

# HEALTH AND SAFETY EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK



## Sidekick Ltd

Prepared by the  
**Mentor**  
**Health and Safety Service**

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## **Introduction**

This Employee Health and Safety Handbook is based on the policies included within our Health and Safety Management System.

The practical guidance contained within this handbook is intended for use by all those who are employed by the company.

Health and safety is, at the core of everything we do and we will seek to conduct our business in such a way as to avoid harm to our employees and all others who may be affected directly or indirectly by our activities.

This handbook supplements our Health and Safety Management System, outlining the responsibilities and arrangements for ensuring your health and safety at work.

The aim is to help you work safely and avoid accidents by providing a framework within which a safe method of work can be established. It is therefore important that you read the advice given here before you start work for the company.

Accident prevention is mainly common sense, tidiness and forethought, but safety does require constant vigilance and care. Remember that a little planning and thought can save a great deal of trouble and regret. **Always seek expert advice when in doubt.**

You are required to sign and return the declaration issued with this handbook stating that you have read, understood and agree to comply with the handbook and are satisfied as to your responsibilities with respect to health and safety.

This handbook will be reviewed periodically and supplementary information distributed to all employees. Suggestions for inclusion, corrections and revisions for future editions of this handbook should be sent to your line manager.

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# **Health and Safety Policy Statement**

Test company aims to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of our employees while they are at work and of others who may be affected by our undertakings. This general policy statement provides a commitment and intent to comply with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.

To ensure the principles of health and safety are clearly understood throughout, we will be committed to:

- comply with relevant health and safety laws and regulations, voluntary programmes, collective agreements on health and safety and other requirements to which the organisation subscribes
- setting and monitoring of health and safety objectives for the organisation
- effective communication of and consultation on health and safety matters throughout the organisation
- assessing the risks to the safety, health and wellbeing of our employees and others who may be affected by our activities and implementing controls to minimise those risks
- ensure the health and wellbeing of our employees
- preventing work-related injuries, ill health, disease and incidents
- providing and maintaining safe plant and equipment and implementing safe systems of work
- the safe use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances
- providing and maintaining a safe working environment with safe access, egress and welfare facilities
- providing the necessary training to our employees and others, including temporary employees to ensure their competence with respect to health and safety
- providing suitable and sufficient information, instruction and supervision for employees
- continually improving the performance of our health and safety management
- devoting the necessary resources in the form of finance, equipment, personnel and time to ensure the health and safety of our employees and seeking expert help where the necessary skills are not available within the organisation
- undertake annual review and when necessary the revision of this health and safety policy
- making this policy available to relevant interested external parties, as appropriate

*Please note that a signed copy of the Health and Safety Policy Statement, which demonstrates our commitment to health and safety, is available at our main business address or on request.*

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# **Organisation and Responsibilities**

## **General Responsibilities**

It is important that health and safety standards are maintained and improved. Where necessary specific roles have been allocated additional responsibility for health and safety. Where this responsibility is specific to a subject area, the details of the responsible person are communicated to employees in writing or verbally as required.

The following individual post(s) have overall health and safety responsibilities within the terms of our policy:

- **Mrs. Angela Vohmann, Director**

The above is responsible for ensuring strategic health and safety planning is in place and that periodic review of health and safety performance is undertaken.

Day to day responsibility for ensuring the policy is put into practice and consultation with employees is delegated to:

- **Company Directors and all Operational Managers.**

## **Responsible Persons**

It is important that health and safety standards are maintained and improved. Where necessary specific roles have been allocated additional responsibility for health and safety. Where this responsibility is specific to a subject area, the details of the responsible person are communicated to employees in writing or verbally as required.

These Responsible Persons will also be required to monitor their areas of control as well as the performance and activities of all persons under their control to ensure that acceptable standards are maintained. They will ensure:

- the objectives and guidance outlined within our health and safety management system is fully understood and observed by persons under their control
- responsibilities for health and safety are clearly defined and allocated and delegated to the appropriate levels within their areas of responsibility
- the health and safety policy statement will be brought to the attention of all individuals under their control, making them aware of all hazards and the means of controlling those hazards
- any changes to the health and safety policy or our arrangements are brought to the attention of all individuals affected
- that no items of machinery, equipment or substances are used unless the hazards associated with them have been identified, risk assessed and effective controls put into place.

## **Management Structure**

The Management Team are responsible for ensuring that the requirements of this policy and all other legislative requirements are managed under the normal method of delegated

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powers and by establishing a system of appraisal of management performance against agreed health and safety performance indicators.

**As an organisation**, we will implement our Health and Safety Policy by:

- ensuring adequate resources, both personnel and financial, are allocated to ensure implementation of the policy
- planning, organising and implementing arrangements to eliminate or control significant risks and to comply with relevant statutory provisions
- determining and documenting procedures, operational instructions, guidelines and codes of practice to implement our Health and Safety Policy
- ensuring that their responsible managers and employees are capable, through recruitment, training or otherwise, to carry out their duties for health, safety and welfare;
- setting health and safety performance standards to ensure effective management within their areas of control
- ensuring that hazards are identified, significant findings of assessments are recorded, groups exposed to risks are identified and the actions taken to protect the health and safety of these groups are recorded
- ensuring that all relevant individuals are familiar with, and comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety Policy, and that all new employees are inducted on the requirements of the Health and Safety Policy and any relevant instructions
- ensuring that contractors and sub-contractors have effective arrangements for health, safety and welfare
- establishing systems for monitoring all arrangements to ensure that they are working effectively
- reviewing information from monitoring systems to ensure continued and effective compliance with performance standards.

**Employees and Relevant/Interested parties shall:**

- take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions
- co-operate with management to meet the employers' legal duties and work in accordance with procedures
- not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interest of health, safety or welfare and refrain from actions (or inactivity) which might endanger themselves, or others
- demonstrate their commitment to health and safety by their behaviour and co-operate in the investigation of accidents and incidents
- use all equipment safely, including that provided for their personal protection and report to management any defects in equipment or other dangers at once, or as soon as it is safe to do so
- comply with all safety instructions or procedures and not undertake any tasks that they are not trained and authorised for.

## Document Control Record

Change undertaken	Issue	Date
"Mentor Services" replaced with "RBS Mentor"	2	05/11/12
Minor wording change under section Responsible Persons	3	28/10/13
Reviewed/Updated to reflect document structure. Changes to Policy statement for relevance to Health and Wellbeing	4	04/10/22
<p>New construction sections created:</p> <p>01 – Cooperation and Coordination, Food Safety.</p> <p>02 – Behavioural Safety, Occupational Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>03 – Asbestos, Leptospirosis, Electrical Safety, Fuel Storage and Use, LOLER, Mobile Plant and Vehicles, Oil, Solid and Wood Fuel Installations, Work Equipment, Working with Lead</p> <p>04 – Control of Dust, Demolition and Dismantling, Excavations, Gas Installation and Maintenance, Public Highways, Site Management, Telecoms, Temporary Structures and Support Work, Working at Height, Working with or Near to Buried Services</p>	5	01/07/24
New procedures created and added for Agriculture, Care Homes and Domiciliary Care and Schools Arrangements for use if required.	5	01/07/04



# Accidents, Incidents and Near Misses

## Introduction

An accident is defined as an unplanned, unexpected and undesired event which occurs suddenly and causes injury or loss and a near miss is an unplanned event that has the potential to cause injury or loss.

