

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

**HEALTH AND SAFETY STEERING GROUP
FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSE COMMITTEE
OPERATIONAL INVOLVMENT: PAUL ROBSON
NEXT REVIEW: JUNE 2020**

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

- 1.1 We are committed to ensuring the health and safety of our staff and anyone affected by our business activities and to providing a safe environment for all those attending our premises through regular assessments of risks in the workplace.
- 1.2 In particular we are committed to maintaining safe and healthy working conditions through control of the health and safety risks arising from our work activities, provision and maintenance of safe equipment, ensuring the safe handling and use of substances, consulting with our staff and providing appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision and taking steps to prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health.

What is covered by this policy?

- 1.3 In accordance with our health and safety duties, we are responsible for:
- (a) Assessing risks to health and safety and identifying ways to overcome them.
 - (b) Providing and maintaining a healthy and safe place to work and a safe means of entering and leaving our premises, including emergency procedures for use when needed.
 - (c) Providing information, instruction, training and supervision in safe working methods and procedures as well as working areas and equipment that are safe and without risks to health.
 - (d) Ensuring that equipment has all necessary safety devices installed, that equipment is properly maintained and that appropriate protective clothing is provided.
 - (e) Promoting co-operation between members of staff to ensure safe and healthy conditions and systems of work by discussion and effective joint consultation.
 - (f) Regularly monitoring and reviewing the management of health and safety at work, making any necessary changes and bringing those to the attention of all staff.
- 1.4 All staff must also recognise that everyone shares responsibility for achieving healthy and safe working conditions. You must consider the health and safety implications of your acts and/or omissions and take reasonable care for your health and safety and that of others.
- 1.5 Any health and safety concerns should be reported to your manager.

Standards of workplace behaviour

- 1.6 You must co-operate with the supervisors and managers on health and safety matters and comply with any health and safety instructions.

- 1.7 You must take reasonable care of your own health and safety and that of others by observing safety rules applicable to you and following instructions for the use of equipment (including safety equipment and protective clothing).
- 1.8 Any health and safety concern, however trivial it might seem, including any potential risk, hazard or malfunction of equipment, must be reported to your manager.
- 1.9 You must co-operate in the investigation of any accident or incident that has led, or which we consider might have led, to injury.
- 1.10 Failure to comply with health and safety rules and instructions or with the requirements of this policy may be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

Information and consultation

- 1.11 We are committed to providing information, instruction and supervision on health and safety matters for all staff as well as consulting with them regarding arrangements for health and safety management.

Equipment

- 1.12 All staff must use equipment in accordance with operating instructions. Any fault with, damage to or concern about any equipment or its use must immediately be reported to your manager.
- 1.13 Employees must ensure that health and safety equipment is not interfered with and that any damage is immediately reported.
- 1.14 No member of staff should attempt to repair equipment unless trained and designated to do so. Failure to report damage to or a fault with equipment or failure to use it as directed may result in action under our Disciplinary Procedure.

Accidents and first aid

- 1.15 Any accident at work involving personal injury should be reported to your manager so that details can be recorded in the Accident Book. All staff must cooperate with any resulting investigation.
- 1.16 Details of first aid facilities and trained first aiders are available from your manager.
- 1.17 If you suffer an accident at work you (or someone on your behalf) must report that fact to your manager as soon as possible. All accidents should be reported, however trivial. The accident will be recorded in our Accident Book.

National health alerts

- 1.18 In the event of an epidemic or pandemic alert we will organise our business operations and provide advice on steps to be taken by staff, in accordance with

official guidance, to reduce the risk of infection at work as far as possible. Any questions should be referred to your manager.

- 1.19 It is important for the health and safety of all our staff that you comply with instructions issued in these circumstances. Failure to do so will be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

Emergency evacuation and fire precautions

- 1.20 You should familiarise yourself with the instructions about what to do in the event of fire which are available from your manager. You should also know where the fire extinguishers are, ensure that you are aware of your nearest fire exit and alternative ways of leaving the building in an emergency.
- 1.21 Fire wardens are responsible for the effective evacuation of designated areas. In the event of a suspected fire or fire alarm you must follow their instructions.
- 1.22 Regular fire drills will be held to ensure that our fire procedures are effective and to ensure you are familiar with them. These drills are important and must be taken seriously.
- 1.23 You should notify your manager as soon as possible if there is anything (for example, impaired mobility) that might impede your evacuation in the event of a fire.
- 1.24 If you discover a fire you should not attempt to tackle it unless you have been trained or feel competent to do so. You should operate the nearest fire alarm and, if you have sufficient time, notify your manager and report the location of the fire.
- 1.25 On hearing the fire alarm you should remain calm and walking quickly, not running, evacuate the building immediately following the instructions of the fire wardens. Do not stop to collect personal possessions, do not use any lifts, and do not re-enter the building until you are told that it is safe to do so.

