

Policies & procedures manuals

It is a legal requirement under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 section 2(3) for companies employing five or more people to have a written health and safety policy. This is called a health and safety policy document and describes your organisation's general policy on health and safety at work and arrangements for managing health and safety including who does what, when and how.

Establishing a health and safety policy that becomes part of your organisation's culture, values and performance standards is crucial to successful health and safety management. We believe the only effective way to do this is by the development of bespoke health and safety policies and procedures which reflect the individual needs of your organisation.

What should your health and safety policy contain?

The health and safety policy document is a live document and should evolve over time. It should be reviewed regularly and updated to reflect any operational or organisational changes that have been implemented. Typically it can be split down into three main sections.

1. Statement of General Policy

This is generally a one page document which sets out your organisation's overall approach to health and safety and the objectives and arrangements that have been put in place for managing health and safety in your business. It should set out who does what, when and how. The policy statement must be signed and dated. This also demonstrates commitment from the top level within your organisation.

There are no hard and fast rules as to what should be included in the statement however the following are often included:

- Your organisation's commitment to keeping employees, customers and anyone else affected by your business activities safe
- Confirmation that you understand the legal duty you have to provide a safe working environment, safe work equipment and safe methods of work
- Name and job title of the person with responsibility for health and safety
- Details of specific staff responsibilities
- Your organisation's commitment to staff consultation and involvement in day to day health and safety issues
- Your organisation's commitment to providing advice and supervision on matters relating to occupational health
- The arrangements you will put into place to support the policy

2. Responsibilities

This section should set out clearly who is responsible for what tasks. As an employer, you must appoint a 'competent person' to help you meet your health and safety duties. This must be someone with the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to manage health and safety. If the relevant skills are not available in-house then you can appoint someone from outside the organisation to take on this role.

When setting out responsibilities you will need to consider which individuals will be responsible for undertaking risk assessments, conducting workplace inspections and ensuring specific tasks or work activities are carried out safely.

3. Arrangements

This sets out the detail as to what you are going to do in practice to achieve the aims set out in your general policy. This includes the steps you are going to take to eliminate or control the risk of any identified hazards in the workplace. This may include actions such as staff training, improved signage, PPE, installation of anti-slip flooring etc.

Setting bespoke policies and procedures

Bespoke policies and procedures will need to be developed to address particular health and safety issues. Areas that may be addressed in your bespoke procedures include:

Corporate Arrangements

- Health and safety policy
- Management organisational structure
- Employees health and safety responsibility
- Accidents & incidents reporting (including RIDDOR)
- First aid
- Emergency plan
- Control of contractors
- Contractor rules
- Information for tenants

Risk Management Procedures and Documentation

- Control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH)
- Display screen equipment
- Electrical safety
- Environmental policy statement
- Fire management
- Fire records
- Asbestos management
- Communicable diseases
- Gas safety
- General work environment
- Grounds maintenance by employees
- Lift safety
- Lone working
- Manual handling
- Permit to work
- Personal protective equipment
- Records summary
- Stress at work
- Traffic management
- Visitor safety
- Water safety
- Window cleaning
- Work equipment
- Working at height

How we can help

Metro SRM are able to work with you to develop policies that suit your specific needs. This should minimise health and safety issues and allow your organisation to respond quickly where difficulties arise and risks are introduced. We can also assist with procedures manuals and documentation, which are required for a wide range of health and safety issues such as manual handling, lift safety or asbestos management.

Our consultants have worked with clients throughout a wide range of sectors and property types including managing agents, retailers, education, the motor trade, housing associations and non-profit making organisations. They understand that clients' needs and working processes are different and are able to develop health and safety policies and procedures appropriate to your business.

Please contact us on 0845 058 9999 for further information.

Typical information to be included a management plan includes:

- Details of the locations and condition of known and presumed ACMs;
- Priority assessments for all ACMs;
- Prioritised actions for ACMs;
- Details about the management options and their rationale;
- Timescales for implementing actions;
- Arrangements for monitoring the condition of ACMs;
- The responsibilities of employees;
- Arrangements for the training of employees and contractors whose work could foreseeably expose them to asbestos. Training for these people is now a mandatory requirement of the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006.
- Mechanisms for the passing on of information about the location and condition of ACMs to those who need it; This should include employees, contractors and anyone likely to work on or disturb the ACMs;
- Details of who will be responsible for maintaining the management plan; and details of how and when the plan will be reviewed.

If any building work is to be undertaken which will disturb the fabric of the building then arrangements will need to be made for a refurbishment or demolition survey to be conducted prior to any building work being undertaken.