

# Business Advice Pack



Helping  
Great Britain  
**work well**

## Health and Safety Advice for Businesses

**Revised May 2016**

The information included is not exhaustive and does not necessarily indicate compliance with any provision under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 or any Regulation. Day to day monitoring of good working practices is a clear responsibility of the employer. This also contains notes on good practice that you may find helpful when considering what you need to do.

For comprehensive information on matters of Health and Safety please visit the Health and Safety Executive Website. This Advice for Businesses gives you quick one-stop access to online tools and sources of advice.

[www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

### How well are you doing with Health and Safety?

To see how you are doing with health and safety in your business ask yourself the following questions.

Question	Yes	No
Do you have access to competent health and safety advice?		
Do you have current Employers Liability Insurance?		
Do you have an up to date Health and Safety Policy?		
Have you assessed the risks associated with your business and are you managing them?		
Are the welfare facilities you provide for your staff adequate?		
Do you provide free health and safety training for your staff?		
Do you talk to your staff about health and safety?		
Do you have arrangements in place for first aid and accident reporting?		
Do you have a health and safety law poster displayed?		
Do you keep yourself up to date with health and safety law and information?		

If you could not answer yes to all the questions please read on and then complete the 'Action Plan' below.

Even if you did say 'yes' to a question you may still find the information in that particular section helpful as a reminder.

### About this Pack

This information pack has been produced by Hastings Borough Council Environmental Health to help you with your health and safety legislation responsibilities. It is not an exhaustive pack, but it provides you with the basic tools to take the first step towards organising health and safety in your workplace.

### What is health and safety?

If you believe everything you read, health and safety is all about endless paperwork and stopping anything that might be dangerous.

### How well are you doing with Health and Safety?

To see how you are doing with health and safety in your business ask yourself the following questions.

**Health and safety is actually about preventing people from being harmed by work or becoming ill through work. This is so important that the law says we must not put ourselves, other workers or the public in danger.**

Controlling danger at work is no different from any other task – you need to recognise problems, know enough about them, decide what to do and act on the solutions. Following the guidance in this pack will help you to successfully manage health and safety for your business.

Health and safety law applies to all businesses however small. It covers employees, full or part-time, temporary or permanent; the self-employed; young people doing work experience; apprentices; charity workers; mobile workers and homeworkers. If you hire temps or casuals from agencies you have responsibilities too.

**Accidents and ill health caused by work cost time and money. Preventing these can help your business save money.**

#### Where can I get help?

Just visit <http://www.hse.gov.uk/120toolbox/index.htm> for more information. The website includes information on a range of health and safety topics including slips and trips, falls from height and downloadable resources for you to make the most of in your workplace.

#### Accidents at Work

Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)

#### RIDDOR - What must I report?

##### Deaths and injuries

If someone has died or has been injured because of a work-related accident this may have to be reported.

##### Work-related accidents

The accident that caused the death or injury must be connected to the work activity.

##### Types of reportable injury

- Deaths
- Specified Injuries to workers
- Over-seven-day injuries

##### People not at work

- Where a member of the public or person who is not at work has died, or
- Injuries to members of the public or people not at work where they are taken from the scene of an accident to hospital for treatment.

##### Specified injuries

fracture, other than to fingers, thumbs and toes;

- amputation;
- any injury likely to lead to permanent loss of sight or reduction in sight;
- any crush injury to the head to torso causing damage to the brain or internal organs;

- serious burns (including scalding) which: covers 10% of the body and causes significant damage to the eyes, respiratory system or other vital organs.
- any scalping requiring hospital treatment
- any loss of consciousness caused by head injury or asphyxia
- any other injury arising from working in an enclosed space which:
  - leads to hypothermia or heat-induced illness
  - requires resuscitation or admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours

#### Over 7 day incapacitation of a worker

This is where an employee or self-employed person is away from work or unable to perform their normal work duties for more than seven consecutive days (not counting the day of the accident but including weekends and rest days).

The report must be made within 15 days of the accident. NB you must keep a record of accidents that result in an employee being incapacitated for over 3 consecutive days.

#### Non-fatal accidents to non-workers (eg members of the public)

Accidents to members of the public or others who are not at work must be reported if they result in an injury and the person is taken directly from the scene of the accident to hospital for treatment to that injury.

#### Occupational diseases

Employers and the self-employed must report listed occupational diseases when they receive a written diagnosis from a doctor that they or their employee is suffering from these conditions and the sufferer has been doing the work activities listed.

#### Dangerous occurrences

Dangerous occurrences are certain listed near-miss events. Not every near miss event must be reported.

#### Online reporting of accidents and incidents

Complete the appropriate online report form as listed below, which is accessed at [www.hse.gov.uk/riddor](http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor). The form will then be submitted directly to the RIDDOR database. You will receive a copy for your records.

- Report of an injury
- Report of a dangerous occurrence
- Report of an injury offshore
- Report of a dangerous occurrence offshore
- Report of a case of disease
- Report of flammable gas incident
- Report of a dangerous gas fitting

#### Telephone

All incidents can be reported online but a telephone service remains for reporting fatal and major injuries only - call the Incident Contact Centre on 0845 300 9923 (opening hours Monday to Friday 8.30 am to 5 pm).

