



GAVCA Specimen Policy: Health and Safety Policy Development

January 2010

Background information to support your policy development

Health and safety is an essential policy for your organisation. The cornerstone of health and safety legislation is the Health and Safety Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. There are several other significant acts which add into this legislation.

Who should adopt the policy for the organisation?

Trustees are responsible for the adoption of this policy as they are responsible to employees, public and volunteers engaged in their organisation's activities. The Trustees can delegate the writing of the policy.

Considerations for your organisation

- How does this translate into every day action for your organisation? Who takes responsibility for the overseeing of the policy?

Recent Changes

Keep up to date with Health and Safety legislation and use the HSE website: www.hse.gov.uk Risk assessment is an essential part of Health and Safety and should be reviewed annually. Duty of care and health and safety duties are increasingly being applied not only to the physical environment but also to stress and abuse within the workplace.

For more information about Health and Safety

- At GAVCA we have *The Voluntary Sector Legal Handbook 2009* edition for detailed legal checks. You are welcome to drop in to look at this resource. Contact Gloucester 01452 332424 and Cheltenham 01242 227737
- GAVCA's Health and Safety Policy as a pdf
- Health and Safety Executive Website www.hse.gov.uk Homepage follow links to 'Write a Safety Policy'.
- Risk assessment – HSE 5 Steps to Risk Assessment. HSE homepage, follow links to do a risk assessment.
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Gloucestershire Association for Voluntary and Community Action

Health and Safety Policy Statement

Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974

1 Overview

1.1 GAVCA accepts its responsibilities for providing and maintaining working conditions which are safe and without risk to health in accordance with the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and within the framework of relevant statutory requirements.

1.2 Our statement of general policy is to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of all staff, members of the public, visitors and voluntary workers using all GAVCA offices, so far as is reasonably practicable by:

- providing adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from our work activities;
- Consulting with our employees on matters affecting their health and safety;
- Providing and maintaining safe equipment;
- Ensuring safe handling and use of substances;
- Providing information, instruction and supervision for employees
- Ensuring all employees are competent to do their tasks, and to give them adequate training;
- Preventing accidents and cases of work-related ill health;
- Providing safe systems of work:
- Maintaining safe and healthy working conditions; and
- Reviewing and revising this policy as necessary at regular intervals.

1.3 As Building managers of 75-81 Eastgate Street, GAVCA is responsible ensuring safe passage for both staircases and the Foyer, and for keeping the carpark

area in a clean and tidy condition. GAVCA is not responsible for other tenants' offices. However if staff are aware of any potential problem it should be reported by GAVCA to Gloucester City Support Services or the Chief Executive of GAVCA.

SIGNED _____ (Employer)

DATE _____ **REVIEW DATE** _____

2 Responsibilities

GAVCA recognizes that Health and Safety is the responsibility of **everyone**, whether they are staff, volunteers or Executive Committee members. However, there are particular responsibilities resting with employers and employees as detailed below:

Overall and final responsibility for health and safety is that of **Chief Executive**

Day to day implementation of this policy is delegated to, Support Services Team Leader.

To ensure health and safety standards are maintained/improved, the following staff have responsibility in the following areas
Gloucester VCA: reception, offices, kitchen, toilets, Foyer, training room
Cheltenham VCA reception and office
ICT equipment

2.1 *Employer's Responsibility*

2.1.1 Every new employee must be introduced to the Health and Safety Policy on their first day of work, and given a copy of the Health and Safety Policy Statement.

2.1.2 the Chief Executive is the designated Health and Safety Appointed Person and is responsible for ensuring all aspects of the policy are adhered to as follows:

- Advising the Executive Committee on all aspects of health and safety at work.
- Ensuring that the general policy and any supplementary statements are implemented and kept under review. (eg. Lone working, handling violent and aggressive behavior.)
- Ensuring that the premises of GAVCA are maintained in a safe and tidy condition.
- Maintaining a record in the accident book of all accidents to staff, members / visitors

to the premises.

- Investigating all accidents, with a view to ascertaining and overcoming and shortcomings in the organisation, and arrangements for dealing with health and safety at the premises.
- Liaising, as necessary, with the Executive Committee, the Health and Safety Executive, the City Council and other appropriate authorities in the formulation of the safety advice and procedures.

2.2 *Employees' / volunteers' responsibility*

2.2.1 Personnel are expected to be mindful of their own safety and to take “reasonable care of themselves”.

2.2.2 All employees must:

- Co-operate with supervisors and managers on health and safety matters;
- Not interfere with anything provided to safeguard their health and safety;
- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety; and
- Report all health and safety concerns to an appropriate person (as detailed in this policy statement).

2.2.3 All GAVCA staff are responsible for their visitors, whilst in the building, in the event of a crisis.

2.2.4 The Trainer/Facilitator or person chairing the meeting / leading the activity is responsible for all visitors in the training room: see appendix III and fire procedures appendix II

3 Risk Assessments

3.1 Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 Regulations 3 states Every employer shall make suitable and sufficient assessment of

- the risks to health and safety of his employees to which they are exposed whilst they are at work and
- the risks to the health and safety of persons not in his employment arising out of or in connection with conduct by him of his undertaking

3.2 Risk Assessments will be undertaken by in Gloucester andin Cheltenham.

3.3 The findings of the risk assessments will be reported to

3.4 Action required to remove/control risks will be approved by, who is responsible for ensuring the action required is implemented.

3.5 The Support Services Team, **names.....**will check that the implemented actions have removed/reduced the risks.

3.6 Assessments will be reviewed every **month** or when the work activity changes, whichever is soonest.

4 Consultation with Employees

4.1 Consultation with employees and volunteers on health and safety matters that affect them is provided through monthly staff meetings and carried out by.....

5 Safe equipment

5.1 is responsible for identifying all equipment needing maintenance and ensuring effective maintenance procedures are drawn up.

5.2 is responsible for ensuring that all identified maintenance is implemented.

5.3 Any problems found with equipment should be reported to:
– Gloucester office
– Cheltenham office
– ICT equipment

5.4 will check that new equipment meets health and safety standards before it is purchased.

6 Safe handling and use of substances

6.1 is responsible for identifying all substances hazardous to health under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH) and which need a COSHH assessment.

6.2 is responsible for undertaking COSHH assessments.

6.3 is responsible for ensuring that all actions identified in the assessments are implemented.

6.4 is responsible for ensuring that all relevant employees are informed about the COSHH assessments.

6.5 will check that new substances can be used safely before they are purchased.

6.6 Assessments will be reviewed every **month** or when the work activity changes, whichever is soonest.

7. Information, instruction and supervision

7.1 The Health and Safety Law poster is displayed in the safe area (corridor connecting all offices) in 75-81 Eastgate Street, and in the Cheltenham VCA office in the Cheltenham Lower High Street Resource Centre.

7.2 Health and safety advice is available from:

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- **The Health and Safety Executive:**
Info line 0845 345 0055
Website www.hse.gov.uk
HSE direct www.hsedirect.com

7.3 Supervision of young workers/trainees will be arranged/undertaken/monitored by their identified **line manager**is responsible for ensuring that our employees working at locations under the control of other employers are given relevant health and safety information.

8 Competency for tasks and training

8.1 Appropriate training will be provided to Appointed First Aiders, the Appointed Health and Safety Person and any other training required by staff to ensure their safety and well being.

8.2 Induction health and safety training, including first aid and fire safety procedures, will be provided for all employees by

8.3 Job specific training will be arranged by the employee's **Line Manager**.

8.4 Specific jobs requiring special training are: Admin volunteers and staff: Health and safety, first aid, food handling, manual handling

8.5 Training records are kept by the employee's **Line Manager**.

8.6 Training will be identified, arranged and monitored by the employee's **Line Manager**

9. Accidents, first aid and work-related ill health

9.1 Two members of staff will be appointed as first aiders. These should be chosen as people who are in the office most of the time.

The appointed first aiders are:
.....

9.2 All accidents and cases of work-related ill health must be reported in the **accident book**. The book is kept in **Reception**.

