

- undertake further validation processes as outlined above, except in exceptional circumstances
- re-attend basic qualifying WEHO training – they are to participate in refresher courses when available.

8.2 Removing WEHOs from the register

WEHOs may be withdrawn from active participation in the WEHO network when:

- workplace behaviour of the WEHO is deemed to contravene the Code of Conduct
- an inappropriate breach of confidentiality by the WEHO is proven
- the WEHO has failed to comply with designated WEHO protocols, including reporting requirements
- when the WEHO fails to participate in WEHO activities without a valid reason requested by the WEHO
- requested by the WEHO's manager/supervisor, e.g. when a WEHO changes roles
- the WEHO resigns from Queensland Health.

When it is intended to remove a WEHO from the register, the district CEO (or delegate) is to notify the WEHO in writing of the proposal. The notification is to:

- include the reasons for the proposed removal from the register
- provide the WEHO with the opportunity to respond to those reasons
- invite the WEHO to submit any other information they may consider relevant.

A WEHO is entitled to lodge a grievance against any decision to remove them from the register, using approved grievance procedures. When the grievance remains unresolved, the WEHO may refer the matter to the Public Service Commissioner (PSC) for a Fair Treatment Appeal.

8.3 Recordkeeping

WEHOs are required to complete the WEHO report when they are contacted by a complainant or alleged respondent for advice.

The statistical and non-identifying data is to be forwarded to the WEHO coordinator for collation of the annual summary of WEHO reports. This is to assist the organisation in identifying and developing strategies for addressing discrimination issues from a health service district/Corporate Office or statewide perspective.

8.4 Role of the WEHO network coordinator or equivalent

The role of the WEHO network coordinator (or equivalent) in the health service district/Corporate Office is to:

- maintain a register of current WEHOs
- coordinate periodic nomination, renomination and nomination validation processes

- coordinate WEHO training including basic qualifying training and ongoing WEHO support activities
- take action to remove WEHOs from the register if required
- collect WEHO reports and collate annual summary of WEHO reports
- analyse the data collated from the WEHO reports and advise the health service district/Corporate Office on trends/issues of interest from the report and recommend remedial strategies if required
- submit the annual summary of WEHO reports by 30 May of each year to People and Culture Corporate outlining any identified trends/issues of statewide interest
- undertake local advertising of the WEHO network and available services throughout the health service district/Corporate Office.

8.5 Resources to be made available to the WEHO

Whenever possible, the following resources are to be made available to the WEHO to support them in performing their role:

- Private meeting area, e.g. existing office or other space that protects the confidentiality of meetings between the WEHO and complainants/ respondents.
- Secure area for the storage of WEHO statistical reports.
- The ability to access computer and intranet facilities to facilitate the access to relevant Queensland Health sites and resources relating to the WEHO duties.
- Other information resources on matters relevant to the role of the WEHO to assist them in providing information.

These resources are not intended to be for the sole use of WEHOs and are ideally to be an existing resource somewhere close to the WEHO's workplace.

8.6 Feedback on WEHO services

Employees (including managers) using the local WEHO network are to be invited to provide non-identifying feedback on the quality, relevance and the accessibility of the WEHO services and support provided. Districts may add further questions to this questionnaire to meet their specific requirements, ensuring confidentiality is maintained.

9 HISTORY

May 2010	Biennial policy review and updated section 8.1.3.
April 2008	Developed as a result of the HR policy consolidation project.

How a WEHO operates

When an employee (either a complainant or a respondent) approaches a WEHO, the WEHO is required to firstly advise the employee of the parameters of the WEHO role.

The WEHO is to inform the employee of their obligations with respect to misconduct. In these situations, the WEHO is legally obliged to report the alleged incident to the HR manager, manager or district CEO. An opening statement such as the following could be used:

“As a WEHO, I will treat any information you provide me in strict confidence, however, I am legally required to report any incident where official misconduct or criminal activity is suspected or alleged to have occurred. With this in mind do you still wish to speak to me about this matter?”

Should the employee subsequently choose not to disclose the details of their issue with the WEHO, the following options would still be available to the employee:

- pursue counselling support with Employee Assistance Service (EAS)
- contact the local HR manager for further advice
- lodge a grievance
- undertake mediation sponsored by the employing facility; and/or
- contact their relevant union representatives.

When the employee elects to continue dealing with the WEHO, the WEHO will:

- act as a source of information, detail the options for resolution available and provide support when requested (the complainant and the respondent **must** be advised by different WEHOs)
- clearly define the limitations of the WEHO role, as a support and source of information about options but not an advocate or counsellor
- actively listen to the employee and show empathy
- provide information and discuss the available informal and formal options
- when requested by the employee, the WEHO may provide follow up support after the initial contact.

Informal options include:

- Dealing with the matter individually.
- Requesting informal action from a manager.
- Taking no action.

Refer to the Guide for the Resolution of Informal Complaints at Local Level.

Formal options include:

- Lodging a grievance (refer to the Grievance Resolution HR Policy E12).
- Lodging a complaint with the Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland (ADCQ).
- Reporting the allegation to Workplace Services, People and Culture Corporate. Workplace Services will undertake an assessment and referral of the allegation to the Crime and Misconduct Commission (CMC) in accordance with the legislative obligations of Queensland Health outlined in section 38 of the *Crime and Misconduct Act 2001*.
- Seeking union support.

The WEHO will recommend that the employee think about the options and their potential impacts when deciding on a course of action.

The WEHO is also responsible for capturing statistical information regarding access to their services (refer to HR forms on QHEPS). This information will be collated annually by the WEHO Coordinator or equivalent (refer to HR forms on QHEPS).

Human Rights Act 2019 Applies
Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work
Code of Practice 2022
applies 1 April 2023

Key skill requirements

The following skills, knowledge and personal attributes are to be demonstrated by any person seeking to become a WEHO.

Skills

- Ability to use effective active and reflective listening skills.
- Sound communication skills both written and verbal.
- Ability to respond with empathy in sensitive and stressful situations.
- Ability to maintain confidentiality.

Knowledge

- Ability to acquire knowledge of relevant legislation and Queensland Health Policy on matters of:
 - Equity, discrimination and harassment.
 - Resolution options available to staff and in particular Queensland Health processes.
- Awareness or ability to acquire awareness of cross cultural issues and sensitivities.

Personal attributes

- Genuine interest in equity and diversity issues.
- Credibility with other members of the workplace/work unit.
- Demonstrated standards of workplace behaviour that reflects the standard of ethical behaviour as described in the Queensland Health Code of Conduct.