



HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY AND PROCEDURES

2008

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1 Statement of Obligations

Northwards Housing fully accepts its responsibility for ensuring the Health, Safety and Welfare of our employees and others who may be affected by our activities or omissions.

We are committed as far as possible to:

- The provision of safe and healthy working conditions;
- Providing premises, plant, equipment and systems of work that are safe;
- Providing safe arrangements for the use, handling, storage, transport and ultimate disposal of articles and substances;
- Maintaining a constant and continuing interest in all Health and Safety matters, consulting and involving our staff whenever possible;
- Giving our full backing to the policy and supporting all those who carry it out;
- Reviewing and updating our policy in light of new experiences or legislation, and bringing those revisions to the notice of all our staff.

Co-operation of staff

All Northwards Housing employees have a vital role to play in the practical working of this policy.

Everyone has general Health and Safety duties at work. Some named people will have more specific responsibilities for your workplace.

The effective control of Health and Safety will only be achieved through the co-operation of all staff.

Signed

Dated

Chief Executive

2. Responsibilities

2.1 Employees

All employees should follow their own **Ten Point** checklist to ensure you comply with your own general duties:

1. Ensure you are familiar with this policy and all the specific rules, procedures and guidance notes which allow you to work safely.
2. You should take reasonable care for your own health, safety and welfare and that of others whilst at work.
3. You should know what to do if there is a fire - the alarm points, escape routes, fire exits and assembly points.
4. You should know your workplace First Aid arrangements.
5. You should use all the work items you are provided with correctly, following all information; instruction and training you have received.
6. You should report any potential hazards or shortcomings in Health and Safety arrangements to your Line Manager or suggest any improvements to them.
7. You should report all accidents and near misses (including damage to property) and incidents to your Line Manager.
8. You should follow instructions and advice on Health and Safety matters.
9. You should participate in all Health and Safety training.
10. You should maintain good standards of housekeeping where you work.

2.2 Chief Executive

The Chief Executive will:

- Have the overall responsibility for Health and Safety within Northwards.
- Ensure that arrangements are made to carry out this policy, and will support everyone in carrying the policy out.
- Make available adequate resources to ensure this policy can be carried out - as far as is reasonably practicable.

- Nominate a Director who will ensure that Health and Safety responsibilities are properly assigned to, understood and accepted by all Northwards staff.

The Chief Executive is **Robin Lawler**

2.3 **Directors**

The Directors will:

- Be accountable to the Chief Executive
- Monitor own divisions' health and safety programme
- Make sure their Line Managers are aware of their responsibility
- Consult with the Board
- Consult with the Head of Health and Safety

The Directors are Larry Patrick (Director of Property Services), Mike Stevens (Director of Neighbourhood Services) and Steve Wood (Director of Business Services). Together with the Chief Executive they comprise the **Executive Management Team**.

2.4 **Nominated Director**

The Nominated Director will:

- Ensure that Northwards' Health and Safety Policy has an effective implementation programme
- Monitor the effectiveness of programme.
- In conjunction with the Board and other Directors ensure a review of the policy annually and revise, where necessary, to ensure its effectiveness.
- In conjunction with the Training Officer and Head of Health and Safety, ensure an effective training programme that supports the Policy.

The Nominated Director is **Steve Wood, Director of Business Services**.

The Chief Executive has overall, final responsibility for Health and Safety in Northwards Housing.

2.5 Health and Safety Group

Northwards has established a Health and Safety Group with representatives across the organisation to help promote and embed a culture of Health and Safety.

The purpose of the group is to:

- a) Raise the profile of Health and Safety at all levels in all operations across Northwards.
- b) Contribute to the development of safety procedures and associated Safe Systems of Work.
- c) Review policies, risk assessments, action plans and procedures together with inspection and audit reports to assist in the transfer of knowledge and good practise.
- d) Consider reports and issues raised by group members.
- e) Review and contribute to the development of Health and Safety related Training Courses.
- f) Consider good practise, how Northwards compares and how we learn from others.
- g) Communicate the work of the group, including what has and has not happened, what worked well and what lessons have been learned.

Membership of the group is representatives of each premises or work function in the organisation together with a representative from HR. The group shall be chaired by the Nominated Director.

Members who are unable to attend are permitted to send alternates.

2.6 Board

The Board will:

- Consult with the Executive Management Team and the Head of Health and Safety
- Ensure that all Health and Safety legislative requirements relating to Northwards' buildings, equipment and staff are being met. (With reference to the Health and Safety Commission's Guidance Document INDG343, Directors Responsibilities).

