

Corporate Health and Safety Policy

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1. Introduction

This Corporate Health and Safety Policy represents a commitment by the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) to apply the highest standards of health, safety and wellbeing at all levels of the organisation and to make sure that health and safety is an integral part of the organisation's management culture. We are committed to developing a positive attitude to health and safety at all levels and encourage active participation from management and staff.

The policy reflects the organisation's aim to go further than our legal obligations under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 where we reasonably can.

Managers will show and promote a positive attitude towards health, safety and wellbeing amongst all staff. Everyone working within the SSSC has this responsibility.

The policies and procedures supporting this policy detail the management responsibilities, arrangements and procedures to ensure successful implementation of this overarching policy.

This includes active consultation and participation of staff through the partnership forum and the health, safety and wellbeing committee. We will provide staff with adequate time and resources to contribute to the implementation, monitoring and review of this Corporate Health and Safety Policy and associated policies and procedures.

This policy is central to the management of health, safety and wellbeing within the SSSC. It requires the support and commitment of every member of staff to achieve the benefits of successful health and safety management.

Our health and safety policy statement from the Chief Executive is included at appendix 1.

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Council

The Council of the Scottish Social Services Council is committed to setting up effective management systems for occupational health and safety. They will make sure that we establish effective policies, procedures and training, with appropriate review mechanisms in place to ensure the effective management of health and safety. The Council delegates the preparation, review and monitoring of all health and safety policies except the Corporate Health and Safety Policy to the Executive Management Team.

The Council will review and approve the health and safety policy every three years and receive an annual health and safety performance report.

2.2 Chief Executive

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with legislative requirements. This includes, so far as is reasonably practicable, doing the following.

- Making sure we keep the Corporate Health and Safety Policy under review and it meets the needs of the organisation.
- Making sure we make enough finance and other resources available to implement this policy.
- Making sure staff are committed to health and safety and cooperate, through the senior management team and other communication forums within the SSSC.
- Deciding the organisational structure through which we implement this policy and delegating the responsibility for implementation of this policy.
- Making sure those with responsibilities for health and safety are given the right information, instruction and training to carry out their duties effectively.
- Appointing competent person(s) to help the SSSC in overseeing the application and provision of health and safety legislation.
- Making sure we set up and maintain health, safety and wellbeing management systems, which include the assessment of risks, effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of the preventative and protective measures necessary to reduce and control the risks.
- Having the health and safety committee chaired by a member of the Executive Management Team (EMT).
- Including health and safety as a standing agenda item at all EMT meetings.

2.3 Executive Management Team

The EMT is, so far as is reasonably practicable, responsible for the health, safety and wellbeing at work of employees in their respective directorates. This includes identifying and determining local strategies and arrangements to support the Corporate Health and Safety Policy. They must also check the progress of the Health and Safety Action Plan within their directorates.

EMT's duties will include responsibility for the following within their directorate.

- Making sure we implement the Corporate Health and Safety Policy and supporting policies and procedures.
- Approval of all health and safety policies except for the Corporate Health and Safety Policy, which is approved by Council.
- Documenting the organisation and delegation of responsibilities arising from this policy.
- Ensuring adequate finance and other resources are made available to enable us to implement the policy.
- Implementing health and safety management systems, through assessment of risk and the effective implementation of preventative measures, needed to eliminate, reduce or control the risks.
- Making line managers aware that the responsibility for health, safety and wellbeing is shared, and that they are responsible for the health, safety and wellbeing of employees or others affected by the SSSC's activities.
- Making sure that the risks associated with the premises and activities under their control are identified with the aim of eliminating or controlling the risks.
- Including health and safety as a standing agenda item at every directorate management team meeting. Issues relating to health and safety must be discussed at least quarterly.

2.4 Operational Management Team

OMT's duties will include responsibility for the following within their department:

- Implementing health and safety management systems, through assessment of risk and the effective implementation of preventative measures, needed to eliminate, reduce or control the risks.
- Making line managers aware that the responsibility for health, safety and wellbeing is shared, and that they are responsible for the health, safety and wellbeing of employees or others affected by the SSSC's activities.
- Making sure that the risks associated with the premises and activities under their control are identified with the aim of eliminating or controlling the risks.

- Including health and safety as a standing agenda item at every departmental management team meeting. Issues relating to health and safety must be discussed at least quarterly.

2.5 Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee

The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee is responsible for the review of this policy. We will review it at least every three years and make amendments as needed in consultation with OMT, EMT and the Partnership Forum. It also has responsibility for the development and delivery of an Action Plan.

2.6 Line managers' responsibilities

Line managers are responsible for ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing at work of employees within their respective teams.

Line managers' responsibilities include the following.