## Hints and Tips

- Ensure you understand your organisation's health and safety policy and objectives.
- Know the emergency arrangements of your organisation.
- Ensure you understand the control measures specified in the organisation's procedures and risk assessments.
- Ensure you have received suitable information, instruction and training in the task you are carrying out.

Ensure you wear all personal protective equipment that is specified for the task you are to carry out.



### Do

- observe and adhere to the safe system of work for the task
- report any accidents, incidents and near misses
- make sure you know how and when to record incidents
- make sure you know the arrangements for emergencies and first aid
- use equipment according to manufacturers' instructions.



### Don't

- remove guards when using equipment
- leave actions for another person to carry out
- make unauthorised modifications to equipment or use equipment with unauthorised modifications
- deviate from approved safe system of work

# **Competence and Training**

## **Introduction**

Competency and training should be related to functions, jobs or processes undertaken in the workplace. Clear standards should be developed, as this will allow those carrying out the work, as well as those supervising to know whether they possess the necessary competency. Training helps people acquire the skills, knowledge and attitudes to make them competent in the health and safety aspects of their work.

## **Key Facts**

The Health and Safety Executive states that:

- "Competence can be described the combination of training, skills, experience and knowledge that a person has and their ability to apply them to perform a task safely. Other factors, such as attitude and physical ability, can also affect someone's competence."

In reality, only an assessment of the individual can demonstrate competence. Competence does not solely depend on any particular skills, training or qualifications. It is universally acknowledged that competence is critical in ensuring suitable health and safety standards are maintained. Competent employees are expected to act in a manner that is consistent with their levels of knowledge, instruction and training.

Competence in Health and Safety should be seen as an important component of workplace activities, not an add-on or afterthought.

## **Hints and Tips**

- co-operate with your employer in developing a personal development plan that fits your training needs and requirements
- remember that competence is a combination of things such as technical training, attitudes and behaviours as well as experience and knowledge of the equipment or processes
- do not operate machinery or attempt anything that you do not have the competence, skills or abilities to do or if you have not been trained
- training does not have to be delivered in a 'classroom' setting with a teacher standing up front. a lot of vocational training, also known as on-the-job training, can be carried out in the workplace as work is actually being undertaken.



## Do

- ensure that you have a personal development plan in place for your role
- bring to your employers' attention, any areas you feel where you lack knowledge or skill
- notify your supervisor or line manager if you witness any unsafe practice somewhere within your workplace.



## Don't

- think that once trained, you may never require further training in a particular subject or discipline
- assume that having received training on one piece of equipment or particular process, you are then competent to do everything within your workplace.

# **Emergency Planning Procedures**

## **Introduction**

An event can be considered to be an emergency if it requires a rapid and variable response in order to minimise loss e.g. explosions, chemical spills, security/terrorist threats etc.

## **Key Facts**

- Fire is not included in here as it is covered under the Fire Safety topic.
- All potential emergency situations should be considered - also consider the worst-case scenario for each potential event.
- Loss can be minimised by taking a practical approach.
- The assembly point for each emergency may vary according to the risk, e.g. assembly point for bomb alert.

## **Terrorism and National Emergencies**

The threat level indicates the likelihood of a terrorist attack in the UK. There are 5 levels of threat:

- low - an attack is unlikely
- moderate - an attack is possible but not likely
- substantial - an attack is a strong possibility
- severe - an attack is highly likely
- critical - an attack is expected imminently.

The level is set by the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre and the Security Service (MI5). The current threat level applicable is widely publicised in the media. Threat levels don't have an expiry date. They can change at any time as different information becomes available to security agents.

Lack of planning and preparedness for emergencies can be extremely costly to business.

## **Hints and Tips**

- being aware of the emergency procedures will help you respond to emergencies
- know the emergency control measures the business has in place
- ensure you have adequate instruction, information and training to deal with emergency procedures, especially where you have a key role
- get involved in the preparation and implementation of emergency procedures if requested.



## Do

- ensure you read and understand the necessary risk assessments
- follow good working practises
- know the potential consequences of emergencies
- remain calm if an emergency arises.



## Don't

- assume it can't happen to you or to your employer
- panic if emergency situations arise
- do anything which could affect the health, safety and wellbeing of yourself or anyone else.

# **Food Safety**

## **Introduction**

Good food hygiene is essential to make sure that the food you serve is safe to eat. It helps prevent food poisoning. When food management is part of your business, you need to introduce ways of working that will help you ensure good food hygiene is right from the start.

## **Key Facts**

- The principal aim of 'General Food Law' is to protect human health and consumer's interest in relation to food. It applies to all stages of production, processing and distribution of food and feed with some exceptions. Food businesses must comply with food and feed safety law.

To place safe food on the market food businesses must ensure:

- traceability of food
- appropriate presentation of food
- suitable food information is provided
- prompt withdrawal or recall of unsafe food placed on the market
- food and feed imported into, and exported from, Great Britain (GB) shall comply with food law.

## **Hints and Tips**

The four main things to remember for good hygiene are the 4Cs:

- Cleaning
- Cooking
- Chilling
- Cross-contamination.

You can use the 4Cs to prevent the most common food safety problems.



## Do

- follow the 4cs and any food related training you have received
- if you think there is a risk in the process, raised it with management so that it can be actioned as soon as possible.



## Don't

- be afraid to raise any issues
- ignore warnings of ill-health
- forget personal hygiene, this is a fundamental component of food safety.

# **Risk Assessment**

## **Introduction**

A risk assessment is the process of identifying the risks from an activity or workplace and assessing the potential impact of each risk i.e. what could go wrong, as well as identifying possible control measures that would reduce or eliminate the risk.

## **Key Facts**

- risk assessments are a legal requirement as per the management of health and safety at work regulations
- a good risk assessment should help prevent accidents and ill health and therefore could save lives and reduce the likelihood of compensation claims or legal action
- you have a duty to comply with your employers risk assessment
- risk assessments only need to be recorded if there are five or more employees although writing them down, irrespective of the number of employees, does help demonstrate your employer has covered all the necessary points
- you should always be aware of the hazards and risk around you.

## **Hints and Tips**

- ensure you are aware and fully understand any risk assessments that are relevant to your duties at work and any tasks that you undertake
- there should be a risk assessment carried out for all work equipment and work activities. ensure that you know what control measures are in place to protect you
- co-operate with your employer when they are carrying out and implementing risk assessments.





## Do

- get involved in the risk assessment process
- implement the control measures stated in the risk assessment e.g. wear PPE
- report any risks or hazards which have gone unreported
- inform your employer if the process steps are different from that on the risk assessment.



## Don't

- carry out work unless an adequate risk assessment has been carried out
- assume your employer has considered all the risks
- ignore the risk assessment - it exists for a reason
- alter or deviate from the risk assessment without notifying your manager and team.

# Safety Signs and Signals

## Introduction

Rules and regulations covering safety signs are covered by the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations. These regulations stipulate the design of certain signs. Safety signs are intended to reinforce the safety message, not act as a primary control.