9.3 The **first aid kit** is kept in the **Reception area** in both the (Gloucester office and the Cheltenham office).

9.4 is responsible for reporting accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences to the enforcing authority.

9.5 is responsible for investigating accidents.

9.6 is responsible for investigating work-related causes of sickness absences.

9.7 is responsible for acting on investigation findings to prevent a recurrence.

10. Fire

10.1 is responsible for ensuring the fire risk assessment is undertaken and implemented.

10.2 Escape routes are checked by every day

10.3 **Fire extinguishers are maintained and checked by Fire Service Appliance** every 3 months

10.4 Alarms are tested by every week

10.5 Emergency evacuation is tested every **year**.

11 Monitoring

To check our working conditions, and ensure our safe working practices are being followed, we will report to the Trustees annually. Our Health & Safety Policy is also available and reviewed every year.

Date reviewed 3 June 08

Prepared by:

Issue Number: 02

GAVCA Health and Safety Procedures

1 Office: premises and equipment

1.1. All staff and volunteers must be acquainted with fire safety procedures, exit route and meeting point, location of equipment and break glass alarms, on their first day of work on the premises.

1.2 Employers and Public Liability Insurance must be kept up to date at all times.

1.3 Safety checks of premises and equipment are carried out by the Support Services Team, as follows:

Definitions:

Hazard

A hazard means something or someone which could/can cause harm e.g. a frayed electrical wire, working with a violent or potentially violent person etc.

Risk

The chance/possibility that a person may be harmed by the hazard i.e. electrocuted or attacked/assaulted.

Checking hazards is common sense, and when identified, must be acted upon to prevent possible harm. All risks or hazards must be reported to your line manager as they occur. Ensure that the information is shared with other workers or clients or other users of the organisation.

Possible hazards:

- * smoking on the premises
- * unsafe furniture, fixtures or fittings within the office
- * leads and wires left in areas where it is possible to be caught up or trip
- * electrical faults
- * drug or alcohol use
- * stress in the workplace
- * illness or sickness which might be deemed as a risk to other staff or clients (chickenpox etc)
- * security measures (unauthorized access)

The Appointed Health and Safety Person must make a monthly “risk assessment check” of the premises and potential risks connected with the working environment .i.e. that which is linked with methods of working and other aspect of the work of the organisation – e.g. maintenance, or stress within the workplace. The risk assessment findings should be regularly monitored and reviewed. Staff should be requested to contribute information and previous incidents experienced should be highlighted as an example of potential risks.

A report should be kept of any obvious or significant risk, recorded on the appropriate form (copy of forms attached). A decision should be made as to whether the risk is high, medium or low. Further action should consider whether the risk can be removed altogether, or, if not possible, how the risk can be controlled. An updated report must record how countermeasures have been implemented and whether there remains any further concern regarding this risk.

Findings should be shared with all staff, and clients where necessary/appropriate, as soon as possible, and agreement made and documented on the course of action to be followed. The documentation should then be made available to the Executive Committee.

1.4 Security of, and safety in, the Premises

1.4.1 Grilles must be open on office windows when an office is occupied, but must be locked at night or when unoccupied.

1.4.2 All staff, volunteers and visitors to the building must sign in and out at Reception, so that there is an accurate record of who is on the ground floor at any time.

1.4.3 The front door to the building must be kept locked before 8.30am and after 5.00pm. (4.30pm on Friday)

1.4.4 The grilles to the front door must be locked by the last person leaving the building at night.

1.4.5 The "IN / OUT" board must be used by the last person entering and leaving the GAVCA premises to ensure that the last person out knows to set the alarm.

1.4.6 The back door grille (main fire exit) must be unlocked whilst people are in the premises and closed but not locked at night. This is normally the responsibility of the Administrator to ensure.

1.4.7 The external side door to the training room must be kept unlocked whilst the training room is in use. Also see fire procedures appendix II.

1.4.8 The GAVCA administrator is responsible for ensuring that the training room is securely locked after use by any group and that the equipment provided by GAVCA is in safe and working order.