- Making sure they implement SSSC's Corporate Health and Safety Policy and supporting policies and procedures for their team.
- Making sure they adequately control the risks associated within the SSSC's working environments to minimise the risk of harm to staff and others by undertaking risk assessments and putting proper controls in place.
- Making sure that employees within their team follow the health and safety policies and procedures applicable to them.
- Supporting and working with other health and safety duty holders as needed.
- Checking that employees within their area of responsibility follow the policy and taking prompt action to report and correct anywhere it isn't.
- Making sure that employees within their team are aware of their responsibilities and promote reporting of accidents, incidents and near misses.
- Encouraging active participation from their team by consulting employees on health and safety matters and encouraging suggestions for improvements.

2.7 Employee responsibilities

All employees are expected to have read and cooperate in the implementation of this policy by doing the following.

- Carrying out their duties following the relevant policies and procedures and applying the controls contained within any risk assessment.
- Looking out for their own safety and that of others who may be affected by what they do, or don't do, while at work.
- Working with the SSSC, so far as is necessary, so as the organisation can follow the Corporate Health and Safety Policy and health and safety legislation.

- Using all work equipment provided by the SSSC properly in line with any statutory requirement or training and instruction they receive to enable them to use the equipment safely.
- Getting to know the emergency procedures relevant to their place of work.
- Bringing their line manager's attention to any situation they would reasonably consider is a serious and immediate danger to health and safety.
- Reporting any accidents or incidents and near misses within one working day to their line manager.
- Going to any training required by the SSSC in respect of health and safety.

2.8 The competent person

The SSSC will appoint a competent person within the meaning of Regulation 7 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

The competent person is responsible for the provision of advice and guidance, to the SSSC, in undertaking the measures needed to comply with the requirements of relevant health and safety legislation.

The competent person will support the SSSC with its responsibility to check the implementation of this policy and take any action necessary to ensure the health and safety of employees and others who are affected by the SSSC's undertaking.

2.9 Trade Union safety representatives

The SSSC will allow any appointed safety representative from a recognised trade union time off with pay to fulfil their functions and to undergo health and safety training. Their functions include:

- standing up for staff about specific matters that will affect their health, safety and welfare
- involvement with risk assessment procedures
- investigating accidents, near misses, and other potential hazards and dangerous occurrences in the workplace
- investigating complaints made by an employee they represent about their health, safety or welfare in the workplace
- presenting investigation findings to management
- inspecting the workplace
- going to health and safety committee meetings as a representative of the staff.

3. Arrangements for health and safety – plan, do, check, act

This section of our policy sets out our approach to ensure suitable arrangements are in place to manage health and safety effectively. It is intended to align with the 'Plan, Do, Check, Act' management system framework, as recommended by the Health and Safety Executive in document HSG65 Managing for Health and Safety.

3.1 Plan

Our policy aims to achieve and support the highest standards in health and safety. We will allocate responsibilities at appropriate levels within the SSSC.

Our policies, procedures and guidance will set realistic, but challenging objectives for the organisation. These objectives will take account of where we are now, where we need to be and outline how we will reach our objectives in an annual health and safety action plan.

EMT, OMT and line managers must consider the potential health and safety impacts of their plans and any significant resources that they need to address health and safety issues in their functional area.

We will keep track of our progress during the year by setting out key performance indicators and reporting on performance to the health, safety and wellbeing committee and Council.

3.2 Do

We will identify a risk profile for the organisation and ensure we carry out suitable and sufficient risk assessments. At a corporate level, we will achieve this by identifying the high-level risks and recording them in our Risk Register. EMT, OMT and line managers are responsible for making sure we carry out risk assessments and implement controls in their area of responsibility.

Where needed, we will develop generic risk assessments to change for local circumstances.

3.2.1 Organising for health and safety

We will allocate health and safety responsibility at appropriate levels within the organisation. We will appoint a competent person and seek the necessary skills to advise and support us on health and safety matters.

We will ensure that arrangements are in place for open discussion and communication that encourage the development of positive attitudes and behaviours.

3.2.2 Consultation with employees

We will involve employees and their representatives in the consultation process through recognised trade union safety representatives and the Partnership Forum, and through

discussion and completion of team and specific risk assessments. The involvement of employees will help in the development of control measures that are both practical and have employee support.

Health and safety will be on the agenda of management and team meetings and we will encourage employees to raise their concerns on any health and safety issues affecting them or their teams, for example, at one-to-ones and team meetings.

We will also encourage employees to raise health and safety concerns with their line manager, safety representative, recognised trade union representatives and the estates, health and safety manager, estates, health and safety office and estates, health and safety assistant. Consultation on any new health and safety initiatives will involve those affected and their health and safety representatives.

