



Health & Safety Statement & Policy

POLICY

Our policy is to provide and maintain safe and healthy conditions for;

- all our employees and volunteers and to provide such information, equipment, training and supervision as they need for this purpose.
- those groups and individuals using the services we offer and to provide the information they need to comply with our policy.
- groups, agencies and individuals using our premises for meetings or training.
- members of the public calling into our premises or otherwise affected by our activities.

The arrangements which we will make to implement the policy are set out below.

The Management Committee seeks the co-operation of all staff in keeping health and safety rules. Staff and volunteers are encouraged to watch out for potential or actual hazards and to inform the Chief Officer or other designated person. Failure to observe this guidance will be viewed as a breach of the organisation's Code of Conduct and can lead to disciplinary action. See Volunteer Centre Glossop's Code of Conduct.

The policy will be kept up to date, particularly as the organisation changes in nature and size. To ensure the policy and the way in which it is operated remains relevant it will be reviewed every year.

The designated officer will ensure that:

- Appropriate training and instruction is given to all staff and volunteers.
- The Health & Safety Poster issued by the H & S Executive is displayed
- Office Fire Rules are displayed on the office premises
- Forms are kept of all accidents and injuries relating to the work of staff and volunteers and visitors to the office premises and service users.
- Staff and volunteers are made aware of new hazards and provided with the relevant information on health and safety matters.
- The management is informed of any health and safety matters that may affect the organisation.
- The organisation's responsibilities under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous occurrences regulations 1985 are carried out.

- A yearly report is prepared for the Management on health and safety matters arising in the organisation for the previous 12 months.

RESPONSIBILITY - Management

General

Overall and final responsibility for health and safety in the company is that of the Chair of the management committee.

Day to day responsibility for health and safety in the company is that of the Chief Officer.

The following supervisors/managers are responsible for the safety in particular areas:

| Supervisor/Manager | Area |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Community Companions Manager | Community Companions |
| Administrator | Howard Town House |
| Administrator | Equipment |
| Chief Officer | Lone Working |

- All employees and volunteers have a responsibility to co-operate with supervisors and managers to achieve a healthy and safe workplace and to take reasonable care of themselves and others.
- Whenever an employee, volunteer supervisor or manager notices a health and safety problem that they are not able to put right, they must straightaway tell the appropriate person named above.
- Consultation between management and employees is provided by monthly staff meetings and bi monthly management committee meetings where issues can be raised on the agenda.

First Aid

The First Aid box is situated on the filing cabinet in main reception office.

Trained First Aider list is in the file in the reception cabinet and in the kitchen.

Appointed person responsible for the box is the Administrator.

The accident book is kept in the Reception Office in the main cupboard.

General Fire Safety

The Fire Officer is the Administrator

Checks of the following are carried out by the Fire Officer or their nominated representative:

Escape routes, ensuring Fire Extinguishers are serviced, Fire Alarms test, Smoke Detectors, Fire Blanket.

Fire drills should be carried out every 6 months and are organised by the Operations Manager.

Training

Responsibility for training rests with those named above for specific areas of responsibility.

Action List for Contractors and Visitors

Explain fire exits and drill in case of fire.

Explain about no smoking status of building.

Instruct them not to obstruct passageways.

Explain location of fire extinguishers and fire doors.

Explain procedure for unlocking/locking main doors on entry and exit.

Instruct them not to use any electrical equipment within the premises without permission.

Equipment

Person responsible

Operations Manager

Checks as follows:

| Equipment | Nominated Company | Regularity |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| All plugs, cables, appliances | Malkin Electrical | Every 12 mths |
| Wheelchairs | Wheelchair Centre | Every month |
| Fire Extinguishers | Stockport Fire | Every 12 months |
| Fire Alarm System | Malkin Electrical | Every 12 months |

Manual Handling

The Bureau has a responsibility to;

- Make a suitable and sufficient assessment of risks involved in manual handling. Where reasonably practical make alternative arrangements to avoid the need for manual handling if there is a risk of injury. Where manual handling cannot be avoided provide manual, automated or mechanical aids and training.
- Record all accidents and ill health.

The assessment should look at four different areas:

- The task - reduce the risk of injury by improving the task layout, using the body more efficiently.
- The load - making it lighter, smaller, easier to grasp etc.

- The working environment - remove space constraints, adequate lighting, ventilation etc.
- The individual's capability - personal considerations, training etc.

The working environment

The Bureau has a responsibility to check the following;

- Are the space constraints preventing good posture?
- Are there uneven slippery or unstable floors?
- Are there variations in the levels of floor or work surfaces?
- Are there extremes of temperature or humidity?
- Are there ventilation problems?

