

---

---

---

---

---

- c) What does your current self-care plan look like?

---

---

---

---

---

**7. Limits to Confidentiality**

As per policy. Please indicate that Supervisor and Supervisee have discussed and understand policy and procedure. \_\_\_\_\_

- a) Who will Supervisee’s personal information be disclosed to in the event of performance management concerns or concerns for an employee’s welfare?

---

---

---

**8. Evaluating Supervision**

- a) What is the preferred process for evaluation supervision?

---

---

---

---

- b) When will the supervision agreement be reviewed?

---

---

**9. Supervision Records**

- a) What form will supervision records take?

---

---

b) How will these records be used?

---

---

---

c) Whose responsibility is it to keep records?

---

---

d) Who will have access to them and in what circumstances?

---

---

---

e) Where will records be kept?

---

f) Duration of storage\_\_\_\_\_

g) What records will be used/provided for performance purposes?

---

---

---

**10. Ethical Issues**

a) What do your professional code and organisational policies outline as ethical conduct in and for supervision?

---

---

---

b) In general, which issues raised in supervision will be kept confidential to this relationship?

---

---

---

---

c) Which aspects may be discussed and with whom?

---

---

---

**11. Complaints**

If a Supervisee has a complaint about their Supervisor, they should follow CLA Complaints and Disputes Policy.

Supervisee Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Line Manger Agreement

Line Manager Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Supervision Agreement Casual Associate Community Living Workers

Between \_\_\_\_\_ as Supervisor  
and \_\_\_\_\_ as Supervisee

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Purpose of Supervision

- To promote quality work by staff consistent with objectives of the organisation, practice principles of the service, and ethical behaviour so as to best help achieve quality outcomes for constituents and their community.
- To assist staff learning, education and for the development of professional competence. To assist in the marking of significant learnings and achievements.
- To provide an environment that assists workers to manage difficult issues associated with the work.
- To monitor workloads and ensure that workers have access to adequate resources.

## The Supervision Process

- Supervision will be at least monthly, at least for one hour, and in private for key workers and two monthly for Associate Workers.
- Supervisor and Supervisee will both contribute to agenda formation. Agenda and minutes of supervision will be kept on Supervision record and signed by both parties.
- Supervision recording will be by Supervisee.
- Supervision record will be kept by Supervisee.
- Previous supervision record will be brought to each supervision session and used as a reference tool.
- Supervision should not be interrupted, except by prior arrangement or in case of an emergency.

### **Section 3.30**

- Personal matters that arise in Supervision will be confidential. Unless (a) agreement is reached that they be shared with third parties, (b) they need to be disclosed to third parties for disciplinary complaint purposes.
- Supervision will be reviewed by both parties annually.
- The Supervisor will consult with Supervisee about supplementary supervision (eg. paid external supervision) and approve terms of engagement of external supervisors.

### **Content of Supervision**

- Supervisor and Supervisee set agenda for supervision.
- Supervisor and Supervisee review previous supervision agreements.
- Reflect on learnings from previous actions and chart most steps.
- Consider new agendas.
- Determine learnings and actions around items.
- Link learnings to service and personal practice frameworks.

### **Expectations of Supervision**

The expectation of \_\_\_\_\_ as Supervisor are:

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

The expectations of \_\_\_\_\_ as Supervisee are:

- 
- 
- 
-