3.2.3 Communication

Good communication is essential to make sure that everyone is aware of their responsibilities, knows the risks associated with their work and can contribute by raising their concerns. We will communicate through the following channels:

- health, safety and wellbeing committee
- the intranet
- healthy working lives group
- regular health and safety emails, bulletins and the staff newsletter.

EMT, OMT and line managers will make sure employees know where to find health and safety information and set up suitable communication channels within their team, paying particular attention to those members of staff spending periods out of the office, including those that have been on sick leave, maternity / paternity leave or secondment. We will make everyone aware of the staff with specific health and safety duties. This will include first aiders, fire and evacu-chair wardens, safety representatives and others with specific responsibilities.

3.2.4 Co-ordination and co-operation

Where we share premises or engage contractors we will make sure that appropriate arrangements are in place to enable co-ordination of health and safety matters. We will share information on fire safety, first aid and the control of contractors in our areas and include the evaluation of relevant health and safety documents as part of the procurement process. We will consider health and safety issues when letting or sharing arrangements for our office.

3.2.5 Health and safety standards

We will detail our health and safety standards for our activities in health and safety policies, procedures and risk assessments. Management and staff must follow these agreed standards to enable us to meet our legal obligations.

Where teams have specific risks, managers must ensure that they develop their own health and safety procedures, based on risk assessment, with the help of the estates, health and safety manager.

3.2.6 Competence and supervision

To ensure all employees are competent to meet their health and safety responsibilities we will provide adequate information, instruction and training. This will include induction training and more training if they are exposed to new risks or take on extra responsibility.

Managers must provide appropriate supervision and take into account the competency of the employees they line manage and identify training and development needs accordingly. The level of supervision will depend on the employee, for example, new employees or young workers may require a higher level of supervision until the manager is satisfied they are meeting their health and safety responsibilities.

Managers will make sure that they record details of employee induction, and of any other, instruction and information on health and safety.

3.2.7 Supporting arrangements

3.2.7.1 Policies

- Alcohol and Drug Misuse Policy
- Smoking Policy
- Display Screen Equipment Policy
- Agile Working Policy
- Health and Wellbeing Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Fire Safety Policy

3.2.7.2 Procedures and Guidance

- Emergency Evacuation Procedure
- Guidance on how to complete the incident form
- Display Screen Equipment Guidance
- Manual Handling Guidance
- Loneworking Guidance
- Safe Driving Guidance
- Sever Weather Conditions Guidance
- Mental Health First Aid Guidance
- Guidance on First Aid Provision

3.2.7.3 Risk Assessments

- Stress Risk Assessment
- Display Screen Equipment (DSE) - Workstation Assessment
- Specific Risk Assessment - Ill health
- Specific Risk Assessment - Young Person Under 18 years
- Specific Risk Assessment - Team Assessment
- Specific Risk Assessment - Expectant Mothers
- Specific Risk Assessment - Loneworking
- Manual Handling Risk Assessment
- Fire Risk Assessment
- Risk Assessment - Office

3.2.7.4 Forms

- Incident Form
- DSE Opticians Form

3.3 Check

We will measure our performance to make sure that we are implementing our plans. We will check our performance in a number of ways, including:

- carrying out regular health and safety inspections for our areas and taking part in joint inspections of shared premises in line with Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 (as amended) and Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996 (as amended)
- carrying out incident and accident investigations
- reviewing attendance rates for short and long term absences
- reviewing risk assessments and safety procedures
- having health and safety audits and reviews.

The frequency of inspections is based on a risk assessment. We will invite participation from recognised trade union safety representatives to inspections and reviews. Recognised trade union safety representatives can also undertake and carry out workplace inspections as needed if providing written notice to the employer.

3.4 Act

We will consider the information gathered from our reviews when determining future health and safety objectives and plans. We will review the Corporate Health and Safety Policy at least every three years, and more regularly if there are legislative changes, to incorporate any organisational changes or changes in legislation or working practices.

Heads of Service must ensure that they regularly review their risk assessments and arrangements for health and safety. We will review health and safety information at least annually to make sure that the names of those given health and safety responsibilities stay current.

Reporting on health and safety performance is necessary to enable us to keep our standards and identify any potential concerns. We will set performance targets to enable us to measure progress. The health, safety and wellbeing committee will compile an annual report for Council.

The report will give an overview of performance against our health and safety objectives and targets. It will highlight achievements and identify forthcoming issues or legislative changes that may have an impact on the organisation.

We will incorporate information from regular reports from departments into the annual report. We will give departments an opportunity to raise any issues they have identified for inclusion in the Health and Safety Action Plan.

4. Legislation

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 (as amended).
- Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996 (as amended).