Users of DSE workstations Set-up

The Bureau has a responsibility to identify which of their employees/volunteers are DSE users and to ensure that the 1992 regulations covering usage of DSEs are adhered to. See appendix one for a copy of the DSE users assessment form.

RESPONSIBILITY – Staff and Volunteers

General

The Health and Safety Act 1974 has laid down certain duties for all volunteers and employees. The duties are to take care of their own safety and that of other volunteers and workers and to cooperate with the organisation and its officers to enable it to carry out its responsibilities. Please ensure you read those guidelines relevant to your activity within The Bureau and please raise any questions you have with your line manager or supervisor. In particular, employees have a duty to:

- work safely, efficiently and without endangering the health and safety of themselves, their colleagues, their clients, the general public or any other person who has a right of access to The Bureau premises at any time;
- adhere to the safety procedures as laid down by the organisation and to conform to all instructions given by those with a responsibility for health and safety;
- report all accidents, near miss occurrences and hazardous situations to appropriate persons.
- wear safety and protective clothing, use protective equipment and use appropriate safety devices, where these are provided for use at work.
- meet their other statutory safety obligations including that laid down in Section 8 of the Act, which states `no person shall intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare in pursuance of any relevant statutory provisions`.

The following general points will contribute significantly to overall health and safety;

- Floors, steps, stairs, passages and fire exits should be kept clear of obstruction at all times.
- Wires to telephones, electrical equipment etc., should not be placed so that some one could fall or put their chair on it.
- Office layout should be such that employees and others can use it safely- e.g., filing cabinets should not open into passages or across doorways.

A copy of this statement is issued to all employees. It will be reviewed, added to or modified from time to time. All employees are invited to submit changes that they feel have become appropriate.

First Aid

- A first aid box is available in the reception area of the main office.
- Employees are encouraged to attend basic first aid training from an approved provider e.g., Red Cross, St Johns Ambulance. One member of staff will be designated as an approved first aider and their name will be circulated to staff.
- Employees are advised to seek treatment for every injury, no matter how small, as any injury, if left untreated, may become serious.

Accident/hazard Reporting

It is essential that all accidents that happen at work, again no matter how small, are properly reported. This should be done, even if no apparent injury was received. In addition to reporting an actual accident it is equally important that employees report a `near-miss` or potential hazard, so that the organisation can deal with it and help prevent employees or volunteers from suffering an injury.

The procedure for reporting an accident

- As soon as possible report the accident to your manager. Preferably you should do this but if it is not possible, get someone else to do it for you.
The details which you should give are:
 - where it occurred, giving the time and place
 - what happened
 - if known, how it happened

- You should also prepare a brief written statement confirming these details and submit it to your line manager or the person who maintains the official accident book.
- In order to help prevent a recurrence of the accident you and any witness to it may be asked to discuss it with your line manager or person responsible for safety issues. It would be helpful to you, therefore, to keep full notes of what happened.

The procedure for reporting a `near-miss` or hazard is exactly the same.

Fire

The Fire Officer is the Administrator

- All visitors should be asked to sign the visitors' book on arrival and sign out on departure. Every member of staff must take responsibility for this with visitors.
- Fire exits should be kept clear and free from obstruction at all times. Notices concerning fire exits or covering procedures in case of fire should be clearly on display and not be removed.
- Employees and volunteers should make themselves familiar with the nearest fire exit to their office, the recommended means of escape, the designated assembly point and with the location and operation of the fire fighting equipment.
- Employees and volunteers will receive periodic instruction on how to use the extinguishers. Please note that not all extinguishers are suitable for an electrical fire, all extinguishers are red, read label to see if extinguisher is suitable for use.

Fire drill

- If you discover a fire;
 - raise the alarm
 - tackle the fire ONLY if it is safe to do so. If you are unsure or if the fire spreads do not endanger yourself. Leave it to the professionals.
- On hearing the alarm ;
 - Leave the building immediately by the nearest exit, taking with you any visitor you may see.
 - Go immediately to the assembly point which is at the rear of the building on the opposite side of the car park.
 - The fire officer will then check that everyone is present and can be accounted for.
 - For your own safety do not delay leaving the building.
 - DO NOT STOP TO COLLECT YOUR BELONGINGS.
 - DO NOT RE-ENTER THE BUILDING until you have been advised that it is safe to do so.
- Fire drills will be carried out at regular intervals to ensure that all employees are familiar with the procedure

Personal safety

The Bureau is concerned for the personal safety of all its volunteers and employees.

