**December 2018 draft for review and branding – this doc needs to be made relevant for each NH.**

Policy: Employee Assistance Program

Background and Overview

XXXX Neighbourhood House, as a part of its Mission, places a very high priority on the overall quality of working-life balance for staff (includes volunteers/Committee of Management members)

An important strategy to assist in this area is the provision of an Employee Assistance Program (EAP), which provides access to a confidential counselling service.

An EAP provides a short-term intervention strategy, and is designed to give staff the opportunity to promptly address issues of immediate concern that impact on their work. Staff who require longer-term assistance will need to consider making private arrangements, which can be either with the assistance of the EAP counsellor, or with some other provider.

2. Policy Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for the effective operation of an EAP at XXXX Neighbourhood House, and to give guidance to staff/volunteers when the need to access the Program arises.

The XXXX Neighbourhood House Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provides staff with access to the following confidential services:

* external, face to face, or telephone confidential counselling for personal or work related issues;
* confidential counselling assistance to staff and members of their immediate family members; and/or,
* support and advice for managers and nominated supervisors in dealing with issues relating to their roles.

The aim of the EAP is early identification and provision of assistance to help resolve either work-related or personal issues. Matters that may be addressed through the EAP include, but are not limited to, dealing with work or life change; relationship issues; personal trauma; family difficulties; financial concerns; health matters; alcohol or substance abuse; gambling or other addictions; coping or dealing with grief and/or loss. The EAP provided services are therefore available to assist staff who are seeking to address such personal or work related issues.

3. Policy Provisions

**3.1 Definitions**

For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions shall apply:

**“Calendar Year”** means the period from 1 January to 31 December.

**“Counsellor”** refers to the individual counsellor/psychologist who has been assigned by the Service Provider to provide a staff member with confidential services related to the EAP.

**“EAP”** means Employee Assistance Program.

**“Immediate Family”** means a staff member’s:
a. spouse (married or de facto), and/or
b. child or adult child (including adopted child, step child, ward or ex nuptial child).

**“Service Providers”** refers to the organisation that has been engaged by the XXXX Neighbourhood House for the purpose of providing confidential counselling services to individual staff members, through the EAP.

**“Staff Member”** refers to a person employed by the XXXX Neighbourhood House as a continuing or fixed-term staff member on a full-time or part-time basis.

**“Volunteer/Committee of Management Member”** refers to all current Committee of Management members and individuals currently volunteering at XXXX Neighbourhood House.

**3.2 Access to Services**

A staff member may access the EAP provider directly and make an appointment when the need arises. The Chairperson may, in consultation with a staff member, refer the staff member to the EAP provider.

A staff member may normally access a total of 3 one-hour sessions per calendar year, paid for by the XXXX Neighbourhood House. Should additional sessions be required, the provider may refer the staff member to an appropriate external agency, or arrange for the staff member to continue with the provider in a private capacity at the staff member’s expense.

In exceptional cases, and on request of the staff member and/or on the recommendation of the counsellor, the CHAIRPERSON may approve up to three additional visits.

**3.3 Attendance at Sessions**

A staff member who attends the service provider during working hours shall be regarded as being on duty, provided that the session is funded by the XXXX Neighbourhood House. The staff member must advise the CHAIRPERSON if they are accessing the EAP during working hours.

4. Confidentiality and Privacy

All consultations will be conducted in complete confidence between the staff member and the EAP counsellor. XXXX Neighbourhood House may obtain statistical data on the broad categories and frequency of access and use of the EAP provider to ensure that the funding support to the service is adequately maintained. Such data will not include names of persons using the EAP services.

5. Grievances

Any grievance arising from the application of this policy at the XXXX Neighbourhood House shall be managed using the grievance management process

6. Policy Review

The XXXX Neighbourhood House may make changes to this policy and procedures from time to time to improve the effectiveness of its operation.