FV-26 | Knife Use Policy

APPROVED BY THE COMMITTEE
Reviewed November 2026

Scope

All staff, volunteers and participants at Fishcare clinics.

Purpose and general use

Prevent cuts, punctures and unauthorised access to knives, scissors and sharp tools. Use a cutting tool only when necessary and select the least hazardous suitable tool. Bait scissors are preferred to a knife where they safely perform the task. This policy does not authorise weapon possession or use inconsistent with Victorian law.

Authorised users and work area

Children and participants must not use cutting implements at Fishcare clinics. All cutting is performed by a trained facilitator or designated competent adult volunteer. Brief the team and use a stable, well-lit preparation area separated from participant movement and casting. Keep hands and bystanders clear, cut away from the body where safe and use task-appropriate protection identified by the assessment.

Do not leave a sharp tool unattended or pass it with an exposed blade. Use the tool only for its intended purpose and do not attempt cutting in a moving vehicle, on an unstable edge or while distracted. Do not include knife handling in a student work experience or participant demonstration without a separately approved policy change; this policy retains the clinic prohibition.

Storage, transport and hygiene

Keep blades sheathed or in a safety cover when not in active use. Store in a secured, inaccessible container in the trailer or vehicle, out of sight and reach of children; concealment alone is not a sufficient access control. Return filleting knives immediately after use. Count tools before and after a session and secure scissors as well as knives. Transport only for a lawful purpose and check any additional possession restrictions for the tool and location.

Clean and maintain tools safely, separate bait preparation from food and use hand hygiene. Remove damaged or unsuitable tools from service and replace them. Consider non-cutting alternatives such as pre-cut bait and suitable line cutters operated by the designated adult.

Injuries and review

Stop work, secure the tool and obtain first aid; call 000 for serious injury. Report all injuries, missing tools, unsafe access and near misses promptly. Preserve a

notifiable incident site as legally required without delaying aid. Review training, tool choice, storage and supervision before resuming. Handle non-compliance under fair procedures and do not use discipline in place of correcting an unsafe system.

References and review

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Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic): incident notification
https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/notifiable-incidents-under-occupational-health-and-safety-act-2004

Victorian Child Safe Standards; Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
https://www.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards