



RUSSELL-COOKE | SOLICITORS

BASIC HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

In the following pages is an example of a basic health and safety policy.

The text in the square brackets [] provide instructions on how to complete any gaps in the policy. They should be removed from the final policy.

Although the notes at the bottom of each page are **not** intended to be included in any policy that you will issue to staff members, you may find some details are useful to keep in the final version, to explain the relevance of some paragraphs.

Health and safety policy statement

1. This policy will say how [insert name of your organisation] will manage its health and safety responsibilities.

2. We will manage health and safety by:
 - 2.1 Controlling the health and safety risks at work.
 - 2.2 Involving employees on health and safety issues that affect them.
 - 2.3 Making sure that where employees work, and any equipment they use, is safe.
 - 2.4 Making sure that dangerous substances are stored and used safely.
 - 2.5 Making sure employees, especially new employees, have relevant information and training on health and safety.
 - 2.6 Making sure employees can do their jobs, and are properly trained.
 - 2.7 Trying to stop accidents and work-related health problems.
 - 2.8 Regularly checking that working conditions are safe and healthy.
 - 2.9 Regularly reviewing this policy and making changes if necessary.

Signed (on behalf of the employer):

_____ **Date** _____

Chair of Management Committee/Board of Trustees

Review Date: _____

Notes

By law (under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974) if you have 5 or more employees, you must have a written health and safety policy, make it available for the staff to look at and to review it regularly.

You must also make sure that you have appropriate insurance cover including Employer's Liability Insurance (if you have any paid employees) and Public Liability Insurance.

Responsibility for health and safety

3. Overall responsibility for health and safety belongs to
[Insert either Management Committee or Board of Trustees]
4. Daily responsibility for managing this policy is given to
[Chief Executive or Director's name]
5. [optional] The following people have responsibilities for health and safety:

Name:	Responsibility:
	<p><i>e.g.1) Emergency Evacuation – in case of fire or other emergency, your premises may need to be evacuated. A fire risk assessment should be undertaken and someone should implement emergency procedures, preferably suitably trained. Who will undertake this?</i></p>
	<p><i>e.g.2) H&S induction – all new staff members should receive training and information about applying this policy. Who will undertake this?</i></p>
	<p><i>e.g.3) H&S risk assessment – risk assessments will need to be recorded and whoever undertakes them, should ideally be trained. Who will carry out the risk assessments?</i></p>
	<p><i>e.g.4) Employee representative – Very small organisations may consult employees directly. Alternatively, the employers might consult a health and safety representative, chosen by the employees or selected by a trade union.</i></p>
	<p><i>e.g.5) First Aider – as a minimum, organisations must have a suitably stocked first-aid box, information for staff about the first-aid arrangements and an</i></p>

	<i>appointed person to take charge of these arrangements. Who is your first-aider?</i>
	<i>e.g.6) Accident recording, investigating and reporting – If your organisation has more than 10 employees, you must keep an accident book by law. Keeping records will help identify patterns of accidents and injuries. Who will record accidents?</i>

[Insert the names of relevant people above]

6. Employees are responsible for:

- 6.1 Co-operating with people who are responsible for health and safety.
- 6.2 Using safety equipment when it is necessary.
- 6.3 Taking care of their own health and safety.
- 6.4 Reporting health and safety concerns to the right person as written in this policy.

Notes

Item 3 – The name of the employer must be included here.

Item 4 – If the employer is not involved in the day-to-day running of the organisation, the role can be delegated to a senior manager. Responsibility still ultimately lies with the employer.

Item 5 – Health and safety functions can be delegated to different people, but you must make sure they are properly trained to carry out the role. Responsibilities should be set out clearly and known across the organisation.

Item 6 – employees should be aware of their responsibilities too.

Controlling the health and safety risks at work

7. [Name of responsible person] will do regular health and safety risk assessments.
8. The results of the risk assessment will be given to [Name of responsible person] and will be included with this policy.
9. [Name of responsible person] should agree any action needed to manage the risks that have been found.
10. [Name of responsible person] will carry out the agreed action points.
11. [Name of responsible person] will check that the actions taken have reduced the risks.
12. Assessments will be carried out every [e.g. 6 months, 12 months], or when there is a change to the way we work.

Notes

To check that your health and safety policy is working you need to do regular risk assessments

You should keep a record of your findings and take action to reduce or remove the risks you have identified.

An example template follows. There is also a template on the Health and Safety Executive website at www.hse.gov.uk/risk/risk-assessment-and-policy-template.doc

Risk Assessments

A risk assessment is, as the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) describe: "a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people.... the aim is to make sure that no one gets hurt or becomes ill".

Step One – Identify the hazards

First walk around the workplace identifying anything that could be potentially hazardous - **write everything down - make a list.** Include *everything* you can think of: not just things that are currently obviously dangerous, but anything with a *potential* risk. Where possible two people will undertake the risk assessment separately and will compare lists afterwards, in case either has missed anything out.

Consider **invisible** hazards – e.g. stress (often related to working long hours, under pressure, to tight deadlines) or physical assault. Invisible hazards often include fumes - for example, photocopiers and laser printers emit ozone when in use.

Finally consider whether things that might not normally be hazardous might be in relation to specific people – e.g. pregnant women, disabled workers.

Step Two – identify who is at risk

Once you have identified and listed all the hazards, you need to (i) identify what the specific risk is, and (ii) who is particularly at risk.

Some people will be more at risk from particular hazards than others - for example a computer user will be more at risk of suffering RSI (Repetitive Strain Injury - also known as WRULDs - Work Related Upper Limb Disorders), a cleaner might have specific risks related to the chemical cleaning agents being used, etc. And there will be those particularly at risk in some circumstances for example because they may be working alone, or they may have a disability. **List those potentially at risk.**

Step Three – Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions

Think about what you can do to remove the risk. Compare what you currently do with what is accepted as good practice. (It may be necessary to seek advice from experts). The main purpose of doing a risk assessment is to be aware of the risks, so that you can take action to eliminate or at least reduce the risks. E.g. if an electrical wire is exposed, you could replace it, or cover it with insulating tape. E.g. if your cleaner is using potentially dangerous chemical agents - change the cleaning product - use something water-based. **Write down the actions currently taken and those actions you propose to be taken, and write down who will take the action, by when.**

Step Four – Record your findings

If you employ five people or more, the law requires you to record your findings. Ensure the written record of your findings is made available to staff, and that they co-operate with the carrying out of the recommendations made as a result of the assessment. This might involve a change in working practices, a change in machinery or equipment, and **appropriate training** being undertaken.

Step Five

Review your assessment. Few workplaces remain the same. You **must** review your assessment when there are major changes in the workplace, such as the introduction of new machinery, or new ways of working - but you must carry out regular reviews anyway - possibly annually. If your original assessment was properly recorded the review should be a relatively simple job but be aware of changing working practices.

Risk Assessment Form (to be completed)

<p>What are the hazards?</p> <p>Spot hazards by walking around the workplace, talking to workers, checking machines and their instructions</p>	<p>Who might be harmed, and how?</p> <p>Remember:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some workers have specific needs • People who are not present when the assessment is taking place • Members of the public 	<p>What are you already doing?</p> <p>List precautions already in place</p>	<p>List actions to be taken</p> <p>Note Who will take the action, by what date</p>

Involving employees

13. The employee health and safety representative is [Name of responsible person]
14. Employees will be involved in health and safety through [e.g. representatives, staff meeting, health & safety working group]
15. Any decisions made at Management Committee/Board meetings concerning health and safety will always be recorded and made available to staff.

Notes

Employers must consult employees about health and safety. This can be done through union representatives or an elected health and safety representative.

Consultation can happen by having a regular item on the staff meeting agenda, or through a health and safety working group.

Making sure that the workplace and equipment are safe

16. [Name of responsible person] will be responsible for making sure that there is a maintenance procedure for the workplace and any equipment being used.
17. [Name of responsible person] will be responsible for checking to see if any equipment being used for work, or parts of the workplace, need maintenance.
18. [Name of responsible person] will be responsible for making sure that all the necessary maintenance is done.
19. Any problems with work equipment or the workplace should be reported to [Name of responsible person].
20. Before buying any equipment or changing where people work, [Name of responsible person] will check that health and safety standards are met.

Notes

You should identify any equipment that needs maintenance and make sure maintenance is done.

When buying second hand equipment you should check that it is safe, e.g. public address systems, vehicles.

If you are hiring a venue, make sure it is appropriate for what you want to do and that the venue owners know what you will be using it for.

Using and storing dangerous substances

21. [Name of responsible person] will check if any substances being used at work need COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) assessment.
22. [Name of responsible person] will do the COSHH assessments.
23. [Name of responsible person] will make sure that any action points from the COSHH assessments are implemented.
24. [Name of responsible person] will make sure all employees are told about the COSHH assessments.
25. [Name of responsible person] will check how to use new substances safely before they are bought.
26. COSHH assessments will be reviewed every [e.g. 6 months, 12months], or when there is a change to the way we work.

Notes

Under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 1994, if hazardous substances are used at the workplace, the employer must assess the risks to health.

This refers to any substance that can be dangerous for people's health.

This could be things you are using, e.g. bleach, paints, as well as things like fumes or dust or gas that are produced when you work.

Your assessment should consider the possible ill-effects that you should then do something about, perhaps by warning people, using hazard signs, training users, using protective equipment, improving ventilation and using safer alternatives.

Examples of COSHH risk assessments can be found on the Health and Safety Executive website at www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/riskassess/ including for an office.