#### Reporting out of hours

The HSE and local authority enforcement officers are not an emergency service. More information on when, and how, to report very serious or dangerous incidents, can be found by visiting the HSE out of hours webpage. If you want to report less serious incidents out of normal working hours, you can always complete an online form.

Further Health and Safety information is available online at [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk) or contact the Environmental Health Department at Hastings Borough Council on 01424 451078

## Getting started on health and safety

**Work accidents and ill health can be expensive. Stopping them happening can save you time and money.**

**The smaller your business the bigger the impact will be if you or a member of your staff has a serious accident, or is off sick for an extended period of time. It could even put you out of business.**

**There are several important areas to consider if you want to reduce the cost of ill health or accidents caused by the working environment.**

### 1. Get the right advice

The law says that you must appoint someone competent to help you comply with your health and safety duties.

**A competent person is someone with the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to manage health and safety.**

**It can be yourself, your workers or an external consultant/advisers or a combination of these.**

Further information can be found in the HSE's free leaflet INDG420 'Getting Specialist Help with Health and Safety' or see the following web site:  
[www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/index.htm)

### 2. Take out Employer's Liability Compulsory Insurance

If you have employees it is likely that you will need to have Employers' Liability Compulsory Insurance.

Only very few businesses are not required to have this, for example: if you do not have employees, are a family run business or all employees are closely related to you. If you do require insurance you must display the current certificate where your staff can easily read it. You could be fined if you do not have a current policy.

If your employees are injured at work, or your former employees become ill as a result of their work while in your employment, they might try to claim compensation from you if they believe you are responsible. The Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969 ensures that you have at least a minimum level of insurance cover against any such claims. The Financial Services Authority (FSA) has a list of authorised insurers. You can check if a company is authorised by searching the register on [www.fsa.gov.uk](http://www.fsa.gov.uk) or phone the FSA consumer helpline on 0845 606 1234.

### 3. Write your Health and Safety Policy

Your health and safety policy statement is the starting point to managing health and safety in the workplace and sets out how you manage health and safety in your organisation. It is a unique document that basically identifies who does what; and when and how they do it within your business. It also demonstrates your health and safety commitment to your staff, and shows them and anyone else what arrangements are in place and that hazards have been identified and risks assessed, eliminated or controlled.

If you have five or more employees you will need to have a written policy which you must share with them.

**A policy will only be effective if you and your staff follow it and review it regularly.**

More information can be found in the HSE publication INDG259 'An Introduction to Health and Safety' which you can download via the Health and Safety website [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk).

#### [4. Assess and manage the risks in your business](#)

Risk assessment is the key to effective management of health and safety and the law says that you must assess and manage the health and safety risks of your business.

You must carry out a risk assessment to identify any risks and then make decisions on how to manage these risks, so far as is reasonably practicable, to comply with health and safety law.

If you employ five or more employees, you must record:

- the significant findings of the assessment; and
- any group of employees identified by the risk assessment as being especially at risk.

This would then form part of the general health and safety policy of your business. Further information can be found at: [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

**There is no such thing as a risk free workplace but you can minimise health and safety risks.**

**It is not just highly unusual or exceptional circumstances that cause accidents or ill health. Some basic thinking and acting beforehand could actually prevent them from happening.**

**The law does not require you to remove all risks, but protect people by putting in measures to control those risks.**

Further information can be found at: [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

#### [5. Workplace health and welfare](#)

You must provide a safe and healthy environment for all your employees including people with disabilities. You also need to take account of their welfare needs. For example you will need to consider lighting, temperature, toilets, washing facilities and drinking water, although this is not an exhaustive list.

Further information can be found in the HSE leaflet INDG244 'Workplace, Health, Safety and Welfare – A short guide for managers'.

#### [6. Provide free health and safety training, information and supervision](#)

Health and safety law says:

- Employees must be trained and clearly instructed in their duties; and
- Employers and host companies must ensure contractors are properly trained and competent to work safely.

Everyone who works for you, including self-employed people, need to know how to work safely and without risks to their own or other's health. Therefore you need to train them so

they know what hazards and risks they may come across within your business and how to deal with them.

Health and safety training should take place during working hours and must not be paid for by employees.

Some employees may have particular training needs, for example:

- new recruits;
- people changing jobs or taking on extra responsibilities; and
- young employees who, because of their inexperience can be particularly vulnerable to accidents.

You also need to ensure that new, inexperienced or young employees are adequately supervised.

Further information can be found in the HSE leaflet INDG345 'Health and Safety Training – what you need to know'

### 7. Consult your employees

By law employers must consult employees on health and safety matters. Your staff are often the best people to identify potential problems as well as offering solutions, so discuss the issues with them whenever possible. This will save you time and money in the long run. You may also get valuable insights into what your employees think about their work conditions, not just in health and safety concerns but others matters too. This can be very important in creating and maintaining a safe and healthy working environment. Involving workers is important for good health and safety. It means that everyone involved with a work activity, whether a manager, employee, or contractor, participates in managing the risks associated with it.

