

Health & Safety Considerations for Volunteers

These points may already be covered in your organisation Health and Safety (H&S) policy.

- Health & Safety posters up and visible (free downloads) [Health and safety law poster – HSE](#)
- Training – what is mandatory for your different volunteer roles, how is it recorded and monitored (links to impact reporting).
- Property / building specific training.
- Fire evacuation procedure training.
- Connections to your insurance cover – ensuring adequate training has been provided suitable for the volunteering role.
- Risk assessment – general one for the specific volunteer role and responsibilities but may also need an individual risk assessment depending on personal circumstances e.g. disability, health, history.
- Risk / incident and accident reporting procedures and location of documentation.
- Check in and out systems to know who is volunteering when and where in case of fire or evacuation.
- Risk register.
- Any PPE for volunteers and their role.
- Policies and procedures documents for the organisation – how / where do volunteers access these (links to volunteer induction).
- Information sharing – regarding clients, fellow volunteers etc – how is this done in compliance with GDPR.
- Trauma informed approach.

Health & Safety (H&S) Policy Content

The policy must clearly establish the organisation's commitment to providing a safe environment and the volunteer's responsibilities within it.

1. Organisation's Duty of Care

- **Statement of Commitment:** A high-level statement confirming the organisation's legal and moral obligation to protect the health and safety of its volunteers, staff, and beneficiaries.

- **Designated H&S Lead:** Identify the person or role responsible for overall H&S (e.g. a specific Trustee or the Operations Manager).

2. Risk Assessment Procedures

- **Mandatory Assessment:** Procedures requiring a written risk assessment for every volunteer role and any new or unusual volunteer activity before it commences.
- **Review Cycle:** A procedure for regularly reviewing and updating risk assessments (e.g. annually or after any incident).

3. Training and Induction

- **Required H&S Training:** A procedure specifying that all volunteers must complete a general H&S induction (including fire safety, first aid location, and evacuation routes).
- **Role-Specific Training:** Documentation requirements confirming that volunteers have received training specific to their tasks (e.g. manual handling, using specific equipment).

4. Incident and Accident Reporting

- **Reporting Mechanism:** A clear, step-by-step procedure outlining how and to whom a volunteer must report an accident, near-miss, or hazardous situation.
- **Record Keeping:** A commitment to investigate all reported incidents and maintain accurate records in line with legal requirements (e.g. RIDDOR, if applicable).

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