In order to reduce the element of risk, The Bureau is committed to the development of policies and procedures for identifying and eliminating risk and training all employees dealing directly with the public, in assessing risk and in preventing violent incidents.

If employees or volunteers are concerned in any way about their personal safety, they should discuss the matter with their colleagues and line manager immediately. On no account should employees put themselves at risk. Ask for assistance from any manager available if your line manager is not immediately available.

GUIDELINES

The Bureau is constantly reviewing its guide for employee safety. If employees feel these guidelines are inadequate they should raise the matter with their line manager.

For personal safety and for the safety of others, employees and volunteers should observe the following guidelines:

Dealing with the public

- When making home visits to the clients, you write it in the office diary, stating clearly the name and address of the person(s) you are visiting and when you will expect to be back in the office.
- If you feel unhappy about the way an interview, or visit is going, either in the office and especially in someone's home, terminate the interview as soon as possible even if it is not completed, but try to avoid raising anxiety levels .
- Interviews or meetings should not be held with a member of the public if you are alone in the office, an appointment should be made for them to return at a more suitable time.
- All incidents of actual physical or verbal abuse must be reported to the appropriate manager- recording full details of what occurred, when, where and any subsequent action to be taken. You should follow this procedure even if no incident occurred but you are concerned about possible future behaviour.
- When making home visits ensure dogs are suitably confined
- When making home visits, let the individual lead the way; avoid entering a room first and never sit with your back to the door, avoid going out onto balconies or into bedrooms, unless absolutely essential.

Money

- Always follow the recommended procedures for handling and collecting cash. If you are collecting money and you are threatened, hand over the money immediately. On no account should you endanger yourself or others to prevent the money being taken or in retrieving it. Employees and volunteers should avoid carrying large amounts of cash on them.

Office Safety & Security

The importance of office security to The Bureau cannot be overstated. The reception areas are particularly vulnerable since they are open to the public. In general terms volunteers and employees should remember the following points;

- Always make sure that the door into the building and an individual's home is locked when you are in the building/home alone.
- Take care of the office keys - if you do lose a key, report it immediately to your manager. All keys must be signed for
- Take great care of your personal belongings; particularly handbags, purses etc., The Bureau cannot accept responsibility for these items, so make sure you do not leave them lying around.
- If you hear the front door open do not assume that another member of staff will check who it is. It is everyone's responsibility to ensure that the building is secure.
- The person on the main reception desk must ensure that everyone coming into the building signs in and makes sure they have a legitimate reason for being in the building.
- All volunteers and members of staff leaving the building – even for five minutes - must inform the person on reception duty and must sign themselves out using the Wall Chart.
- If you see a stranger wandering around the reception/office, do not assume that he or she has the right to be there; ask who they are, who they wish to see, whether you can help.
- Do not allow visitors to wander in parts of the building. Ensure that the member of staff they are visiting is informed of their arrival and collects them.
- If you are leaving a computer always press control, alt, delete to lock it so that sensitive information cannot be accessed.
- Ask for identity cards of people claiming to be telephone engineers, computer engineers, gas/electricity/water board officials, etc. They all carry such cards and do not object to producing them for inspection.
- Ensure that your office is safe and secure when you leave it at night (e.g., make sure windows are shut, locks secure where necessary, the burglar alarm has been activated, and that all lights, heaters etc., are switched off)

Escorting People

The golden rule when escorting someone is to make sure you know what help they need before you set off. So check with your supervisor if the person has a specific disability, injury or illness.

Staff and volunteers are expected to observe the Health & Safety regulations of those buildings in which the activity is taking place whether that is a community building or hospital.

Volunteers are expected at all times to conform to the guidelines and training they have received with regard to safe escorting of people with disabilities. Main points include;

Falls

If the person you are escorting falls over;

- do not attempt to pick them up
- call an ambulance even if they say they do not want one
- advise them to stay still until the ambulance arrives

If they still insist on getting up;

- do not physically lift them as you may well cause them more damage by falling on top of them as well as causing injury to yourself.
- if possible find them something to lean on or something firm to grasp to help themselves up.

People using wheelchairs

- Always ensure the wheelchair brakes are on before anyone gets out of or into the wheelchair. Also ensure there are no heavy bags on the back of the wheelchair which could cause it to tip as someone gets up.
- Always move footrests into the folded back position before the person gets into the wheelchair. When they are sitting secure the footrests in the front position and make sure the person's feet are properly in place before setting off.
- Agree a set of signals so you can still communicate in noisy environments.
- Encourage the person in the wheelchair to use the seatbelts.
- Always use dropped kerbs whenever possible. If you have to go down a steep kerb or step always go down backwards and tell the person this is what you are going to do before you begin.