Health and safety information and support

27. The Health and Safety Law poster is displayed [e.g. next to the kitchen, by the entrance].
28. The current employers' liability insurance certificate is displayed [e.g. next to the kitchen, by the entrance].
29. Health and safety advice is available from [Name of responsible person].
30. People using any equipment for the first time will be supervised by [Name of responsible person].
31. [Name of responsible person] is responsible for making sure that employees working away from the workplace are given relevant health and safety information.

Notes

You are required to display a poster, or hand out a leaflet, that tells employees about health and safety (available from the Health and Safety Executive website at www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/lawposter.htm .

You are also required to display a copy of the current certificate from your insurance company showing that you have employers' liability insurance, or make it available electronically and tell all employees where it can be viewed.

Employees and workers should be able to get good health and safety advice either from inside or outside the organisation.

If you are working with young workers or trainees then you need to do a special risk assessment for them because they may not have enough experience.

If any staff members are pregnant you must carry out a risk assessment to identify any risk to their health or to that of their child. If there is a risk you must remove it or make alternative arrangements.

If your employees are sent by you to another workplace, you need to make sure that it is a safe place to send them.

Training and induction

32. General health and safety induction training will be provided for all employees by [Name of responsible person].
33. Health and safety training for the particular job will be provided by [Name of responsible person].
34. Jobs that need special health and safety training are [e.g. manual handling, food preparation].
35. Training and induction records are kept by [Name of responsible person].
36. Any training that is needed will be arranged by [Name of responsible person].

Notes

All employees should be given a health and safety induction when they start work covering such things as first aid and fire safety.

You should record all health and safety training to show you are doing it.

Accidents and work related health problems

37. The first aid box is kept [e.g. at reception, by the kitchen].
38. The appointed person/first aider is [Name of responsible person].
39. All accidents and work-related health problems should be recorded in the accident book by [Name of responsible person].
40. [Name of responsible person] is responsible for reporting accidents and diseases to the Health and Safety Executive.

Notes

Under the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981, all employers have a duty to provide first aid facilities and equipment that is adequate and appropriate for their organisation.

You should have a first aid box, clearly visible, accessible and fully maintained. All workplaces should have at least one appointed person to organise a first aid response such as phoning for an ambulance. No-one should carry out first aid unless they are trained to do so.

Although there is no statutory requirement to have trained first aiders, the Health and Safety Executive provides guidance on the recommended number, based on the number of employees and the nature of work. For example, if the risks are low (e.g. in an office environment), one first aider may deal with up to 50 employees.

Recording all accidents, even small ones, and near misses can show up if there is a health and safety problem in a particular area.

The accident book should be kept for at least 3 years after the last entry.

Checking work conditions are safe and healthy

41. To make sure that we are working safely and that this health and safety policy is being followed we will: [e.g. carry out inspections, investigate accidents and near misses, collect reports, meet with representatives].
42. [Name of responsible person] is responsible for investigating accidents at work.
43. [Name of responsible person] is responsible for investigating work-related causes of absence [e.g. wrist/arm pain, stress].
44. [Name of responsible person] is responsible for acting on the results of the investigation to stop the same problem happening again.

Notes

Investigating accidents is a good way to make sure they do not happen again.

Investigating absence, especially if several people are away with the same problem, could help to find a cause of illness in your organisation.

Fire and evacuation

45. [Name of responsible person] is responsible for making sure that the fire risk assessment is done and any action points are carried out.
46. Escape routes are checked by [Name of responsible person/professional service address details] every [e.g. 6 months, 12 months].
47. [If applicable] Fire extinguishers are maintained and checked by [Name of responsible person/professional service address details] every [e.g. 6 months].
48. Alarms are tested by [Name of responsible person/professional service address details] every [e.g. month].
49. Emergency evacuation will be tested every [e.g. 3 months, 6 months].
50. The evacuation procedure is:

If the alarm sounds

- Evacuate the building immediately by the nearest exit
- Ensure any visitors leave the building
- Do not put yourself at risk
- Assemble [e.g. in front of the building]
- Do not re-enter the building for any reason until the Fire Officer or fire brigade confirm that it is safe to do so.

If you discover a fire

- Raise the alarm by operating the break glass switch at the nearest fire alarm call point. These are located in .
- Evacuate the building immediately as above.

Notes

A fire risk assessment is the same as any other risk assessment.

Escape routes, fire extinguishers and alarms should be checked by qualified people such as your local fire brigade.

Make sure you check escape routes and practice emergency evacuation regularly.

Some other areas of risk to consider

- Display screen equipment
- Stress
- Working alone
- Electricity and electrical equipment
- Food hygiene
- Manual handling
- Noise
- Slips, trips and falls
- Confined spaces
- Violence to staff
- Staff with disabilities, eg in relation to fire and evacuation procedures

Further information

- Health and Safety Executive - www.hse.gov.uk
- Basic health and safety from the Health and Safety Executive - www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/index.htm
- ACAS leaflet on 'Health, Work and Wellbeing' - www.acas.org.uk

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