Risk assessments and manual handling

- 1.26 General workplace risk assessments are carried out when required or as reasonably requested by members of staff or management. Managers are responsible for ensuring that any necessary risk assessments are undertaken and that recommended changes to the workplace and working practices are implemented.
- 1.27 Information on the regulation of manual handling can be obtained from your manager.

2. NO-SMOKING POLICY

- 2.1 We are committed to protecting your health, safety and welfare and that of all those who work for us by providing a safe place of work and protecting all workers, service users, customers and visitors from exposure to smoke.

- 2.2 All of our workplaces (including our vehicles) are smoke-free and all staff and visitors have a right to a smoke-free environment.
- 2.3 This no-smoking policy complies with the Health Act 2006 and associated regulations. We are committed to a programme of action to make this policy effective and to bring it to the attention of all staff.
- 2.4 This policy covers all employees, officers, consultants, contractors, interns, casual workers and agency workers. Anyone visiting our premises or using our vehicles must comply with the smoking restrictions set out in this policy.
- 2.5 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

Scope and implementation of the policy

- 2.6 Smoking is banned in any enclosed or substantially enclosed premises within our workplace. The ban applies to anything that can be smoked and includes, but is not limited to, cigarettes, electronic cigarettes, pipes (including water pipes such as shisha and hookah pipes), cigars and herbal cigarettes.
- 2.7 No-smoking signs are displayed at the entrances to enclosed or substantially enclosed premises at our workplace.
- 2.8 Staff may only smoke outside in designated areas during breaks. When smoking outside, staff should ensure that they dispose of cigarette butts and other litter appropriately.
- 2.9 Staff using our vehicles, whether as a driver or passenger, must ensure the vehicles remain smoke-free. Any of our vehicles that are used primarily for private purposes are excluded from the smoking ban. Any questions concerning these provisions should be directed to your manager.
- 2.10 We are committed to making this policy effective and to promoting a healthy working environment. Workers who experience particular difficulty complying with this policy should discuss their situation with their manager.

Breaches of the policy

- 2.11 Breaches of this policy will be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure and, in serious cases, may be treated as gross misconduct leading to summary dismissal.
- 2.12 Smoking in smoke-free premises or vehicles is also a criminal offence and may result in a fixed penalty fine and/or prosecution.

3. STRESS POLICY

- 3.1 We are committed to protecting your health, safety and well-being and that of all those who work for us. We will endeavour to maintain a working environment in which everyone treats one another with dignity and respect and is able to co-operate with and trust their colleagues.

- 3.2 We recognise that, whatever its source, stress is a health and safety issue in the workplace. We acknowledge the importance of a supportive environment and working culture and of identifying and reducing workplace stressors.
- 3.3 We are committed to a programme of action to make this policy effective and to bring it to everyone's attention. However, this policy can only be effective if everyone co-operates to achieve its aims.

What is stress?

- 3.4 Stress is the adverse reaction experienced in response to excessive pressures or demands. Stress is not an illness but, sustained over a period of time, it can lead to mental and/or physical illness.
- 3.5 There is an important distinction between working under pressure and experiencing stress. Certain levels of pressure are acceptable and normal in every job. They can improve performance, enable individuals to meet their full potential and provide a sense of achievement and job satisfaction. However, when pressure becomes excessive it produces stress.
- 3.6 Pressures outside the workplace, whether the result of unexpected or traumatic events such as accidents, illness, bereavement, family breakdown or financial worries, can result in stress. They can also compound normal workplace pressures.
- 3.7 We recognise that what triggers stress and the capacity to deal with stress varies from person to person. Individuals react to similar situations in different ways.