## Key Facts

**Prohibition** - Dangerous behaviour, Stop, must not do

**Warning** - Be careful, take precautions

**Mandatory** - Specific behaviour or action, must do

**Emergency** - Door, Equipment, Facilities

Prohibition Sign	Warning Sign
	
Mandatory Sign	Emergency Sign
	

## Hints and Tips

**Prohibition signs:** which gives instruction on what must not be done (e.g. 'no smoking' or 'no access for unauthorised persons'). These signs are circular with a red diagonal line and edging. The pictograms are often supported by white text on a red background.

**Warning signs:** which warns of dangers or hazards (e.g. 'fork lift trucks operating'). These are triangular with black edging and a yellow background. The pictograms are often supported by black text on a yellow background.

**Mandatory signs:** which tells employees, or others, what they must do (e.g. 'eye protection must be worn' or fire door keep shut'). These are circular with a blue background and white pictogram. The pictograms are often supported by white text on a blue background.

**Emergency signs:** providing information about emergency escape routes, first aid, etc. These are rectangular with a green background and white pictogram. The pictograms are often supported by white text.

Signals may also be given verbally (shout of fire where there is no alarm system) or visually in the form of lights (RED strobe to indicate Fire in a noisy environment) or hand signals to a crane operator



## Do

- ensure that you understand the meaning of all safety signs and signals in your workplace
- remind your colleagues of the dangers if you see them ignoring safety signage or signals
- get temporary signage removed when it is no longer applicable, such as wet floor signs.



## Don't

- ignore safety signs or signals even if they appear to be out of date, placed or used incorrectly - often, dangers may not be obvious
- remove or deface safety signage
- obstruct safety signs with goods or stock.

# **Alcohol, Drugs and Substance Misuse**

## **Introduction**

The consumption of alcohol is an accepted part of social life and is normally a personal matter. However, the subject of alcohol, drugs and substance misuse and how these stimulants can impair performance, safety or interpersonal work relations is a matter for employers.

## **Key Facts**

Alcohol, drugs and substance misuse are known to affect judgment and physical coordination which could lead to accidents. Alcohol, drugs and substance misuse can lead to resentment among employees who have to 'carry' colleagues whose work declines because of their drinking, drug taking or substance misuse.

## **Hints and Tips**

- Familiarise yourself with the Company's Alcohol, Drugs and Substance Misuse policy.
- Ask your Line Manager what help is available if you feel you have a problem with alcohol, drugs or substance misuse.
- Be conscious that at times, your activities outside of work can have an impact the following day.



## Do

- Know the rules on alcohol, drugs and substance misuse at work or when attending work functions.
- Bring to the attention of your line manager if you are taking medication which may impair your ability to work safely.
- Alert your line manager if you feel a colleague is under the influence.



## Don't

- Operate machinery or drive any vehicle when under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Operate machinery or drive any vehicle if taking medication which may affect you.
- Be afraid to approach your line manager if you feel you have a problem.

# Behavioural Safety

## Introduction

No matter what your job title, trade or position; EVERYONE must observe and follow the general health and safety rules which apply. They are the fundamental requirements that underpin more job/task specific health and safety measures.

## Key Points

We all must:

- adhere to the business health and safety policy
- adhere to the project construction phase plan
- co-operate with line managers and others with a co-ordinating role on-site
- behave responsibly and not in a manner that could cause injury to yourself or others
- report any unsafe acts or conditions to the appropriate person.

## Tip

- Everyone at work has responsibilities under Health and Safety legislation to work safely and to co-operate with their employer.



## Do

- ensure you have read the health and safety policy statement
- follow procedures that have been put in place
- report any unsafe acts or conditions to the appropriate person
- make full and proper use of all equipment
- be aware of safety signage.



## Don't

- behave in way that could endanger yourself and others
- ignore unsafe practices or conditions
- carry out tasks that you have not been trained and authorised for

# **Disabled Workers**

## **Introduction**

There are many different types of disability, which may not always be noticeable to others. Changes in working practices can ensure that disabled workers have the same opportunities as others. Some of the adjustments are straightforward and may be carried out with little expense.

## **Key Facts**

- The definition of disability from the Equality Act is 'a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term negative effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.
- Disabled workers should provide employers with enough information to enable them to plan/make adjustments. Employers must not disclose confidential information about employees without their permission.

## **Hints and Tips**

- Some of the adjustments to the workplace that can prevent a disabled worker feeling disadvantaged include adapting equipment so that it is easier to use, changing layout to improve access or changing working hours.
- Disabled workers may be involved in the risk assessment process or creating a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) if mobility is impaired.
- Disability awareness training can help other workers to understand the individual needs of disabled workers.
- Mental health problems, diabetes or epilepsy do not always create additional safety needs. In fact, making assumptions may be unlawful discrimination.



## Do

- tell your employer about any changes in your health condition, including any time off for appointments or treatments that you might need
- ensure that all employees are aware of who the first aiders are within your organisation.



## Don't

- make assumptions about the best way to assist a disabled worker, ask them directly instead
- try to hide your disability from your employer. you may have additional safety needs that are not currently being met.



# **Driving at Work**

## **Introduction**

Risks associated with driving will always be present. Although these cannot be completely controlled an employer has a responsibility to take all reasonable steps to manage these risks, down to as low a level as is reasonably practicable.

## **Key Facts**

- Around one third of fatal and serious road crashes involve someone who was at work. Business drivers are far more likely to be involved in accidents than people driving privately.
- A number of people are injured by moving vehicles on motorway hard shoulders each year, either because they stayed inside their vehicle whilst awaiting assistance or remaining close to their vehicle.

## **Hints and Tips**

- Plan journeys in advance. Do not be tempted to adjust satellite navigation systems (Sat-Nav's) whilst driving.
- If there is a risk of getting stranded during periods of poor weather, either postpone your journey if possible or ensure you carry additional provisions such as water, snack foods, a blanket and a torch.
- If you do breakdown on a motorway, pull your vehicle as far to the left on the hard shoulder as possible and angle your wheels towards the verge. Put your hazard warning lights on and side lights if visibility is poor. Get everyone out of your vehicle safely (via the nearside doors if you can) and stand at a safe distance, even if that means climbing over a crash barrier or standing in the rain.



## Do

- ensure you hold relevant levels of insurance for the type of vehicle you are driving
- carry out daily levels checks
- plan your journey and leave yourself plenty of time
- remain courteous to other road users at all times.



## Don't

- drive for more than 2 hours without taking a short break
- drive if under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- allow yourself to be provoked into losing your temper by other motorists
- use your mobile phone whilst driving.

# **First Aid & Mental Health First Aid**

## **Introduction**

First aid is the care given before emergency medical help arrives, it can often mean the difference between life and death. If an employee shows evidence of any mental health symptoms then assistance from mental health first aiders may be needed.

## **Key Facts**

- Appropriate training for first aiders or appointed persons in both physical and mental health first aid provision should be provided, along with appropriate first aid equipment or facilities.
- A first aider is someone who has undertaken training and has a valid and in date first aid qualification.
- An appointed person is the person who takes charge when someone is injured or falls ill, including calling an ambulance if required but does not give first aid treatment.
- First aid can save lives and prevent minor incidents from becoming major incidents.
- First aid at work covers the arrangements you must have in place dependant on your business operations and activities.