1.4.9 The back office door must be locked at any time when the back office is not in use.

1.4.10 All internal doors to GAVCA offices must be locked when not in use.

1.4.11 The safe area must be kept tidy at all times.

1.5 Fire:

1.1.5 A record of fire equipment service checks shall be kept and GAVCA will arrange for checks to be done quarterly.

1..5.1 Fire doors must be kept closed at all times.

1.5.2 See attached fire procedures

1.6 Electrical Equipment

1.6.1 A record must be kept of the purchase of new/used appliances in order to monitor wear and tear.

1.6.2 Any equipment suspected of being faulty, cables or flexes which are damaged or with loose connections should never be used. Faults should be reported immediately to the Administrator, who will arrange for the necessary repairs.

1..6.3 Repairs to equipment should never be attempted by staff themselves.

1.6.4 Where possible, electrical appliances should be switched off when not in use and plugs removed from socket outlets, particularly at the end of the day.

1.6.5 Care must be taken to ensure that telephone, / electrical wires and similar hazards do not trail across floors, particularly where people pass

1.6.6 The lift must only be operated in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions. In the event of a fire the lift must not be used.

2 Personal Safety and well being in the office

2.1 An incident reporting book must be kept in reception and completed by the person concerned, appointed first aider or administrator for any accidents or injuries involving personnel or clients. Accidents must be reported to the Administrator immediately. In the case of serious injury the Chief Executive must be informed as soon as possible.

2.2 A First Aid box must be kept, suitably maintained, and visible in reception. This is the responsibility of the Finance Officer / Office Manager, who must be suitably trained as the Appointed First Aider.

2.3 No more than one hour should be spent working at the computer without a break.

2.4 Staff should ensure that they are comfortable at their computers and discuss with their line manager any specific equipment they feel the need to ensure that they are working comfortably and safely.

2.5 Regular breaks, including half an hour for lunch, should be taken during the working day.

2.6 There must always be a member of staff in reception when the door is open to the public. If this is not possible, the door should be locked, even within normal opening hours, and only opened if the volunteer on reception knows who the visitor is.

2.7 There must always be another member of staff on the premises when volunteer appointments are held.

2.8 If a visitor to the premises is clearly under the influence of drugs or alcohol, they will be offered assistance or signposting and encouraged to leave the premises as quickly as possible. If they refuse to leave, reception staff should ask for assistance from the Chief Executive. If in doubt, the Community Support Officers or Police should be called.

2.9 Staff responsible for lifting and carrying heavy items will receive training in manual handling.

3 Personal Safety and well being when out of the office

3.1 Staff should ensure that reception know where they are whilst working out of the office, by keeping their personal calendar up to date, and reporting any changes to reception.

3.2 All staff must notify reception that they have finished work, if they are not planning to return to the office.

3.3 If a worker does not report back as expected, staff will check where they are supposed to be and attempt to contact them there by phone.

3.4 If this fails, a member of staff will go to the address of the last visit to find them.

3.5 If this fails, other possible locations will be contacted, then the Police will be called. At this stage, the Chief Executive and the worker's next of kin should be notified, if either of them has not already been.

4 Personal Health and Safety: Stress

4.1 GAVCA recognizes that any staff member may suffer from stress at any time and it is not a sign of weakness or failure on the part of the employee. However, GAVCA will try to put as many structures in place as it can to avoid staff and volunteers experiencing unmanageable levels of stress. These include:

4.2 All staff and volunteers should have the support of their line manager whenever they feel they need it to offload or talk through any situation. If the line manager is not appropriate, or not available, staff are encouraged to use other colleagues for support.

4.3 All staff and volunteers will receive at least bi-monthly supervision from their line manager.

4.4 All sensitive information can be shared with other members of the staff team, in line with GAVCA's Confidentiality Policy. This ensures that no one person is taking on the burden of a difficult or stressful situation alone.

4.5 Staff will encourage each other to take half hour lunch breaks, as required by law, and to make sure that these are taken out of the room in which they normally work.

4.6 Staff's use of TOIL will be monitored to ensure that it is taken as soon as possible after working overtime. This ensures that staff do not work excessively long hours.