

Health & Safety Guidelines for Employers

Every Employer and Employee have duties under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 to protect themselves, other employees and members of the public so far as is reasonably practicable.

The basis of British Health & Safety Law is the [Health & Safety at Work Act 1974](#). You are required to display the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 on your work premises. Posters are available from [HSE Books](#).

Health & Safety Law is in general good common sense. Steps should be implemented to assess and reduce foreseeable risks or potential hazards in the work place. The HSE have produced a useful guide to risk assessments. For more information [click here](#).

[The Management of Health & Safety Regulations 1999](#) require that you examine whether you as an employer have taken enough precautions or whether you should do more. The HSE have a leaflet which gives employers practical guidance. You can link direct to this leaflet by [clicking here](#).

[Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992](#) require that we adopt a set of principles to the way we conduct manual handling activities. Where possible you should avoid manual handling. The HSE have produced a leaflet, which provides guidance to employers about manual handling. Just [click here](#) to access it. Where manual handling cannot be avoided it is necessary to conduct a risk assessment. The HSE have recently released a new manual handling risk assessment tool which is free to download from their website. You can download this tool by [clicking here](#).

As an employer you have a duty to ensure that your staff have information and are adequately [trained](#) and supervised to do the job you have employed them to do.

Induction Training

All care worker employees under the [National Minimum Standards for Domiciliary Care](#), and in accordance with [Topss Standards](#) must receive induction training. The training should be applied prior to the applicant starting work. Most of the components are statutory requirements and require updating on an annual basis. It is relevant to note that the regulations of the [Care Standards Act 2000](#) may not be applicable to the employer however; compliance with the National Minimum Standards is highly recommended and is considered good practice. Although the employer may not need to comply with the National Minimum Standards for Domiciliary Care every employer is bound

by [Health & Safety Law](#).

Please note that all applicants and members of staff must hold a current manual handling certificate (completed within 12 months and updated annually). Any member of staff not in compliance should not be able to work in an area that requires any manual handling activities.

Supervision

Where there is a team, appointed to care for the service user, individual supervision should be conducted by a suitably qualified appointed member of the team. Supervision ensures that a staff member is competent at completing work-based tasks and is complying with the employer's working guidelines. Supervision allows the staff member to express concerns about issues in the work place and is a vital component of a system of work. All documentation must be kept in the personnel files respectively and sufficient steps should be taken to ensure confidential information is kept securely locked away.

Appraisals

Appraisals should be conducted on all members of staff on a three monthly interval. A suitably appointed member of the team or the employer may conduct the appraisals. Appraisals review an employee's goals, strengths and weaknesses. Further training and support can be identified. Appraisals should be considered as a positive experience which encourages the employee to express their opinions.

Where there is no team leader or only one member of staff caring for the service user the responsibility of supervision and appraisal could be undertaken by a suitably qualified relative. Employers have a duty to ensure their employees are competent at the job they are doing and have sufficient training and instruction. Appraisals and supervision are a system of work that assists the employer to discharge their duty under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974.

Criminal Convictions

All employees working in the care sector should be inspected for the disclosure of a criminal conviction. Other than for minor driving convictions such as parking tickets all disclosures should be investigated thoroughly. You should consider carefully the circumstances behind the conviction. All applicants will be placed in a position of trust with, and in some circumstances, with a vulnerable individual and or children. The final decision should be made following careful consideration. Please consult [acas](#) or the [Equal Opportunities Commission](#) for advice on discrimination issues.

CRB Checks

All care workers are required to have a satisfactory check with the [Criminal Records Bureau](#). Checks made with the Criminal Records Bureau are strongly recommended and costs vary according to the institution you acquire them through. Further information can be obtained from <http://www.crb.gov.uk>

Health Status

Your employee should be fit to do the job they are employed to do. A copy of a health certificate from the applicants' GP should be retained on the applicants' personnel file. An employer has a duty to ensure that the employee is fit to do the job they are assigned for and their health is monitored as a result of the job they do. All accidents and near misses should be investigated and reported accordingly. You can purchase an accident book from [HSE Books](#). Further information about accident reporting and RIDDOR 1995 can be found by [clicking here](#). Employer's Liability [Insurance](#) is compulsory if you employ people to work for you.

Policies & Procedures

The Employer should have a Policies and Procedures Information File which must be retained on the service user's premises and is considered good practice. An Employer with more than 5 employees is required by law to have a Health & Safety Policy in effect. Further information about Health & Safety can be obtained from [the Health & Safety Executive](#).

It is recommended that all members of staff complete and sign the relevant documentation to confirm;

- They have completed the induction training programme
- They have read and agree to abide by the Employer's policies and procedures
- They have read and agree to abide by the conditions of employment as laid down in their Employee Handbooks.
- Evidence of such is retained in their personnel files.
- Should an accident occur the file may be requested for inspection.

As an employer you are required to supply adequate first aid facilities. There are different sized first aid kits available. Ensure you have an adequate sized kit. You may require a first aid officer and your staff may need training.

You may need to acquire a fire certificate for your work premises. Ensure you ask the advice of your local fire station and request an inspection. You may be required to supply adequate fire safety equipment such as smoke alarms, fire extinguishers and a fire blanket as well as fire safety training.