## **Hints and Tips**

- If asked to be a first aider, ensure that you are comfortable with this and are given the appropriate training.
- Your employer will ensure there are sufficient first aid kits in the premises.
- All mobile workers should have access to first aid kits.
- Familiarise yourself with first aid signage and location of first aid kits.



## Do

- Know who the appointed person or first aiders are and where they are located.
- Know how to contact them.
- Ensure that any first aid situation is reported.



## Don't

- Try to give someone first aid if you have not had any training.
- Remove anything from the first aid kit without notifying the responsible person for the first aid box.
- Move first aid kits.
- Panic if faced with first aid situation, remain calm and contact the appointed person or first aider.

# **Lone Working**

## **Introduction**

The Health and Safety Executive defines Lone Working as 'those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision'. This means that many businesses will have people classed as 'Lone Workers'.

## **Key Facts**

- Just by the nature of them being lone workers, does not increase the risks to the individual, and consequently, lone working in itself is not against the law. However, the law requires employers and others to think about and deal with any health and safety risks before anyone works alone.
- It is the employer's duty to assess risks to lone workers and take steps to avoid or control risks where necessary.
- You have responsibilities to take reasonable care of yourself and other people affected by your work activities and to co-operate with your employer in helping them to meet their own legal obligations.
- Specific Risk Assessment must be undertaken for Lone Workers.

## **Hints and Tips**

- If your work does not base you in one particular place each day, always prepare a daily schedule so that someone knows where you are and what you are doing.
- Prepare and agree a contact strategy with a designated 'contact person' and ensure they are aware of what to do if they cannot get in touch with you.
- If you have any medical conditions which might cause black-outs, fainting, dizzy spells etc., notify your Supervisor or Line Manager immediately. It would be advisable to check with your Doctor or other healthcare professional whether lone working is suitable given your medical condition.



## Do

- make sure someone knows where you are working and any travel plans you might have
- feel comfortable leaving any situation you consider threatening or intimidating
- ensure you are sufficiently experienced and fully understand the risks and precautions.



## Don't

- take un-necessary risks when you are working alone
- keep quiet about any issues you think might compromise your safety - always discuss issues with your supervisor or line manager.

# **New and Expectant Mothers**

## **Introduction**

Being pregnant or a new mother does not prevent you from working and developing a career. Many women work whilst they are pregnant and return to work whilst breastfeeding. To the new or expectant mother, working conditions that were considered acceptable may no longer meet their needs.

## **Key Facts**

- If an employer fails to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of their pregnant workers, it is automatically considered sex discrimination.
- Because pregnancy is considered to be a 'special position' requiring special protection, you do not have to compare yourself to the way anyone else has been treated at work, or to how you were treated before you were pregnant.
- If any type of work can present a particular risk to expectant or nursing mothers, the risk assessment must then include an assessment of those risks and detail any additional control measures required.
- If the risks are unavoidable, then working conditions should be adjusted.
- Specific Risk Assessment must be undertaken for Pregnant Workers.

## **Hints and Tips**

- Hormonal changes during and after pregnancy can affect ligaments, thereby increasing your risk of injury from sprains and strains.
- Whilst standing for long periods of time may cause backache, dizziness and light-headedness, sitting for long periods can increase the risk of thrombosis and may also increase backache. Vary your movement as often as you require.
- Exposure to shocks, bumps, jolting and vibration, often experienced whilst driving or using ride-on plant or equipment, can increase the risks of potential miscarriage.
- Exposure to certain noise, especially if prolonged, can lead to an increase in blood pressure.



## Do

- ensure you notify your supervisor or line manager if you are pregnant or breastfeeding
- work with your supervisor or line manager to complete your specific risk assessment
- speak with your supervisor or line manager if you have any concerns regarding your health and your workplace.



## Don't

- work in close proximity to pesticides, lead or biological hazards
- attempt to lift anything you consider to be too heavy. always seek help
- be afraid to ask your supervisor or line manager to conduct a detailed, specific risk assessment
- forget, you have a statutory right to time off to attend medical appointments with pay.



# **Night and Shift Workers**

## **Introduction**

How people cope or adapt to shift work is dependent on health, fitness, age, lifestyle, home life etc.

## **Key Facts**

- Shift work can affect performance and alertness, which could potentially cause accidents.

Shift work can also cause:

- fatigue
- poor appetite and digestion
- reliance on sedatives and/or stimulants
- social and domestic problems.

**Night time** is defined as the period between 11pm and 6am although this agreement can be slightly varied between employers and employees.

**Night workers** - those individuals working for at least 3 hours between the above times are entitled to an annual free health assessment funded by your employer.

**Shift work** is defined as a work activity outside the core daytime hours 9am-5pm.

## **Hints and Tips**

- Ensure there is adequate rest time between shifts - the minimum time allowed between shifts is 11 hours.
- Where possible, vary work activity across your shift to help relieve fatigue.
- Ensure adequate communication between each shift handover.



## Do

- try to sleep for at least 7-8 hours between shifts
- rotate shifts regularly
- notify your supervisor or line manager of any health issues
- discuss shift patterns with management.



## Don't

- forget, if you are a night worker, you have a right to receive free health assessments
- work hours or shifts which are beyond your capabilities
- forget to take breaks during your shift
- take your break at your work station.

# **Occupational Health and Wellbeing**

## **Introduction**

An important part of occupational health is concerned with how work and the work environment can impact on workers' health, both physical and mental. It also includes how workers' health can affect their ability to do their job. Work Related Stress is defined as 'The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them at work'. Many outward signs of stress should be readily noticeable but as people react differently to different pressures, indications will vary between different people.

## **Key Facts**

- Work related ill health can manifest in many different forms, such as asthma, skin irritation, eye strain, back issues, and many more. Stress can cause changes in those experiencing it. In some cases there are clear signs that people are experiencing stress at work and if these can be identified early, action can be taken before the pressure becomes a problem. This may make it easier to reduce and eliminate the causes. Your line manager has a duty to ensure that work does not make you ill and will understand how to spot the signs of ill health and stress.

## **Hints and Tips**

- If you think you are suffering from work related ill health or stress, talk to your line manager or HR department in the first instance and then speak with your GP.
- Try to avoid 'eating on the run' or avoiding meals altogether.
- Taking care of yourself physically will enable you to deal with stress-related problems more efficiently. A balanced diet, moderate exercise and adequate sleep will all help.
- Do not be embarrassed to seek professional help.



## Do

- take care of yourself physically by taking regular exercise, maintaining a balanced diet and getting sufficient sleep
- report any concerns you have to your line manager or hr department
- ensure you behave responsibly to yourself and others to minimise pressures.



## Don't

- be afraid to say no to unrealistic demands on your time
- ignore warnings of ill-health. your gp will be familiar with the warning signs and can deal with them early
- tolerate bullying or harassment.

# **Trainees and Work Experience**

## **Introduction**

Work experience offers students the opportunity to prepare for the challenges of tomorrow. Students at school can become familiar with the skills and attitudes needed by modern business and recognise that the demands of working life are undergoing rapid change.

## **Key Facts**

- Work experience may be defined as: 'a placement on employer's premises in which a student carries out a particular task or duty, more or less as an employee would, but with the emphasis on the learning aspects of the experience'.
- Work experience is governed by the Education Act, as amended by the School Standards and Framework Act.
- Only students in their last 2 years of compulsory schooling or students taking post-16 courses are eligible.
- Placements usually occur on employer's premises.
- The vast majority of under 16 work experience placements last for two weeks, but post-16 placements can vary in length.
- Specific Risk Assessment must be undertaken for Young Workers.

