

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

A Health and Safety Policy is the basis to your health and safety procedures. It is your statement of intent about health and safety, and clarifies procedures and areas of responsibility

Health & Safety Act 1974

Section 3 imposes a duty of care on the organisation not to harm or damage the health of volunteers through their involvement in the activities of the organisation.

An organisation can be legally liable if it does not exercise its duty of care for all its volunteers, employees, clients and members of the public. Every individual has a duty of care.

A volunteer should not in the course of their voluntary work be exposed to unnecessary risk. Think about taking all reasonable steps to **minimise risk**.

Have you considered?

- ❑ **Reviewing** all your policies and procedures for volunteers to ensure volunteers are treated with equal consideration in health and safety
- ❑ Reviewing your **recruitment and selection** procedures to ensure that a volunteer is matched with the appropriate tasks.
- ❑ Reviewing your **support and supervision** procedures to ensure that a volunteer is able to talk openly about their volunteering experience
- ❑ Reviewing your **training and development** procedures to ensure that volunteers and staff have the necessary skills and information to undertake their voluntary work safely
- ❑ Volunteer tasks and boundaries need to be clearly defined. This will be helpful for volunteers, staff and clients.
- ❑ Assessing each volunteer job and issuing appropriate **special equipment and protective clothing**
- ❑ Ensuring that volunteers are not placed in situations they are unable to cope with
- ❑ Providing adequate training and guidance during your induction on your health and safety procedures, enabling volunteers to report accidents and dangerous practice early thus promoting thought and care.

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This is not a full account of your duties but it is intended to prompt thought. Organisations are advised to seek advice about their own needs.

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/index.htm>

Risk Assessments are a useful tool in health and safety. A risk assessment is a structured process through which the organisation, management processes, employee and volunteer tasks are examined to **identify and control** potential hazards.

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/index.htm>

Risk Assessment Process

- ❑ Inspect the workplace, work processes and volunteer jobs to identify all the hazards
- ❑ Consult staff and volunteers
- ❑ Will the hazard cause harm, and who or what will be harmed?
- ❑ Assess the risk. Are existing measures sufficient to control the risk?
- ❑ Take action to control unacceptable risks
- ❑ Record and date the findings and determine review date.
- ❑ Review regularly

Organisations using other people's premises, carrying out home visits, taking clients on trips, offering a driver/escort service will find it harder to carry out a risk assessment.

Best Practice when working with another organisation, is to check that their Health and Safety Policy and Procedures are to a standard you are happy with.

Remember:

Review your policies and procedures for volunteers and treat volunteers with equal consideration in health and safety