5. Further information

5.1 Learning and development

To support the fair and consistent application of this policy, we will identify the opportunities and implications for managers. We will do this by incorporating training on this policy within line management development programmes. We will consider the implications for employees and make sure that they receive suitable training. We will also provide refresher training.

5.2 Sources of support

Further sources of support include:

- day to day support from line managers
- the employee assistance programme
- help advice and support from recognised trade union representatives
- ACAS
- Health and safety
- Human resources.

5.3 Related Policies

Related policies and supporting arrangements are listed in 3.2.7.

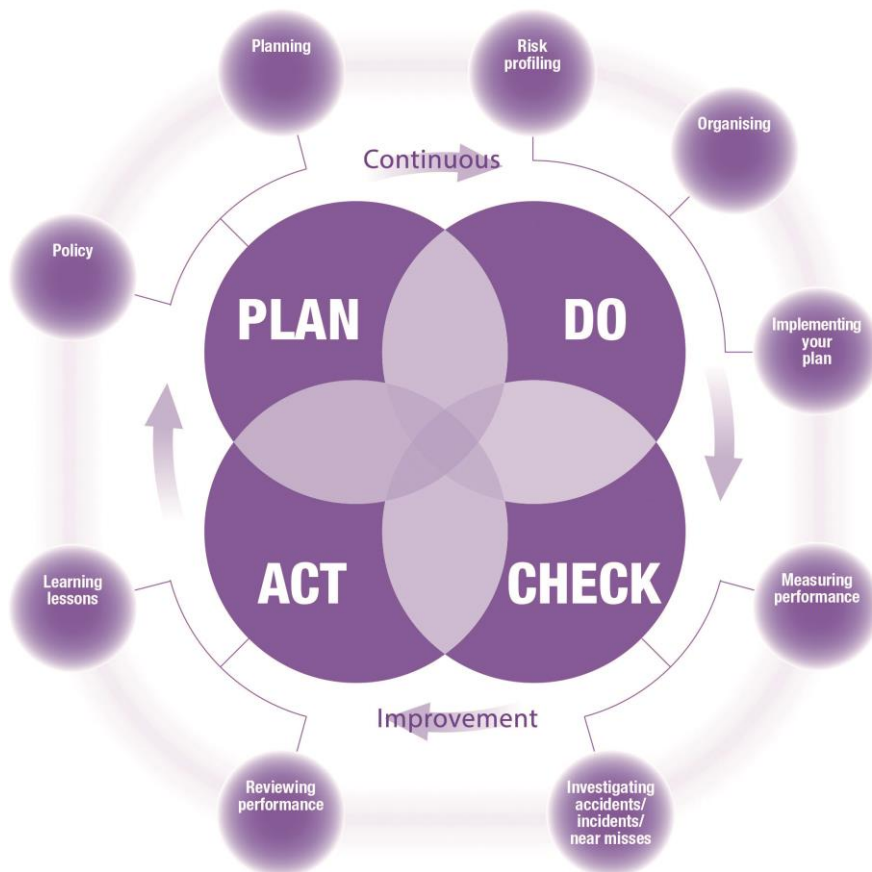
Appendix 1

Our health and safety policy statement

As an employer, the SSSC is committed to ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and wellbeing of all our employees. We also fully accept our responsibility for other persons who may be affected by our work activities. We will make sure that the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, approved codes of practice and other relevant legislation are met at all times.

We will make sure that all processes and systems of work consider health and safety. We will provide adequate resources, levels of supervision and appropriate information, instruction and training to allow staff to work safely.

We will follow the general principles of the Health and Safety Executive's document HSG65 Managing for health and safety. We will use the '**Plan, Do, Check, Act**' approach to make sure we effectively manage and monitor our health and safety performance.



To have effective health, safety and wellbeing policies, we need commitment to them from everyone in the organisation. We are all legally obliged to take reasonable care of our own health and safety, and for the safety of other people who may be affected by what we do, or fail to do, while at work.

Every employee must work with us to allow the SSSC to follow all statutory duties. We will provide arrangements for employees and their representatives to raise health and safety issues through our health and safety committee, partnership forum and line managers.

We will appoint competent people to assist us in meeting our statutory duties including, where appropriate, specialists from outside the organisation.

Specialist advice on health, safety and wellbeing matters is provided by our estates, health and safety manager.

This policy includes our management system and arrangements for managing health and safety. Detailed policies, guidance and arrangements will support this policy and we will set them out in separate documents.

We will regularly monitor this statement to make sure that we are achieving its objectives. The health and safety committee will review and revise this statement and policy every three years, or sooner if necessary, in the light of legislative or organisational changes, making amendments as needed in consultation with the partnership forum. The Director of Finance and Resources and the partnership forum are responsible for monitoring and implementing this policy.

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