

Environmental Health and Waste Management Policy

Template

Purpose:

To maintain a clean, safe, and sustainable environment within the aged care facility through effective management of environmental health hazards, waste segregation, handling, storage, transportation, and disposal in compliance with the Aged Care Quality Standards and environmental legislation.

Scope:

Applies to all staff, contractors, volunteers, and service providers engaged in environmental safety, cleaning, maintenance, and waste management activities within the organisation.

Policy Statement:

The organisation will:

- Provide a healthy, hygienic, and environmentally sustainable living and working environment.
- Manage all types of waste, including clinical, domestic, sharps, chemical, and recyclable materials safely and effectively.
- Comply with state, territory, and local environmental and waste disposal regulations.
- Promote sustainability through minimisation, recycling, and responsible resource use.
- Prevent and control environmental risks that may affect resident health and the wider community.

Legislative Context:

- Aged Care Act 1997 (Cth)
- Aged Care Quality Standards (Standard 4 – The Environment; Standard 5 – Clinical Care)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth)

- Environment Protection Acts (State/Territory-specific)
- Public Health Acts
- Dangerous Goods and Waste Management Regulations

Definitions:

- **Waste:** Materials discarded from care, cleaning, or operational activities, including hazardous and non-hazardous waste.
- **Clinical Waste:** Waste generated from clinical procedures that may pose infection risks.
- **Sharps Waste:** Needles, syringes, blades, or instruments capable of cutting or piercing.
- **Environmental Health:** Practices aimed at preventing environmental factors that could adversely affect human health.

Key Principles:

1. Maintain a clean, safe environment for residents, staff, and visitors.
2. Segregate waste at the point of generation using colour-coded systems.
3. Ensure safe storage, transportation, and disposal of hazardous materials.
4. Promote recycling, energy efficiency, and resource conservation.
5. Prevent pollution and environmental contamination.
6. Provide regular staff training and audits on environmental and waste management practices.

Responsibilities:

- **Approved Provider / Board:** Oversee policy implementation and compliance with legislation.
- **Facility Manager:** Ensure systems for waste segregation, removal, and recycling are in place and monitored.
- **Environmental Services Manager:** Conduct inspections, supervise waste contractors, and maintain documentation.
- **All Staff:** Follow waste segregation protocols and report hazards or breaches immediately.

- **Contractors:** Comply with facility procedures and applicable environmental health regulations.

Procedures:

1. Segregate waste into appropriate containers (general, recyclable, clinical, sharps, chemical).
2. Label hazardous waste clearly and store in designated secured areas until collection.
3. Use leak-proof, puncture-resistant containers for sharps disposal.
4. Arrange regular waste collection by licensed contractors.
5. Maintain cleaning and sanitation standards to prevent pest infestations and contamination.
6. Ensure ventilation and odour control in waste storage areas.
7. Record waste collection volumes and disposal certificates.
8. Conduct quarterly environmental and waste management audits.

Infection Risk and Waste Handling:

- Staff must wear appropriate PPE when handling waste.
- Immediately clean spills using approved disinfectants and report as an environmental hazard.
- Dispose of infectious or contaminated waste following infection control protocols.

Sustainability Initiatives:

- Implement recycling programs (paper, plastic, glass, metals).
- Use environmentally friendly cleaning products.
- Monitor energy and water use to identify reduction opportunities.
- Partner with local councils on community sustainability projects.

Monitoring and Review:

- Environmental health inspections conducted quarterly.
- Waste contractor performance reviewed biannually.

- Annual review of policy and practices to ensure compliance with regulatory updates.
- Continuous improvement through incident trend analysis and audit findings.

Associated Policies:

- Infection Prevention and Control Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Work Health and Safety Policy
- Emergency and Disaster Management Policy
- Continuous Quality Improvement Policy

Evidence and Records:

- Waste collection logs and certificates of disposal
- Contractor licenses and compliance documentation
- Audit and inspection reports
- Staff training attendance records
- Environmental health risk assessments

Policy Control:

Version	Effective Date	Review Date	Policy Owner	Approved By	Status
1.0	20 January 2026	20 January 2027	Facilities and Compliance Manager	Approved Provider Board	Draft

Compliance Summary:

Entity Type	Entity Name	Completion Rate	Status
Policy	Environmental Health and Waste Management Policy	100%	FULLY COMPLIANT (100%)