Further information can be found in the HSE leaflet INDG232 'Consulting Employees on Health and Safety – A brief guide to the law'

### 8. Health and Safety Law poster

As an employer you must advise your staff on matters of health and safety. This may be either by displaying a Health and Safety Law poster or alternatively, you can provide your employees with individual copies of the same information in the leaflet HSE27 called 'Your Health and Safety – a guide for workers' produced by the HSE and the TUC.

The poster is available to purchase from HSE Books and the leaflet is available to download from the HSE website. You must include some contact details on the poster for example your own Health and Safety contacts, and those of your local enforcing authority (details of Hastings Borough Council, Environmental Health can be found below).

### 9. Arrangements for first aid

#### First Aid

First aid can save lives and prevent minor injuries becoming major ones. You are responsible for making sure your employees receive immediate attention if they are taken ill or are injured at work. The level of arrangements you need will depend on the circumstances in your workplace and you will need to assess what your first aid needs are.

**As a minimum, you must have:**

- 1. A suitably stocked first aid box;**
- 2. An appointed person to take charge of first aid arrangements;**
- 3. Information for all employees giving details of first aid arrangements**

Further information can be found in the HSE leaflet INDG214 'First Aid at Work - Your questions answered'.

## 10. Gas Safety

If gas appliances are not properly installed and maintained, there is a danger of fire, explosion, gas leaks and carbon monoxide poisoning. Employers need to comply with the relevant regulations to ensure worker and public safety. You can do this by ensuring all maintenance work carried out on a gas appliance including connection and servicing is carried out by a Gas Safe registered engineer. See Gas Safety on the following web site <http://www.hse.gov.uk/120toolbox/index.htm>

For details of Gas Safe engineers see the following web site: [www.hse.gov.uk/gas/domestic/newschemecontract.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/gas/domestic/newschemecontract.htm)

## 11. Electrical Safety

Electricity can kill or severely injure people and cause damage to property. The main hazards are electric shock, burns, injury from exposure to arcing, fire from faulty electrics and explosions. You must make sure electrical equipment is suitable and used for its intended purpose and make sure that the electrical equipment and installations are maintained to prevent danger. You should carry out regular visual checks of electrical equipment and appliances. "If in doubt turn it out, get it checked". Repairs and maintenance must only be carried out by a competent person (someone who has the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to carry out the work safely). See Electrical Safety on the following web site: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/120toolbox/index.htm>

## 12. Asbestos

Asbestos is the single greatest cause of work related deaths in the UK. When fibres are inhaled they can cause serious diseases which are responsible for around 4500 deaths a year. Although it is has been illegal to use asbestos since 1999 in building construction, many thousands of tons have been used in the past and still present in many buildings. Exposed or damaged asbestos is a serious risk. Anyone who uses your premises may be at risk. If you are responsible for the maintenance of your building and it is non domestic you have a duty to manage the risk either finding where any asbestos is in the premises or assessing if asbestos containing materials are liable to be present and keeping a plan of how the risk can be managed should anyone need to work on or disturb the asbestos. If in doubt as to whether any material contains asbestos you should always assume it does unless there is strong evidence to the contrary. Do not break or damage any material which may contain asbestos to try to identify it.

Most work on asbestos insulation, asbestos insulating boards and lagging, including sealing and removal, should normally be done by a contractor licensed by the HSE. For more information go to 'Managing and Working with Asbestos' at [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

## 13. Keep it going!

Now that you have taken the simple steps to improve health and safety in your organisation make sure you keep it up. You must ensure that your health and safety policy and procedures are reviewed regularly to make sure they are still effective and up to date.

Basically, you need to:

- review your risk assessment to make sure that precautions are still working effectively, especially if you bring in new machinery, substances or procedures which could lead to new hazards.
- review your Health and Safety policy to make sure it is up to date;
- keep Employers Liability Compulsory Insurance up to date;
- review your programme of health and safety training - to ensure that all your employees have been trained and clearly instructed in their duties
- keep yourself up to date with changing laws and best practice within your industry

## Summary

**Effective health and safety management clearly helps reduce the unacceptable toll of suffering that accidents and ill-health can bring. That's not all it does. Your business will benefit in many other ways by simply improving your management of health and safety.**

**A good health and safety regime for your business ensures your hard earned profits stay in the bank and are not spent on accident or illness related problems, each time they happen. This means more money to keep your business going.**

## Action Plan

### What do you need to improve?

Now you have read through the pack, consider what actions you need to take to comply with the basic steps we have given you and list them in the table below.

<b>Action to be completed</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>

## Further advice

### Hastings Borough Council

Website [www.Hastings.gov.uk](http://www.Hastings.gov.uk)

Address Environmental Health, Aquila House, Breeds Place, Hastings, East Sussex, TN34 3UY

Email: [environmentalhealth@hastings.gov.uk](mailto:environmentalhealth@hastings.gov.uk)

### Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

For more detailed online guidance on health and safety topics for your type of business, go direct to [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

### Planning/Building Control Advice

If you are a new business and/or undertaking structural changes to your premises you may require Planning and/or Building Control approval.

To contact the Planning Team visit <http://www.hastings.gov.uk> for more information.