## **Hints and Tips**

- The adult world of work will be an unfamiliar place to most students, so a detailed induction is a must. Ensure that induction covers all the rules and regulations applicable to your organisation, highlights areas of particular risk and what control measures are in place to reduce the risks. You should also ensure that induction describes what standards you expect of the work experience student with regard to their personal behaviours.
- You may need to alter the terminology you use when explaining information to students and always ensure understanding from your audience before moving on to further topics.



## Do

- ensure you understand who will be in immediate charge of you
- ensure you are aware of all the key people within your organisation, including first aid staff
- be fully aware of emergency procedures, evacuation routes and alarm sounds.



## Don't

- use machinery without permission of the supervisor
- try to impress by undertaking activities you have not been trained to do
- be afraid to ask if you have not understood all of the safety instructions - ask if you don't understand.

# **Violence and Aggression**

## **Introduction**

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines work-related violence and aggression as: 'Any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work'. Violence can range from a life-threatening physical attack to verbal abuse. Verbal abuse and threats are the most common type of incident.

## **Key Facts**

- Anyone whose job requires them to deal with the public can be at risk from violence. This can include employees engaged in giving a service, education, caring professions, cash transactions, delivery and collection, and controlling or representing authority.
- The consequences of work-related violence can be wide-ranging and include poor morale among staff and a poor image for the organisation. It can also affect staff recruitment and retention, create extra costs for absenteeism and result in higher insurance premiums and compensation payments.

## **Hints and Tips**

- If you are the victim of violence or aggression, report it to your supervisor or line manager immediately.
- Do not respond to violence or aggression with violence or aggression. You will only exacerbate the situation and make matters worse. By maintaining a calm but assertive approach, you will remain in control.
- If you are responsible for banking cash, bank frequently and always vary your route to the bank.
- If you have to meet a client or customer who you know has aggressive tendencies, always ensure you are accompanied or meet in a public area.



## Do

- ensure you understand what constitutes violence and aggression and where to report any incidents
- recognise the early signs of aggression and learn to avoid it or cope with the situation
- avoid lone working situations if you think there is the potential for violence or aggression.



## Don't

- tolerate unacceptable behaviour - always report any incidents of violence or aggression
- resort to name-calling or other verbal abuse
- stare at another person in a menacing or threatening manner
- raise your hands whilst discussing issues. This could be viewed as an aggressive act.



# **Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)**

## **Introduction**

Some substances used in the workplace may be hazardous to health, such as chemicals, fumes, dusts, or bacteria.

## **Key Facts**

The COSHH Regulations is the law that requires employers to control substances that are hazardous to health.

Hazardous substances cause harm by getting into our bodies by either:

- inhalation
- skin absorption
- ingestion
- injection.

Good control measures will match the nature of the exposure risk, e.g. good ventilation will reduce the risk of inhalation of hazardous fumes.

Most businesses use substances, or products that are mixtures of substances. Some processes create substances. These could cause harm to employees, contractors and other people.

Some substances will re-act if mixed together so this should be avoided in use and storage where possible.

All hazardous substances will have an information sheet called a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) which provides key facts about each substance.

Our company completes COSHH risk assessments on all hazardous substances which all employees/relevant/effected parties will be briefed on.

## **Hints and Tips**

- only use the smallest amount required of any substances - the more you use the bigger the risk
- replace lids and tops on all hazardous substances when not in use and store them in accordance with the SDS
- ensure that areas in which you are using substances are well ventilated
- wear personal protective equipment (PPE) that has been identified to protect you from exposure to substances
- make sure all spillages are cleared up at the earliest opportunity and reported to the relevant people.



## Do

- know where hazardous substances should be stored when not in use
- make sure chemicals are kept apart in the designated stores
- label all containers and clearly identify hazards, such as irritant, corrosive, toxic etc
- wear appropriate clothing when handling hazardous substances.



## Don't

- use chemicals from unmarked containers or decant them into other unlabelled containers
- eat, drink or smoke near hazardous substances.

# **Electrical Installations and Fixed Equipment**

## **Introduction**

Electricity is invisible and silent, but it can easily be a killer if not treated with respect. A mild electric shock could be enough to throw you off balance and make you fall from a height.

## **Key Facts**

The main hazards are:

- contact with live parts causing shock and burns
- faults which could cause fires
- fire or explosion where electricity could be the source of ignition in a potentially inflammable or explosive atmosphere.

All electrical equipment and installations must be regularly tested, inspected and maintained.

The IET Wiring Regulations are also published as British Standard BS7671.

## **Hints and Tips**

- Where possible, use 110V equipment powered from a 110V Current Transformer (CT) supply. Where this is not possible, use a Residual Current Device (RCD)
- Even low-level voltages can be dangerous
- Remember that electricity can arc i.e. "jump" across considerable distances
- Even if working live can be justified, many precautions are needed to make sure that the risk is reduced. Ensure you comply with our control measures before working on live electricity. You may be required to submit a permit to work.



## Do

- use safe isolation procedures at all times
- use adequate signage when working with electricity
- assume cables are present when digging in the street
- inspect electrical equipment before use
- test and certificate the circuit on completion of work.



## Don't

- work on live electricity unless it is unavoidable
- assume the cable is 'dead'
- do the job unless you're trained and competent to do so
- forget water and electricity don't mix.

# Portable Electrical Appliances

## Introduction

Generally, appliances that have a lead or cable and a plug and which are normally moved around or are easily movable from place to place are classified as portable electrical appliances.

## Key Points

- Tools, plugs and cables designed for DIY and domestic use are not suitable for construction sites.
- Cordless tools or those that operate from a 110V centre tapped to earth (CTE) supply system should be used where possible.
- Where mains voltage (230V) is used, the system should be fitted with a RCD.
- Power tools must be taken out of service immediately if they are damaged in any way.
- Power tools must be stored properly and maintained in good repair.

## Tip

"Do not bring your own power tools into work."



## Do

- Carry out visual checks before using any equipment.
- Let your supervisor know if you find any equipment that needs to be repaired.
- Use the right equipment for the job.
- Store your equipment in the correct way, to minimise damage.



## Don't

- Use equipment that has frayed cables, scorch marks or damaged casings.
- Assume that PAT tests should be carried out annually; it may be more frequently for some equipment.
- Forget that water and electricity don't mix!

# Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment

## Introduction

**Lifting Equipment** includes any equipment used for the lifting or lowering of loads, whether that is goods or people. The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) cover a wide range of equipment including cranes, fork lift trucks, hoists and mobile elevating work platforms.

**Lifting Accessories** include man-riding cages, web or wire slings, eye bolts or shackles.

**A Lifting Operation** is an operation concerned with the lifting or lowering of a load.

## Key Facts

- Although as an employee you do not have specific duties under LOLER, you still have general duties to take reasonable care of yourself and others who may be affected by your actions. You also have an obligation to co-operate with others.
- Accidents involving lifting equipment are frequently caused by misuse or neglect of equipment.
- Under LOLER, duty holders - the Charity- must ensure that lifting equipment undergoes regular examination by a competent person.