Members of the Board are as follows:

Tenant Board Members

Michelle Carmichael
Joan Fitzgerald
Sue Ratchford (Chair)

Council Board Members

Councillor Mark Hackett
Councillor June Hitchen
Councillor Anna Trotman
Rachel Christie

Independent Board Members

Fatima Adamjee
Martin McKevitt
David Leah
Paul Seymour

2.7 Principal Managers

Principal Managers will ensure that they:

- Understand and implement the Health and Safety Policy in areas under their control.
- Identify by name, Managers and others with specific responsibilities and ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities and that written delegation systems are available and known by all staff.
- Review own section's Health and Safety performance through monthly reports from their Managers.
- Include Health and Safety on the agenda at all regular meetings with all Managers.
- Ensure the investigation of shortfalls in Health and Safety arrangements reported to them by Managers.

2.8 All Managers

All Managers will ensure that:

- They understand and implement the Health and Safety Policy and their own section's arrangements.
- All employees have received a completed copy of the Policy and are kept informed of any changes.
- Emergency procedures and equipment are provided, maintained and checked, and that staff are aware of them.
- Regular risk assessments are carried and that significant findings are recorded and made known to all staff.
- The Head of Health and Safety is consulted.
- All machinery and equipment is made safe to use, correctly maintained and frequently inspected.

- Employees have adequate information, instruction, training and supervision to ensure their Health and Safety whilst at work.
- Employees receive Health and Safety Training as part of the induction to their work place and receive Health and Safety training as part of the new starter's induction course.
- They communicate and consult with their staff on Health and Safety issues.
- They investigate any shortcomings in Health and Safety arrangements or any potential hazards reported that might require remedial action. All accidents, near misses and incidents are investigated to find causes and ways to prevent repetition. They should be correctly recorded and reported on the Northwards investigation form.
- A Health and Safety notice board is maintained at the workplace containing relevant Health and Safety information for staff to view.
- A Health and Safety file for the workplace is maintained containing all relevant Health and Safety records and information.
- Standards of housekeeping are monitored at the workplace and any shortcomings are put right.

3. Organisation

3.1 Keeping you Informed

Northwards will ensure that everyone knows about our Health and Safety Policy and that we keep our Policy up to date.

Every member of staff will get a copy of this Policy to fill in with the details of where they work. If you change job, or where you work, you will get a new booklet with new details.

A master copy of the Policy for your workplace is displayed at your workplace, and also kept in your workplace Health and Safety file. The original signed copy is kept with the Head of Health and Safety. If changes in personnel with Health and Safety responsibilities occur, you will be informed immediately and the master copies will be updated for your reference - allowing you to maintain your personal copy.

The Policy will be reviewed annually so that improvements can be made. You will be given an updated version.

A Health and Safety notice board at your workplace will contain Health and Safety information about your work and your workplace.

A Health and Safety File will be maintained at your workplace containing any relevant additional information. Your Manager will let you see it on request.

3.2 Ensuring your Co-operation

To ensure your co-operation, it will be a requirement that Health and Safety must appear on every agenda at:

- Management Team Meetings
- Periodic meetings of the Board
- One-to-One Supervision Sessions
- Regular meetings between Trade Unions and Northwards allowing consultation on and communication of Health and Safety matters throughout Northwards.

If you identify any potential hazards or shortcomings in any Health and Safety arrangements and you cannot put them right yourself, you should report them to your Line Manager.

If you require advice on Health and Safety matters contact your Line Manager. If you are not satisfied with the advice you have received there is further advice available to you.

3.3 Further Advice and Assistance

The Health and Safety Team is a central resource for risk assessment, information, investigation and advice on the promotion of good working practice within Northwards.

The Head of the Health and Safety Team is: Alan Lawrenson

THE CONTACT NUMBER IS: 0161 741 2700

The Health and Safety Team will:

- Advise the Executive Management Team and the Board on specific Health and Safety issues, or proposed changes in legislation which may affect Northwards.
- Keep updated and informed on all Health and Safety issues.
- Make themselves available to all staff to offer Health and Safety advice whenever they can.
- Assist relevant Managers to carry out risk assessments, and design control measures.
- Assist Managers to interpret legislation, Codes of Practice and Guidance Notes.
- Make regular visits to workplaces to monitor standards and the effectiveness of the Policy.
- Help Managers investigate accidents, near misses and incidents at work and submit reports to the Board highlighting statistics, trends and any resultant control measures.
- Liaise with Northwards' Training Officer to design and deliver Health and Safety training courses as identified by risk assessments.

- Establish and maintain contacts with external authorities on Health and Safety.
- Maintain a central resource for information on Health and Safety.

4. Arrangements

How we plan, organise, control, monitor and review our aims with regard to:

4.1 Risk Assessments

All Managers, with assistance from the Health and Safety Team, will carry out risk assessments in every workplace, to identify hazards and to evaluate the extent of risks.

These will be used to guide Managers to judge what ought to be done and how to prioritise actions required.

The significant findings will be recorded and maintained in your Workplace Health and Safety File.

You will be provided with relevant information by your Manager on the hazards and the extent of the risks identified by the assessments and on what preventive and protective measures will ensure your health and safety.

If there are developments (e.g. new legislation, increased knowledge) or changes in working conditions, practices or procedures that suggest that an assessment is no longer valid, the risk assessment will be reviewed.

Specific **risk assessments** are required by law. The main **legislation** includes:

- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (as amended)
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended)
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (as amended)
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Noise at Work Regulations 1989 (as amended)
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006

These will be carried out at each workplace by appropriately qualified staff.

4.2 Emergency Procedures

Your workplace will have written procedures of what to do in the event of an emergency.

Your Manager will provide information and make sure you understand any procedures and any duties you may have.

Emergency Procedures will be displayed on your workplace Health and Safety Notice Board and copies will also be left in your workplace Health and Safety File.

Emergency Procedures will be tested periodically and the results recorded in the **workplace Health and Safety File**.

4.3 Fire

It is in everyone's interest that:

- Good housekeeping is maintained especially that waste is removed and flammable material - including paper - is properly stored and controlled.
- Machines and electrical appliances that could start fires e.g. heaters, cooker etc. are used correctly and controlled.
- A "close down" procedure is prepared and used at the end of the working day.

Also that:

- You receive specific information, and training about what to do if there is a fire at you workplace and who must do what if there is a fire or fire alarm to make sure there is a safe controlled evaluation.
- There will be a yearly fire drill to check the Action Plan and the results recorded in the Health and Safety File.
- All Staff new to the workplace will receive written fire prevention procedures as part of their workplace induction. Copies will be displayed on the Health and Safety Notice Board and kept in the Workplace Health and Safety File.

It is a duty to provide and maintain:

- Safe and effective escape routes, clearly marked, and kept free from obstructions at all times.

- Exit doors that are clearly marked and capable of opening easily from the inside as long as people remain in the workplace.
- Fire fighting appliances that are accessible and in efficient working order.
- A secure and efficient method of sounding a fire alarm. It should be checked weekly to ensure that it works and can be heard everywhere over normal background noise.
- Weekly checks on such equipment and escape routes provided and for the periodical inspection of fire alarm detection, fire fighting and emergency lighting equipment.
- Records and maintenance of the checks carried out including any actions taken.

4.4 **Accidents and Near Misses**

A First Aid Box containing suitable and sufficient first aid materials will be provided and maintained at your workplace.

An "Appointed Person" at your workplace will check contents at regular intervals and replenish missing items as soon as possible.

The names of your trained / qualified First Aiders will be displayed and made known to everyone.

If there is no First Aider at your workplace there should be a Named Responsible Person (and a substitute) to take charge of the situation, administer minor first aid and make arrangements for further medical assistance if required (e.g. calling an ambulance).

All accidents and near misses will be reported by Managers on a Northwards accident / near miss / dangerous occurrences report form.

Your Manager will immediately notify all accidents and near misses to the Head of Health and Safety, and send him the original accident report form.

The more serious accidents and incidents must also be reported to the Health and Safety Executive under **R.I.D.D.O.R (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations 1995)**. This is usually done by the Head of Health and Safety or in his absence by a member of the Health and Safety Team.

All accidents resulting in injury, illness or property damage will be investigated by your Manager, in conjunction with the Health and Safety Team, to find the causes and to recommend ways to prevent repetition.

Records of accidents and subsequent investigations will be kept for three years from the date on the incident in a locked cabinet at the workplace.

The Head of Health and Safety will produce annual statistics in an understandable form to highlight areas for improvement.

4.5 Electrical Equipment

Your Manager is responsible for maintaining an inventory of all electrical equipment used in your workplace in the Health and Safety File.

Your Manager will ensure as far as possible that all electrical equipment is maintained in a safe condition.

Your Manager will arrange regular testing of all electrical equipment and keep records of the tests in the Health and Safety File.

Electrical equipment should be tested annually. Records of the tests will be maintained in the Health and Safety File. If you are going to use a piece of portable electrical equipment you should examine it visually yourself to make sure it is safe.

You should not bring any electrical equipment into the workplace from home. It would not be covered by our planned inspection and maintenance scheme. This is part of the Northwards policy on electrical equipment.

4.6 Chemicals and Substances

All chemicals and substances used by Northwards staff will be purchased from an "approved list" of substances.

The substances and chemicals contained on the list will have been assessed, and there will be information on how to transport, store and use them safely - (control measures).

Substances hazardous to health that you are likely to come into contact with will be fully assessed under the **Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH)** to ensure that control measures are adequate.

This information on all substances and chemicals used in your workplace should be readily available to you. Your Manager will keep them in the COSHH Safety File for your workplace.

You will receive information, instruction and training necessary in the safe use of substances hazardous to health.

You should not use any substance or chemical unless it is on the "approved list" and you are fully aware of and use the control measures required.

4.7 **Asbestos**

The **Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006** places a legal duty on Northwards, to manage asbestos in all of its non-domestic properties. This covers those properties that Northwards owns, controls or occupies and has maintenance and repair responsibilities for. This duty is also placed on Northwards, where it is the owner, with regard to the common parts of multi-occupied buildings, including blocks of flats.

It requires Northwards to:

- Assess whether its properties contain asbestos;
- Assess the risk from such asbestos, and;
- Take action to manage the risk from the asbestos.

Further information on how Northwards will manage this can be found in Northwards' *Asbestos Policy*. This can be obtained from the Head of Health and Safety and is on the intranet.

4.8 **Training**

You will be provided with sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to enable you to carry out your duties safely and efficiently. (*Particular attention will be given to young people who may require closer supervision*).

Risk Assessments carried out in your workplace may identify the need for further training to ensure your Health and Safety.

Your Manager, Northwards' HR Team and the Health and Safety Team will provide you with the information, instruction and training you need.

If you receive any training you will be asked if you found it useful and relevant to your job and if, in your opinion, there is a need to improve or add to it.

If you start work at a new workplace you will receive basic induction training in Health and Safety at that workplace in the arrangement for:

- First Aid
- Evacuation

- Fire
- Accident and near miss reporting

Records of the information, instruction and training given to you will be kept in the Workplace Health and Safety File and by Northwards' HR Team.

4.9 Violence against Staff

There is a Code of Practice for Northwards staff about (physical and verbal) violence against staff.

You will be issued with your own copy of Northwards' Policy Statement and the Guidance Notes on violence against staff.

As far as possible, shortcomings in facilities, systems of work and training will be identified and put right.

All incidents will be monitored and reviewed every 6 months by the Executive Management Team and the Board of Northwards. If necessary, changes will be made and will be made known to you.

4.10 Purchasing

All items purchased by Northwards for use by you at work will be of a defined and agreed standard and will at least comply with all existing legislation, and be safe and free from risk.

The Executive Management Team and Board of Northwards, in conjunction with the Head of Health and Safety, will ensure that:

- Standards are specified to suppliers.
- Staff receive all necessary documentation.

4.11 Control of Legionella

Legionella is covered by **Regulation 3 of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002** and places a legal duty on Northwards, to protect employees and others who may be affected by its actions.

To ensure compliance Northwards shall:

- Identify and assess sources of legionella bacteria;
- Appoint a person to be managerially responsible for legionellosis controls in each of its premises;

- Prepare a scheme (or course of action) for preventing or controlling the risk;
- Implement and manage the scheme;
- Keep records and check that what has been done is effective; and,
- Notify the appropriate Local Authority Environmental Health Unit of any premises with a cooling tower.

Managers within the Company have a duty to inform the Executive Management Team and Board of Northwards of any new installations, such as air conditioning units or new water storage tanks and shower units, so that compliance can be assured.

Further details on the control of legionella bacteria can be found in Northwards' *Control of Legionella Policy*, which can be obtained from the Head of Health and Safety.

5. Summary

Everyone on Northwards' premises must follow safety rules and instructions given to them to ensure their own safety and that of others.

All Managers will ensure that all contractors and visitors in areas covered by this policy are made aware of any Health and Safety implications, procedures, hazards and risks to ensure their Health and Safety.

Contractors or visitors who will not be accompanied by a member of staff for the duration of their visits sign in and sign out of the workplace.

Any work to be undertaken by a contractor shall if possible be pre-planned and they provide notification verbal or in writing to your Manager of any actions they propose that have Health and Safety implications for staff.

To ensure we meet the standards and objectives set out in our policy, the Health and Safety Team will carry out audits of workplaces.

This will provide information from across Northwards on our performance.

[This information, along with information gained from our monitoring, will allow us to review our performance.](#)

An annual report will be prepared for the Directors and Board of Northwards that will:

NORTHWARDS HOUSING HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY AND PROCEDURES



- Identify our achievements on Health and Safety.
- Detail any major issues
- Identify areas for improvement.
- Make recommendations for improvement.

This will lead to annual review of the Policy and to changes if they are needed.

Roles and Responsibilities

As a Manager, I will make sure that the Health and Safety Policy is carried out at:

Write in the locations where you are responsible for the Health and Safety Policy

My name is

Phone

Contact Address

In some cases there are staff with special responsibility for some aspects of Health and Safety, e.g. First Aider and Evacuation Marshal.

Ensure that people with special responsibilities are named and what they are responsible for.

Name	Responsible for	Where