

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea (VCKC)

Health & Safety Policy

General Statement of Policy

Our general statement of policy is:

- to provide adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from our work activities
- to consult with our employees (including volunteers directly involved in any VCKC programmes) on day-to-day matters affecting their health and safety
- to provide and maintain safe plant and equipment
- to ensure safe handling and use of substances
- to provide appropriate information, instruction and supervision for employees;
- to ensure all employees are competent to do their tasks, and to give them adequate training;
- to prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health by managing health and safety risks in the workplace;
- to maintain safe and healthy working conditions;
- to implement emergency procedures in the case of fire or any other significant incident; and
- to review and revise this policy as necessary at regular intervals.

There are a number of related policies which support this policy which can be found in the policy file on docshare.

Policy History

This policy was drafted and submitted to the Board for approval in May 2012 and updated and submitted to the Board for approval in September 2019.

Policy Owner

Policy, Procedure and Personnel sub-group

Policy

Responsibilities

Overall and final responsibility for health and safety of VCKC is that of the Trustees of VCKC.

Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice is delegated to the Chief Executive with support from the Senior Management Team.

To ensure appropriate health and safety standards are maintained, the following people have responsibility in the following areas

Accident reporting and recording; First Aid; Portable electrical appliances; Display screen equipment; Defect and Hazard reporting; health & safety information; health & safety risk assessments; clear passageway; security; storage;	Chief Operating Officer
Infectious diseases; violence to staff; new and pregnant mothers; working hours/practice; workplace stress	Chief Executive

Emergency Procedures and Drills; emergency signage; firefighting equipment; mains electrical safety; gas safety; alarm system; intruders; parking; water quality	Westway Trust
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VCK&C will comply with all relevant legislation regarding reporting of incidents and accidents as set out at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/guidance/index.htm>

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).

Health and safety risks arising from our work activities

Regular risk assessments will be undertaken by the Chief Operating Officer (or Chief Executive if not available)

The findings of the risk assessments will be reported to the Chief Executive (or Chair of Trustees if not available).

Recommended actions to reduce or remove risks will be approved by the Chief Executive (or Chair of Trustees if not available)

The Chief Operating Officer will be responsible for ensuring the approved actions are implemented and will report back to the Chief Executive once they have been actioned.

Once the actions have been implemented, the Chief Operating Officer will check that they have reduced or removed the risks by carrying out a refresh of the risk assessment and report back to the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive will report any hazards that cannot be reduced to the Chair of Trustees.

Assessments will be reviewed every twelve months or when the work activity changes, whichever is soonest.

Consultation with employees

VCK&C will consult with employees on the following:

- any new measure which may substantially affect their health and safety at work, for example new equipment, new ways of working and new procedures
- arrangements for getting competent people to help satisfy health and safety laws
- the information we give to employees on the risks to health and safety arising from their work, measures to reduce or remove these risks and what they should do if they are exposed to a risk, including emergency procedures
- planning and organizing health and safety training and
- the health and safety consequences for them of any new technology we plan to introduce.

The information provided to employees will be in a form that can be easily understood.

VCK&C will consult directly with employees through team meetings and face-to-face discussions.

VCK&C will allow enough time for employees to consider the issues and give informed responses. Employees are encouraged to ask questions, raise concerns and make recommendations.

VCK&C will take employees' views into account before a final decision is made, respond to any concerns and questions raised and explain the final decision and why it has been taken.

Safe equipment

The Chief Operating Officer will be responsible for identifying all equipment needing maintenance, ensuring that effective maintenance procedures are drawn up (where that is within the control of VCK&C), ensuring that all required maintenance is implemented and checking that all new equipment meets required Health & Safety standards before it is purchased.

Any problems found with equipment should be reported to the Chief Operating Officer, or, in their absence, the most senior member of staff available immediately. The Chief Officer will have responsibility for ensuring that new equipment meets health and safety standards before it is purchased.

Responsibility for maintaining fixed items of equipment (eg windows, window blinds, fridge, microwave and kettle) falls to the Chief Operating Officer who is required to respond to all maintenance issues.

Safe handling and use of substances

The Chief Operating Officer will check that new substances can be used safely (including paying due regard to any health conditions suffered by team members, eg asthma) before they are purchased. VCK&C does not currently use or store any substances which need a COSHH assessment.

Safe use of VDU equipment

The Chief Operating Officer will have overall responsibility for ensuring that use of work stations is analysed and risks reduced including putting controls in place, providing information and training to staff and volunteers, ensuring that eye and eyesight tests are provided if staff do not qualify for a free NHS test for regular users of VDUs who use the equipment for more than an hour continuously. The Chief Operating Officer will ensure that VDU risk assessments are completed as necessary.

Manual handling

The Chief Operating Officer has responsibility for ensuring that hazardous manual handling operations are avoided so far as is reasonably practicable. When possible, tasks will be redesigned to avoid moving the load or by automating or mechanising the process. An assessment of the risk of injury from any hazardous manual handling operations that cannot be avoided will be made and any risk of injury from those operations will be reduced so far as is reasonably practicable. Where possible, mechanical assistance such as a sack trolley or hoist will be provided. Where this is not reasonably practicable changes to the task, the load and the working environment will be explored.

Information, instruction and supervision

The Health and Safety Law poster must be clearly displayed in the office.

The Chief Operating Officer can provide leaflets or additional information as required.

Supervision of young workers/trainees will be arranged by the relevant member of the Senior Management Team and will be monitored by the Chief Executive.

The Chief Operating Officer is responsible for ensuring that our employees working at locations under the control of other employers are given relevant health and safety information.

Competency for tasks and training

Induction training will be provided for all employees by their line manager, the Chief Operating Officer and the Chief Executive.

Training records are kept in the personnel cabinet by the Chief Executive.

Accidents, first aid and work-related ill health

Health surveillance is not currently required in relation to any jobs at VCK&C

The first aid box is kept in the kitchen and the appointed First Aider is the Chief Operating Officer.

All accidents and cases of work-related ill health are to be recorded in the accident book. The book is currently kept at the back of the office on the open shelving.

The Chief Executive is responsible for reporting accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences to relevant external authorities [and the Chair of the Board of Trustees?].

Emergency procedures – fire and evacuation

The Chief Operating Officer is responsible for ensuring office fire risk assessments are undertaken, implemented and regularly reviewed. Escape routes are checked regularly by the Chief Operating Officer.

VCKC Fire extinguishers are maintained and checked twice yearly. All other fire extinguishers are maintained by Westway Trust.

Alarms are tested by Westway Trust weekly.

Emergency evacuation drills are the responsibility of the Chief Operating Officer and will be organized on a regular basis

Fire Drill Procedure

A Fire Drill Procedure is carried out periodically and Fire Action notices are situated at all entrances/exits to the main premises. The evacuation assembly point is Portobello Green.

Monitoring

To check our working conditions, and ensure our safe working practices are being followed, we will carry out inspections and spot checks and investigate any accidents or sickness absences that occur.

The Chief Executive is responsible for investigating accidents, work-related causes of sickness absence and for acting on investigation findings (or delegating the action as appropriate) to prevent a recurrence [, plus informing the Chair of the Board of Trustees?].

Resources Required

Distribution (electronically) to all employees of VCK&C.

Time from the Chief Operating Officer to carry out risk assessments and oversee the implementation of any agreed changes.