## Hints and Tips

- If travelling with a load, ensure it is carried in the safest position possible. Do not consider raising the load whilst moving.
- Do not use lifting equipment to lift people, unless it has been adapted specifically for the purpose. E.g. lifting someone on the forks of a fork lift truck must be avoided unless the forks have been fitted with a suitable carrying cage.
- If you identify any damage to lifting accessories such as frayed edges to straps/ropes, damaged wires or stretched hooks/eyes, inform the person controlling the lift immediately.



## Do

- visually inspect lifting equipment prior to use
- plan all lifts in detail, prior to executing them
- ensure that everyone involved in lifting operations understands their role in the lift
- protect ropes and slings from sharp edges where they may get damaged.



## Don't

- operate equipment unless trained and authorised
- use lifting equipment that looks worn or damaged
- exceed maximum load limits on lifting equipment or lifting accessories
- let familiarity with repetitive lifting operations make you become complacent.

# Manual Handling

## Introduction

Manual handling operations means any transporting or supporting of a load (including the lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving thereof) by hand or by bodily force.

## Key Facts

- Bad backs affect people of all ages.
- Poor handling techniques when you are young will contribute to problems in later life.
- Once you damage your back, you are more likely to suffer injury again.
- Incorrect manual handling causes work-related musculoskeletal disorders (MDSs) which account for over a third of all workplace injuries.

## Hints and Tips

- Follow appropriate systems of work developed for your safety.
- Make proper use of equipment provided for your safety.
- Co-operate with your employer on health and safety matters.
- Inform your employer if you identify any hazardous handling activities.
- Ensure that any lifting activities you get involved in do not put others at risk.

Use the acronym **TILE** when preparing to lift anything:

- T = Task (the job to be done);
- I = Individual (the person performing the task and their capabilities);
- L = Load (the physical attributes of the load e.g. hot, cold, weight, shape); and
- E = Environment (the environment where the task is being performed).





## Do

- avoid or reduce manual handling activities where possible
- use mechanical aids where provided
- tell your employer if you have any history of back trouble
- make sure your travel route is clear before moving any objects.



## Don't

- attempt to lift an object without assessing its weight first
- carry objects over long distances
- stoop when picking anything up - bend your knees.

# **Personal Protective Equipment**

## **Introduction**

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** is equipment or clothing that should be worn to protect you from known hazards in the workplace. The most commonly seen items of PPE are probably safety helmets and safety footwear, other forms can include protective gloves, hearing protection and safety glasses or goggles.

Items not classed as PPE under the current legislation include:

- ordinary uniforms and work clothes which do not provide any protection; and
- equipment used while taking part in sport.

## **Key Facts**

- PPE should only be provided if the risks cannot be reduced by more robust means as it only protects the user and not those working within the vicinity.
- PPE may sometimes restrict the movement or the sensory perception of some users. This should be considered during the risk assessment process.
- Where more than one item of PPE is required to be worn simultaneously, your employer must ensure that they are compatible with each other and do not compromise your protection.

## **Hints and Tips**

- Always wear protective equipment in the manner it is designed to be worn. You may think that a safety helmet worn back to front looks cool or trendy, but in reality, it will offer less protection to your head in the event of impact.
- Always ensure that you look after your PPE. Keep it clean and in good condition and always store it properly when not in use. If it's left lying around it could be damaged or get dirty rendering it ineffective when you require it.
- If PPE is uncomfortable to wear or you feel it is ineffective in any way, bring your concerns to the attention of your immediate supervisor or line manager.
- PPE will be issued as and when required and used appropriately.



## Do

- wear protective equipment correctly when it has been issued to you
- store your personal protective equipment securely when not using it
- report defects or loss of your protective equipment.



## Don't

- share your protective equipment with colleague
- wear protective equipment if it appears damaged, broken or worn out
- leave PPE lying around where it can get damaged or dirty.

# **Portable Electrical Appliances**

## **Introduction**

Generally, appliances that have a lead or cable and a plug and which are normally moved around or are easily movable from place to place are classified as portable electrical appliances. This description also incorporates electrical equipment that could be moved, although remains static for the most part, such as photocopiers, desktop computers etc.

## **Key Facts**

- Failure to maintain electrical appliances increases the likelihood of electric shock, fire or serious injury.
- Portable Appliance Testing (typically referred to as PAT tests) are one way of verifying appliances are in a safe condition and if appropriate should be carried out regularly. How often these tests are carried out depends on the conditions that the equipment is used in and how frequently it is moved around.

## **Hints and Tips**

- Look for evidence of a recent PAT test or inspection, this may be a sticker marked with a date.
- Remember to wear the appropriate PPE when using power tools.
- Ensure that the power supply is fitted with an earth-leakage circuit breaker (ELCB) or a residual-current device (RCD).
- Don't bring your own equipment into work unless pre-arranged with your employer, they need to check that it is safe to use.
- Formal visual checks should be carried out by a competent person on a regular basis.



## Do

- carry out visual checks before using any equipment
- let your supervisor know if you find any equipment that needs to be repaired
- use the right equipment for the job
- store your equipment in the correct way, to minimise damage.



## Don't

- use equipment that has frayed cables, scorch marks or damaged casings
- assume that items with an in-date PAT sticker is safe to use
- forget that water and electricity don't mix.

# **Pressure Systems**

## **Introduction**

If pressure equipment fails in use, it can seriously injure or kill people nearby and cause serious damage to property.

## **Key Facts**

Principle causes of incidents are:

- poor equipment and/or system design
  - poor maintenance or equipment
  - an unsafe system of work
  - operator error, poor training/supervision
  - poor installation
  - inadequate repairs or modification.
- Most pressure equipment available on the market must meet the requirements of the Pressure Equipment Regulations.
- Pressure systems must be suitable for their intended purposes and stored correctly.
- Under the Pressure Systems Safety Regulations, a written scheme of examination is required for most pressure systems.

## **Hints and Tips**

- Ensure suitable protective devices (e.g. safety valves, electronic devices which cause shutdown) are fitted to the vessels or pipework before use.
- You must have the necessary skills, knowledge and competence to carry out your job safely - so you must be properly trained.
- Ensure you are aware of the safe usage procedures and the limitations of the system.
- There should be a measuring device to indicate critical conditions within the pressure system - make sure you monitor these devices and report any significant changes as soon as possible.



## Do

- inspect the equipment before use
- be aware of the pressure systems safe operating limits - your supervisor or line manager should inform you of this
- report any problems or defects
- ensure you are aware of all emergency procedures.



## Don't

- adjust the system or try to fix it yourself unless trained
- remove or damage any mark, plate or signage
- use a pressure system which has not been maintained and examined
- ignore start up and shut down procedures.

# **Work Equipment**

## **Introduction**

Work equipment includes any machinery, appliance or tool that is used to carry out a task. Examples include lifting equipment, machinery, hand tools, protective equipment and computer hardware.

## **Key Facts**

- A set of regulations known as the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) applies to work equipment in the workplace.
- Removing or bypassing guards installed for your safety is a common cause of injury with work equipment.

## **Hints and Tips**

- Never take short cuts by using equipment inappropriately, like using a screwdriver instead of a chisel.
- Consider the risks to other people working near you or to members of the public.
- If an electrical machine you are working on develops a fault, isolate the machine (switch it off), then report the matter to your supervisor or line manager.
- Do not attempt or carry out maintenance activities unless you are trained, competent and authorised to do so.