- Do not rest anything on the back of the wheelchair which may get caught in the wheels or interfere with your control of the wheelchair.
- Keep your back straight whenever pushing the wheelchair.
- Never physically lift a person out or into a wheelchair – provide them with a stable surface on which to rest their weight (such as a table) and assist them into the chair.
- Never go down a steep hill or across an uneven surface unless you are confident that you can control the wheelchair - find an alternative route.
- Do not go too fast.
- Be aware of where the person's hands are – it is very easy to cause an injury by moving off before the person has had chance to withdraw their hands.
- Leave plenty of room at the front to allow space for the footrests – these cannot be seen from your position at the back- so you need to have a good idea of how far they project.
- Be careful of other pedestrians – they are often unaware of your presence and may suddenly turn into your path.
- When the wheelchair is no longer in use fold it and put to the side of the room so that it does not become a hazard.

People with Impaired Vision

- Allow them to take your elbow so that they can walk at your side, slightly behind you.
- Talk them through obstacles – steps, overhead signs, and doors.
- Be aware that with someone walking at your side you need to leave more space to negotiate narrow places and doorways.
- Be aware that obstacles clearly visible to you may not be obvious to someone with partial sight because it may be a similar colour to its background.

Shopping

- Avoid shops that are overcrowded.
- Do not carry bags that are too heavy for you. Arrange to leave some of them in the shop and take them back to base in shifts or get help from another volunteer. Volunteers should tell service users that they are not to purchase very heavy items as they cannot be lifted by volunteers.

- Point out dangers in the shop or street to the person you are escorting. Be aware that you may need to speak more clearly/slowly/loudly to someone with impaired hearing.

Refreshments

- Always take care when carrying hot refreshments and always put the cup down on the table rather than handing it to someone.
- Clear up any spills immediately.
- Do not overfill the cups.
- Do not put cups close to the edge of the table.
- Tell the person that the cup is in front of them especially if they are visually impaired.
- Ensure that kettles and urns are kept on a secure surface and not overfilled.

Driving

Mandatory speed limits must be adhered to at all times and it is expected that all our volunteer drivers will drive carefully and observe all aspects of the Highway Code. It is also an offence to drive a vehicle whilst under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

- Seatbelts – these should be worn at all times and it is the driver's responsibility to ensure that they are in use before the journey begins.
- In the event of dangerous weather conditions the journey should not be undertaken.
- In the event of a breakdown passengers should not leave the car – they should be kept warm and comfortable.
- In the event of an accident first check whether you are injured – if so you must stay with your car and wait for assistance to arrive, providing that does not put you in further danger. If you are not injured you should check your passenger and always call an ambulance whether the client wants it or not. You are not a paramedic and cannot say whether someone is injured.
- All accidents must be reported to VCG soon as possible.

(More detailed guidance is to be found in the volunteer driver's handbook.)

Lifting and Handling

Lifting objects is the skilful use of the right body muscles and it must be appreciated that all body movements conform to definite patterns. There are six `key` factors to remember and apply if one is to avoid unnecessary injury and strain.

Correct procedure

- In order to maintain body balance the feet should be placed apart at approximately hip breadth with one foot in advance of the other and pointing in the direction of intended travel.
- Use the total gripping surface of the hand. This means that you should use the full length of the fingers and the palm of the hands. Where necessary use protective gloves.
- Keep the back straight when lifting. Use the strong leg and thigh muscles and this will considerably reduce the effort required to lift an object. Tuck the chin in and look forward just before taking the load. This will automatically straighten the back and reduce the strain on the shoulders and back muscles.
- Keep your arms straight and close to the body. This will ensure that you use your leg muscles and prevent shoulder and back strain.
- The weight of the body should be used when handling large and heavy objects. But make sure that the feet are correctly placed.

General hints

- Do not lift a load that causes a feeling of strain.
- Do not stand holding a heavy weight.
- Do not twist whilst lifting.
- Seek assistance if the load is too heavy or large.
- Do not change your grip whilst carrying a load.
- Do not carry excessively high loads that obscure your vision.
- Use the necessary protective equipment.
- Remember - foresight, sense and care can save you permanent injury.

As a rule staff and volunteers must not lift or handle any client without full training.

Volunteer Centre Glossop
POTENTIAL HAZARD REPORT

Location of potential hazard -

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Description of hazard

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Hazard Notified by:

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Date of Notification

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Copies required: Hazard report file
Client file (if appropriate)
Staff, Volunteer file

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Action Taken

Signed ..... Date .....