Legal obligations

- 3.8 We have a legal duty to take reasonable care to ensure that your health is not put at risk by excessive pressures or demands arising from the way work is organised.
- 3.9 This policy takes account of our obligations under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Employment Rights Act 1996, Protection from Harassment Act 1997, Working Time Regulations 1998 and Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Scope and purpose of the policy

- 3.10 We are committed to identifying, tackling and preventing the causes of work-related stress and to providing appropriate support and consideration to staff suffering from stress, on a confidential basis where appropriate.
- 3.11 We are committed to:
- (a) Promoting a culture of open communication, participation and encouragement. Through training, effective planning and allocation of workloads and ensuring feedback is provided on performance, we want staff to develop their skills and confidence and to feel able to raise any concerns they have about their work or working environment.

- (b) Using staff development, staff support systems and policies reflecting current good practice to help staff understand and recognise the causes of stress and to address work-related stress and the impact of external stressors at work.
- (c) Providing a workplace free from harassment, bullying and victimisation.
- (d) Addressing violence, aggression and other forms of inappropriate behaviour through disciplinary action.
- (e) Ensuring risk assessments include or specifically address workplace stress.
- (f) Maintaining an appraisal process to ensure the suitability of workloads, supported by a capability procedure.
- (g) Facilitating requests for flexible working where reasonably practicable.
- (h) Following comprehensive change management procedures.
- (i) Providing support, for staff affected by or absent by reason of stress.

Personnel responsible for implementation of the policy

- 3.12 Recognition of stress as a genuine problem requires management support and action. Those working at management and supervisory level have a specific responsibility to:
- (a) Participate in the culture of open communication and encouragement, ensure that staff they manage receive training, effectively plan and allocate workloads and provide feedback on performance.
 - (b) Monitor workloads and reallocate work where necessary.
 - (c) Ensure that staff they manage understand the standards of behaviour expected of them and others and act on behaviour that falls below those standards.
- 3.13 To facilitate this process, managers and supervisors are encouraged to seek advice on how to recognise stress in the staff they manage.
- 3.14 However, all members of staff are responsible for the success of this policy and must ensure that they:
- (a) Familiarise themselves with the policy and act in accordance with its aims and objectives.
 - (b) Plan and organise their work to meet personal and organisational objectives.
 - (c) Speak to their manager if they experience or are aware of a situation that may lead to a stress problem.
 - (d) Co-operate with support, advice and guidance they may be offered by their manager.
- 3.15 Managers should provide appropriate support to staff suffering from stress.

Resolving cases of stress at work

- 3.16 If you believe you are suffering from stress you should discuss this with your manager in the first instance.
- 3.17 Once an issue affecting your health comes to the attention of your manager, steps will be taken to address that issue. Those steps may include any of the following:
- (a) A workload review, reallocation of work, monitoring of future workload or possible redeployment. Our Capability Procedure may be applied.
 - (b) Where appropriate, investigation under our Disciplinary and/or Grievance Procedures.
 - (c) Referral for medical advice or a medical report to be provided by our medical advisers or the GP (and any medical specialist) treating the member of staff concerned.
 - (d) If you are on sickness absence, discussion of an appropriate return to work programme. Our Sickness Absence Policy may be applied.

Absence due to stress

- 3.18 If you are absent due to stress you should follow the sickness absence reporting procedure contained in your contract.
- 3.19 Our Capability Procedure will apply.

Confidentiality

- 3.20 Confidentiality is an important part of this policy. Every member of staff is responsible for observing the high level of confidentiality that is required, whether they are suffering from stress, supporting a colleague who is suffering from stress or because they are otherwise involved in the operation of a policy or procedure dealing with stress.
- 3.21 Breach of confidentiality may give rise to disciplinary action.
- 3.22 However, there are occasions when matters reported by a member of staff suffering from stress may have to be put to third parties. For example, where duties need to be reallocated within a team or where, as the result of reported bullying or misconduct, a disciplinary investigation and/or proceedings take place. If this is the case, matters will be discussed with the member of staff concerned before any action is taken.

Protection for those reporting stress or assisting with an investigation

- 3.23 Staff who report that they are suffering from stress, who support a colleague in making such a report or who participate in any investigation connected with this policy in good faith will be protected from any form of intimidation or victimisation.
- 3.24 Any member of staff who considers that they have been subjected to any such intimidation or victimisation should seek support from their manager. They may alternatively or additionally raise a complaint in accordance with our Grievance Procedure.
- 3.25 Any member of staff who is, after investigation, found to have acted in bad faith or to have provided false information will be subject to action under our Disciplinary Procedure.