

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY



Health and Safety Guidance Note



NFU Mutual
RISK MANAGEMENT SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

The term “health and safety policy” simply means a description of your business’ commitment to managing the health and safety of your employees and others affected by your work activities.

Every business is required to have a health and safety policy, and if you employ five or more people the law requires this to be in writing. However, there are advantages to having a written policy regardless of the size of your business as amongst other things it will help to:

- Show a firm commitment to the health, safety and welfare of your employees and others (e.g. your customers, contractors, the public etc.);
- Clarify where responsibilities lie for health and safety;
- Help to build confidence in your business when submitting tenders or seeking new contracts for work.

A good health and safety policy doesn’t need to be lengthy or complicated as long as it is specific to your business, and clearly sets out who does what and how with respect to managing health and safety. The policy must be kept up to date by reviewing it whenever appropriate (e.g. annually; following a change in management structure or expansion of the business etc.) and then brought to the attention of all your employees and other relevant parties (e.g. contractors, sub-contractors, etc.).

WHAT DOES THE HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY NEED TO SAY?

The health and safety policy should normally be in three parts:

- Statement of General Policy;
- Organisation; and
- Arrangements.

The policy should be signed and dated by a senior official of the business – this would normally be the most senior person (e.g. Owner, Managing Director, or the Partners etc.).

An example Health and Safety policy template can be downloaded for free from the HSE website. See Further Resources below.

STATEMENT OF GENERAL POLICY

The General Statement of Policy is a declaration of intent, detailing your commitment to ensure the health and safety of all employees and others affected by your work activities. This should be reinforced by specific provisions and objectives relevant to the organisation, such as:

- Allocation of sufficient resources to ensure a safe and healthy place of work;
- Provision of appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision;
- Promotion of employee consultation on matters affecting health and safety.

An example Statement of General Policy is included at the end of this guidance note.

ORGANISATION

This section should be appropriate to the size of your business, and reflect the way in which it is organised to carry out the aims and objectives of the health and safety policy. In a small business this may simply be a case of one individual taking responsibility for co-ordinating health and safety. In more complex businesses, key individuals / job titles should be identified wherever possible and their roles and responsibilities defined (e.g. the responsibility for training or carrying out risk assessments).

This section should also be used to describe the way in which employees will be consulted on health and safety issues. Once again this should reflect the nature and size of the business and may range from informal meetings and the use of noticeboards, to formal consultation and committees involving elected safety representatives or appointed trade union representatives.

ARRANGEMENTS

This section should describe how your business will meet the commitments made in the General Statement of Policy. Depending on the size and nature of your business this may be one detailed section of the health and safety policy document; or an index of separate procedures.

However it is set out, it should detail the systems and processes in place for complying with the various legislative requirements that apply to your business; and provide detail on how you will ensure the health and safety of your employees and others affected by your business by eliminating or reducing, so far as is reasonably practicable, the risks posed by the hazards in your workplace.

The following list is not exhaustive, and equally may not all be relevant for your business, but the headings may be helpful in identifying your arrangements:

- Risk Assessment;
- Safe Systems of Work;
- Consultation & Communication;
- Information, Instruction, Training and Supervision;
- Emergency Procedures;
- First Aid;
- Accident Reporting;
- Hazardous Substances;
- Occupational Health;
- Manual Handling;
- Personal Protective Equipment;
- Welfare Facilities;
- Lone Working;
- Work Equipment/Statutory Inspections;
- Noise and Vibration;
- Display Screen Equipment;
- Workplace Traffic Management and Transport Safety;
- Occupational Driving;
- Fire Safety;
- Electrical Safety;
- Waste Management;
- Legionella and Water Quality;
- Asbestos;
- Work at Height;
- Confined Spaces;
- Third Parties;
- Management of Contractors;
- Safety Signage;
- Monitoring and Review.

MONITORING & REVIEW

A system of monitoring the effectiveness of your arrangements and for reviewing safety performance as a whole should be developed.

Reviewing the health and safety policy itself may consist of simply checking that all areas of the policy are still relevant and having it re-signed and dated by senior management; however where significant changes have occurred some sections may need more detailed revision or expansion.

FURTHER GUIDANCE

- HSE website: Prepare a health and safety policy
www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/policy/how-to-write-your-policy.htm
- INDG449 Health and safety made simple, The basics for your business
www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg449.pdf

This document is available to download free of charge from www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/

STATEMENT OF GENERAL POLICY

This is the Health and Safety Policy Statement of:

NAME OF BUSINESS

We recognise and accept our responsibility to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of all our employees, contractors, visitors and members of the public who may be affected by our employee activities. Health and Safety is a key element and contributor in the overall success of the business. It therefore has equal priority with other aspects of management and will be managed with the same determination and commitment. Any decisions made by the business will take full account of any Health and Safety implications for all our employees and those under our control. We will endeavour to ensure the health and safety of all others who could be foreseeably affected by activities under our control.

It is our aim to promote, set and maintain the highest standards for health, safety and welfare matters. This will be achieved by:

- Providing adequate control of health and safety risks arising from the activities we undertake;
- Consulting with employees and contractors on matters affecting health and safety;
- Providing and maintaining safe premises, machinery and equipment;
- Maintaining safe systems of work;
- Ensuring safe handling and use of substances;
- Providing information, instruction and supervision for employees;
- Providing information for visiting members of the public;
- Ensuring all employees are competent to do their work;
- Maintaining safe and healthy working conditions;
- Reviewing and revising this Policy as necessary at regular intervals; and
- Putting measures in place to prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health.

Health and Safety is viewed as “everyone’s business”. To achieve a high standard of health and safety, the active co-operation of all employees is essential. This policy and associated documents will be revised annually, or after any significant change or legislation likely to affect the policy. This policy will be publicised and available to third parties on request.

Signed:

Job Title:

Date:

Review Date:

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