## Do

- ensure the equipment is suitable for the task
- carry out visual inspections before using any equipment
- report any damage or defects to equipment
- follow all safety procedures
- request further training if you feel inadequately experienced to operate the equipment.



## Don't

- use equipment unless you are adequately trained, experienced and authorised to do so
- ignore safety warnings. they are there for a reason
- use equipment if it is damaged or appears to be unsafe.

# **Confined Spaces**

## **Introduction**

A confined space is a place which is substantially enclosed (though not always entirely), and where serious injury can occur from hazardous substances or conditions within the space or nearby (e.g. lack of oxygen).

## **Key Facts**

- Some examples of confined spaces are a chamber, tank, pit, silo, flue and well.
- The air that we breathe contains around 21% oxygen and at that level, people can usually function without difficulty. However, even a small reduction in oxygen levels can have profound effects on the human body. At 17%, judgement is affected, whilst at 10%, light-headedness and breathing difficulties can occur. 8% usually causes nausea and possible collapse and if reduced further to 6%, respiration stops and death will follow in minutes.

## **Hints and Tips**

- Ensure that you are aware of the company policy on confined spaces.
- If you identify a problem with any part of the policy on confined spaces, you should ensure that you bring this promptly to the attention of your supervisor or line manager.
- If you ever feel unwell whilst working in a confined space, notify your supervisor or line manager immediately.



## Do

- follow any safe system of work
- ensure you are wearing all the personal protective equipment required
- make sure you are trained and competent in all aspects of the work expected of you, including any rescue procedures
- leave the confined space immediately, if told to do so or if you begin to feel unwell
- raise the alarm before attempting any rescue (but see point below).



## Don't

- enter any confined space without ensuring a risk assessment has been undertaken and a safe system of work is implemented
- take any non-approved electrical equipment into a confined space
- eat or drink whilst within a confined space
- attempt to rescue anyone unless you have been trained and equipped as a rescuer and are supported by other trained and equipped persons.

# **Display Screen Equipment**

## **Introduction**

Most businesses these days use some form of Display Screen Equipment (DSE).

## **Key Facts**

- A variety of ill-health symptoms have been associated with intensive work with Display Screen Equipment (DSE) including musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) (upper limb disorders; back pain); mental stress; and visual fatigue, eye discomfort.
- Where problems do occur, they are generally caused by the way in which DSE is being used rather than the equipment itself.
- It is a myth that visual display units (VDU's) give out harmful levels of radiation.

## **Hints and Tips**

- Ensure you know how to set up your work station - this includes adjusting the chair, height of screen, avoiding glare from windows or artificial lighting, using a footrest where necessary.
- Problems can often be avoided by good workplace design and good working practices.
- If you use DSE for long periods of time, you are entitled to undergo an eye test which must be paid for by the company.
- If you require glasses for DSE use then the company will meet certain costs.



## Do

- ensure you know how to set up your workstation
- organise your work, if possible, so you have occasional breaks away from the screen
- make sure you have enough room around your workstation
- get regular eye and eyesight checks.



## Don't

- allow problems to go un-reported
- sit in the same position for long periods
- be afraid to adjust a workstation you are unfamiliar with.

# **Fire Safety**

## **Introduction**

A wide variety of flammable substances are found in most workplaces ranging from the obvious such as petrol, chemicals and gasses, to the less obvious such as packaging materials, waste paper and even some dusts. When fires occur, people can suffer burns but around 50% of injury and death in fires is from the inhalation of smoke.

## **Key Facts**

- For fire to exist, you must have oxygen, fuel and heat. These three things are sometimes referred to as 'The Fire Triangle'.
- Given sufficient fuel, a fire will double in size every minute it burns and could totally engulf the average sized domestic house within just 4 minutes.
- Your employer must carry out a fire risk assessment and ensure your route to a place of safety is not compromised. Final exit doors, leading to a place of safety, must not be locked or blocked in any way during working hours.

## **Hints and Tips**

- If you work within a building, office or factory, your employer will have prepared an evacuation plan for use in the event of fire. Make sure you know it and understand the role you are meant to play in it.
- In the event of fire evacuation, proceed directly to the nearest fire exit and leave the building. Do not try and rescue personal belongings or wait for friends. Exit the building by the most direct route and in a calm manner.
- Do not overload plugs sockets and if you see evidence of scorching or burning to plugs, sockets or cabling, report it to your supervisor or line manager immediately.
- Do not use lifts (unless fire lifts) and never allow yourself to get positioned so your exit is compromised.



## Do

- make sure that all sources of heat are properly extinguished unless they need to be left on, such as a pilot light
- keep sources of ignition and fuel apart
- make sure you understand what to do in the event of an emergency.



## Don't

- leave any source of ignition unattended
- interfere with equipment provided for fire safety, such as extinguishers
- use a fire extinguisher to fight a fire unless you have been trained to use it
- endanger your own safety to fight a fire.

# **Noise at Work**

## **Introduction**

Protecting yourself from hearing damage while you are at work, should be a primary concern. There are two main causes of damage to hearing:

- long term exposure to loud noise such as in an engineering workshop or metal fabricators
- exposure to one-off loud bangs or extreme noise, such as mine workers or shot-blasters in a quarry.

## **Key Facts**

- Noise becomes hazardous when it occurs at high levels or continues for a long time.
- Although hearing loss caused by work is preventable, you must realise that once your hearing has gone, it won't come back.
- For many, total hearing loss is a result of damage, thousands of others suffer from tinnitus, sometimes described as a permanent ringing in the ears although this can sound different to each individual.

## **Hints and Tips**

- As a rule of thumb, it should be possible to hold a conversation with someone around 2 metres away from you without raising your voice.
- Help the Charity to do what is needed to protect your hearing. Make sure that any equipment or systems provided for your protection are effective and are used.
- Wear any hearing protection you are given and ensure it is worn properly. Your supervisor, line manager or safety representative should show you how to do this.
- Look after your hearing protection. If it gets damaged, contaminated or worn out, ensure it is replaced immediately.
- If you detect any problems with your hearing protection, let your supervisor, line manager or safety representative know.





## Do

- take your breaks in a quiet place
- keep a safe distance from sources of extreme noise
- have your hearing checked regularly.
- look after your hearing protection
- wear hearing protection where required if it has been provided for you.



## Don't

- work in a noisy environment for longer than you have to
- wear poorly fitting, damaged or dirty hearing protection
- think that one-off loud bangs will not cause you hearing problems.

# **Pandemics**

## **Introduction**

A pandemic is defined as "an epidemic occurring worldwide, or over a very wide area, crossing international boundaries and usually affecting a large number of people".

When a disease outbreak happens, it can cause widespread illness and disruption to normal business services. Past pandemics have included for example various influenza (Flu) pandemics, Cholera and more recently, Coronavirus (Covid-19).

In the event of pandemic outbreak, you can play a key role in protecting your own and colleagues' health as well as minimising the impact on our activities.

