

COMMUNITIES 1st

Health and Safety Policy

General statement of policy

Communities 1st is working towards a comprehensive Health and Safety Policy and is bound to abide by the Health and Safety at Work Act. This lays down certain duties on all staff and office volunteers. The duties are to take care of their own safety and that of other staff, volunteers and visitors and to co-operate with the Trustee Board and its officers to enable it to carry out its responsibilities.

In particular staff and volunteers have a duty to:

- work safely, efficiently and without endangering the health and safety of themselves, their colleagues or any other person who has a right of access to the organisation's premises at any time
- adhere to safety procedures laid down by Communities 1st from time to time, and conform to all instructions given by those with a responsibility for health and safety
- record all accidents, near miss occurrences and hazardous situations in the Health and Safety/Accident book and report to the next staff meeting
- meet their other statutory safety obligations including that laid down in Section 8 of the Act, which states that "no person shall intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare in pursuance of any of the relevant statutory provisions".

Organisation and responsibilities

Trustee Board

Overall and final health and safety responsibility within the organisation lies with the Trustee Board. The Trustee Board shall appoint one person who will take the responsibility for drawing to the attention of the Trustee Board, staff and office volunteers any health and safety matters that need to be discussed and/or acted upon.

Delegated responsibilities

The Chief Executive shall be given delegated responsibility for ensuring that the Health and Safety policy is carried out within the organisation. In particular s/he will be given delegated responsibility for:

- carrying out regular safety inspections in the offices utilised by Communities 1st
 - ensuring that staff are provided with suitable seating and appropriate computer work stations
 - ensuring that floors and aisles are kept clear, as far as reasonably practical, of trailing wires, equipment, stationery, etc.
 - ensuring that the general fabric of the offices (including office items & equipment used by staff) is maintained
- investigating and reporting accidents
- ensuring that a Health and Safety Workplace poster on "Health and Safety Law" is displayed
- making staff and office volunteers aware of the specific fire escapes and fire extinguishers within the building

- ensuring staff and volunteers are given a copy of this Policy and understand its contents; ensuring that staff and volunteers are made familiar with the alarm systems within the building and action to be taken in the event of a fire
- drawing to the attention of the Trustee Board, Chief Executive and staff any new legislation on health and safety relevant to the work of Communities 1st
- drawing to the Trustee Board's attention any matters with which s/he is unable to deal.

Staff and volunteers

All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to:

- read and fully understand the Communities 1st's Policy statement and the procedures to be carried out in the event of an emergency. If there is any doubt about the meaning, staff must seek clarification from the Chief Executive
- co-operate with the Trustee Board and the Chief Executive, as appropriate, to achieve a healthy and safe workplace and to take reasonable care of themselves and others
- report to the Chief Executive within 24 hours any accident occurring:
 - on the premises
 - off the premises whilst acting on behalf of Communities 1st
- bring to the notice of the Chief Executive any potentially dangerous circumstances that the employee is unable to put right.

General arrangements

Accidents, near-miss occurrences and hazardous situations

Communities 1st has a Health and Safety Accident Book located next to the First Aid Kits and all incidents, no matter how small, must be recorded as soon as possible after the incident. The incident should also be reported to the Wellbeing Services Manager. In addition to reporting accidents it is equally important to report near misses and potential hazards so as to enable preventative action to be taken before it is too late. Once an incident has been recorded in the Accident Book the Sheet must be removed and stored separately, e.g. in the personnel file.

It is the responsibility of the Wellbeing Services Manager to ensure that any necessary follow up action is taken to reduce the risk of the accident or near accident reoccurring.

The Chief Executive is responsible for reporting incidents which come within the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases & Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR), to the Health and Safety Executive. RIDDOR covers the following incidents:

- (a) fatal accidents
- (b) major injury accidents/conditions
- (c) dangerous occurrences
- (d) accidents causing more than 7 days incapacity for work
- (e) certain work-related diseases.

General fire safety

Wellbeing Services Manager is responsible for the maintenance of the fire fighting equipment and the arrangement of regular fire safety checks and fire drills. The Wellbeing Services Manager also undertakes a Fire Risk Assessment for the building.

All staff must also read and understand the Fire Procedure.

Personal safety

1. Staff or volunteers who are working on their own should not allow access to casual visitors who have no appointment.
2. All windows and entry doors will be lockable.
3. Staff or volunteers who are going to be away on Communities 1st business should make it clear to other staff (and put in diary) where they will be, how long for and how they can be contacted.
4. Staff and volunteers should inform the office who they wish to be contacted in the event of an emergency giving contact details.
5. Staff who carry money for Communities 1st have the right to be accompanied by another person.
6. Visits to the bank should not be at a regular time.
7. Staff and volunteers should not put themselves at risk on account of Communities 1st's property.
8. All incidents of aggression or violence and any threat to personal safety should be reported to the Chief Executive and recorded in the accident book.
9. Staff and volunteers should be vigilant with regards to terrorist incident warnings – e.g. unattended bags.