## **Key Facts**

- There are various means by which infectious agents can be transferred from a source to susceptible individuals. The modes of spread of infection can be classified as:
  - Direct Contact: Person to person
  - Indirect Contact: Transmitted via contaminated objects or insects/animals
  - Hands/face: Person to person, or person to object
  - Inhalation: Breathing in the infectious agent
  - Ingestion: Entering the body through the mouth via hand contact, food or drink
  - Inoculation: Following injuries with contaminated sharps.

## **Hints and Tips**

- Good hygiene practices are essential.
- Regular, careful hand washing is vital, where hand washing facilities are not available use appropriate sanitising products.
- If you are suffering from cold or flu like symptoms, remember the 'Catch it, bin it, kill it' message. Use of disposable tissues is preferable to using handkerchiefs in reducing the spread of infection.
- Remember to use an appropriate grade of sanitiser or disinfectant on any surfaces such as workstations, hand held tools, office furniture or other surfaces as they may have been contaminated.
- Also, where the infectious agent can be airborne then "social distancing" will most likely be appropriate.



## Do

- observe safe systems of work
- observe good hygiene practices such as regular hand washing and increased cleaning regimes
- work from home when advised
- wear any personal protective equipment required by safe systems and risk assessments
- avoid public transport when so instructed.



## Don't

- come to work if you have symptoms of the disease
- have been advised by a medical professional not to attend work
- discuss any issues or concerns you may have.

# **Slips, Trips and Falls**

## **Introduction**

Slips, Trips and Falls are an unfortunate occurrence of day-to-day life and often seen as humorous events, but this is far from the truth. By taking a few simple precautions, you can significantly reduce the risks.

## **Key Facts**

- Around a third of all specified injuries reported each year are caused as a result of a slip, trip or fall (the single most common cause of injuries at work). They also account for more than half of all reported injuries to members of the public.
- Anyone at work can help to reduce slip, trip and fall hazards through good health and safety arrangements. Effective solutions are often simple, cheap and can lead to other benefits.

## **Hints and Tips**

- Make sure you know what to do with spillages.
- Make sure that leaks are reported as soon as identified.
- Play your part in cleaning regimes and schedules.
- Keep your work area tidy.
- Choose appropriate footwear for the tasks you are undertaking or the area in which you are working.
- Check that floor surfaces are in good condition and report defects.



## Do

- walk on designated walking routes if these are available
- wear footwear appropriate to the work you are carrying out
- report defects in floor surfaces to your supervisor or line manager immediately
- keep work areas tidy and free from slip and trip hazards.



## Don't

- walk on uneven surfaces or where there have been fluid spills
- walk in poorly lit areas
- expect others to report defects - it is everyone's responsibility.

# **Working at Height**

## **Introduction**

Falls are the biggest cause of death and injury in Britain's workplaces. You don't have to fall far to be hurt; deaths and injury can occur from any height.

## **Key Facts**

- Working at height remains one of the biggest causes of fatalities and major injuries in the UK. There are about 50 deaths and more than 3,500 specified injuries each year caused by falls from height. Common causes include falls from ladders and falls through fragile roof surfaces.
- The Work at Height Regulations applies to all work at height where there is a risk of a fall which could cause personal injury, this also applies to those who work at height providing instruction or leadership in caving or climbing by way of sport, recreation, team-building or similar.
- Your employer/instructor must do all that is reasonably practicable to prevent anyone from falling.

## **Hints and Tips**

- Follow the risk assessment and safe system of work as carried out by the Charity.
- Follow the hierarchy for managing risks from work at height: avoid - prevent - reduce.
- Everyone uses ladders, however not everyone uses them safely - ensure you are a safe user.
- Choose the right equipment for the jobs and ensure the necessary control measures are in place.
- Where work at height is necessary you need to justify whether a ladder or stepladder is the most suitable access equipment compared to other access equipment options.
- Make your supervisor or line manager aware of any medical conditions or medication which could increase the risks from working at height.



## Do

- wear adequate Personal Protective Equipment at all times
- comply with any procedures and signage
- inspect work at height equipment before use
- secure ladders
- maintain three points of contact when using ladders
- erect mobile tower scaffolds as you have been trained to do
- take care not to drop anything whilst at height.



## Don't

- work at height if you feel unsafe.
- work at height if weather conditions will endanger you.
- work on or near a fragile surface unless adequate precautions are in place.

# **Workplace Transport**

## **Introduction**

People and vehicles operating together can often be a recipe for disaster. However, with a little planning risks can be reduced and, in some cases, avoided altogether.

## **Key Facts**

- Traffic routes must be suitable for the people and/or vehicles using them and both must be able to circulate safely at all times.
- All workplace transport must be tested, inspected and maintained regularly.
- There are five types of accidents associated with workplace transport:
- being struck by a moving vehicle
- falling from a vehicle
- being hit by a falling load
- being hit against a vehicle whilst travelling in it
- injury caused by a vehicle collapse or overturn.

## **Hints and Tips**

- You must be trained before you can operate workplace transport. N.B. Some equipment has specific restrictions and requirements for use e.g. fork lift trucks.
- Visually inspect your vehicle before use and report any damage or defects to your supervisor or line manager.
- Remove the key when unattended to prevent unauthorised use.
- Ensure you wear appropriate PPE (and specifically high-visibility clothing) at all times.
- Always be aware of your surroundings.





## Do

- use pedestrian routes if these are available to you
- follow site safety rules if you are driving a vehicle
- take notice of all signs - they are there for your safety
- buckle up - seatbelts save lives!



## Don't

- walk or stand in areas designated as traffic routes where possible.
- ride in or on a vehicle as a passenger unless it is designed to take passengers.
- think you are safe in car parks. they are not as safe as you might think.

# **Workplace Welfare**

## **Introduction**

Workplace and welfare issues cover a wide range of basic health, safety and welfare topics and apply to most workplaces. Workplaces must meet the health, safety and welfare needs of all members of a workforce, including people with disabilities. Topics such as lighting, workstations and seating, facilities for rest and to eat meals, toilet and washing and maintenance are covered by workplace and welfare.

## **Key Facts**

- Most workplaces have broadly similar hazards and welfare arrangements.
- There should be fresh, clean air circulating, via windows or by properly maintained mechanical means. Windows should be able to be opened safely.
- The temperature should normally be at least 16°C unless rigorous physical effort is involved in which case the minimum should 13°C. There is currently no maximum workplace temperature.
- A suitable supply of drinking water should be provided.
- Adequate toilets should be provided for the number of employees. Washing facilities should have hot running water, soap and a means of drying.

## **Hints and Tips**

- Rest areas should be readily accessible, clean and have suitable surfaces to place food upon. Seats should be provided for use during rest breaks.
- Pregnant women and nursing mothers should have suitable rest facilities.
- Workstations must have sufficient surrounding space and workers must be able to leave workstations swiftly if needed. Seating should be suitable for each worker and a footrest provided if needed.
- Flooring should be suitable and not uneven or slippery.
- Sufficient lighting should be provided, natural light where possible. Emergency lighting should be provided if an artificial light source could fail.



## Do

- raise any concerns about workplace facilities with your supervisor or line manager
- clean as you go, and keep facilities and your workstation clean and tidy
- ensure that equipment is kept in good repair and maintained regularly.



## Don't

- obstruct traffic routes
- leave any waste materials lying around, put them in the appropriate place
- forget to wash your hands before eating or drinking, especially if you work in dusty or oily environments.