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**“Working to Empower the Community”  
in Lancashire and Cumbria**

**Pamela Beswick - Chief Executive Officer**

Community  
Legal Service



Help Point

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

### **STATEMENT**

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and recent additional legislation places a legal duty on Signposts to try to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety and welfare at work of all employees, non employees and visitors.

*To do this Signposts will make sure that, as far as is reasonably practicable:*

- All staff and volunteers are made aware of their individual responsibilities
- All staff and volunteers are given sufficient information, instruction and training to maintain their health and safety at work
- Equipment and ways of working are safe and without risk to health
- Arrangements are made for the safe use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances at work
- Risk Assessments are carried out and reports detailing the findings are made available to staff and volunteers
- All relevant Health and Safety legislation is complied with

**The Executive Committee expects all its employees and volunteers to assist Signposts to fulfil all its health and safety obligations by:**

- **Working safely and efficiently**
- **Reporting incidents that have led or may lead to accidents**
- **Following Signposts safety rules and procedures**

### **MANAGERIAL ORGANISATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **Introduction**

This policy covers all employees and volunteers working for Signposts in any of its offices.

**The Executive Committee** will be responsible for:

- ensuring resources are adequate to maintain health and safety standards
- ensuring the Chief Executive carries out safety duties adequately
- acting on reports and recommendations made by the Chief Executive

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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**The Chief Executive** will be responsible for:

- ensuring all employees and volunteers receive adequate safety training
- ensuring that the Health and Safety policy is implemented, monitored and reviewed regularly
- working with the nominated person in investigating all accidents and incidents and preparing the appropriate reports for the Executive Committee
- making regular inspections of Signposts property, equipment and procedures
- presenting reports on accidents, incidents and near misses to the Executive Committee
- ensuring the nominated person carries out their duties as Health and Safety Officer adequately

**The nominated person** will be responsible, on a day to day basis, for:

- acting as the competent person under the Act
- carrying out risk assessments as required under current legislation
- implementing the health and safety policy in co-operation with other staff
- reporting accidents, incidents and near misses to the Chief Executive
- ensuring good housekeeping is maintained
- maintaining records of:
  - accidents
  - fire drills (where required)
  - safety checks
  - nominated First Aid persons in the Centre
- preparing, where appropriate, incident/accident reports
- maintaining up-to-date legislative information on Acts and Regulations
- maintaining all certificates and registers required under relevant legislation
- carrying out initial reviews of Health and Safety policy as requested by the Chief Executive
- ensuring all new equipment or processes are introduced in line with regulations

**All staff and volunteers** will be responsible for:

- taking reasonable care in their work practices
- working in a way which does not endanger others (including Members of the public)
- reporting any accidents, incidents or near misses or any potential risks to the nominated person
- complying with any instruction relating to health and safety .
- maintaining good housekeeping

This policy will be reviewed every two years, and amended after major changes to legislation, processes or equipment. The review will be carried out by the nominated person in consultation with all staff and will be submitted to the Executive Committee for approval.

### **ARRANGEMENTS FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY**

All employees are obligated under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to ensure that they work in a manner which protects not only their own safety but that of their colleagues, visitors and members of the public, The nominated person will hold copies of all relevant Health and Safety legislation in the Signposts office and this will be available to all members of staff and volunteers on request.

Signposts is advised by Peninsula Business Services who provide a bespoke management system.

**Compliance with the Health and Safety Policy is a condition of employment and breaches may be subject to disciplinary procedure.**

### **Reporting Accidents**

1. Any person involved in an accident, whether or not injury is sustained, must report to the nominated person as soon as possible.
2. Any person receiving any injury - however slight - must report it and obtain adequate treatment.
3. Any person involved in a 'near miss' or dangerous occurrence must report this as soon as possible.
4. Any unsafe conditions or work activities must be reported to the Chief Executive immediately.

### **Smoking**

Smoking is prohibited anywhere on Signposts premises, except in exceptional circumstances. As defined by the Law of England July 1<sup>st</sup> 2007.

### **Hand Hygiene and Infection Control**

Facilities are available for hand washing in all venues including specific sinks in kitchens. Antibacterial hand gel and tissues are provided in offices and other work spaces to allow the team to prevent and control infection.

### **Sharps**

If any sharps are used on Signposts premises there will be a written sharps policy attached to this Health and Safety Policy.

### **First Aid**

- a) A first aid box will be maintained.
- b) The first aid box will be kept suitably stocked.
- c) The names, and extension numbers of all 'Appointed Persons' (i.e. persons nominated to take responsibility in case of an accident) will be displayed in a prominent position in the Signposts office.
- d) The nominated person will maintain an accident record book in line with Signposts policy.

### **Working Away**

All relevant safety rules and legislation apply to all Signposts employees and volunteers engaged on Signposts business away from the offices.

### **Outreach Offices**

All staff or volunteers working in any outreach offices should make themselves aware of the Health and Safety arrangements for that building.

### **Fire/Emergency Arrangements**

- a) All staff and volunteers must make themselves aware of evacuation plans in the event of fire or other emergency. A copy of the plan will be displayed.
- b) Staff and volunteers will be issued with information as to locations of fire fighting equipment and emergency exits - all staff and volunteers are required to make themselves aware of these.
- c) Staff or volunteers who facilitate meetings involving visitors to the building must ensure that information about fire exits and alarm procedures is relayed at the start

- d) Fire drills will be held on a regular basis where required - everyone is required to take part. The nominated person will keep a record of all drills.
- e) All fire doors must be kept closed at ALL times.
- f) Emergency exit doors will be maintained to open easily from the inside.
- g) Fire fighting equipment will be serviced regularly.
- h) The nominated person will make regular checks to ensure that fire exits are kept clear and all safety notices remain conspicuously displayed.

## **7 Training**

- a) All new staff and volunteers will be required to undertake induction training.
- b) All staff and volunteers will receive periodic training on what is required to comply with Health and Safety policy.
- c) Health and Safety training courses will be arranged as necessary by the.
- d) Chief Executive to maintain a suitable level of 'appointed' persons'.
- e) Before the introduction of any new equipment or change in working practices, the nominated person will identify any new training requirements in consultation with the Chief Executive.

## **CODES OF PRACTICE**

### **General**

- a) Use equipment only for the purpose for which it was purchased - do not improvise.
- b) Use equipment in line with the manufacturers instructions.
- c) Stop using equipment if a fault develops - report it to the nominated person.
- d) Never run cables under carpets - ensure suitable cable covers are used.
- e) If door wedges are not being used, store them on a raised surface – avoid leaving them on the floor
- f) Co-operate with other staff or volunteers by maintaining good house-keeping, especially in your own work area
- g) Filing cabinets:
  - a. avoid leaving drawers open at any time
  - b. fill from the bottom upwards - to prevent toppling
- h) Anyone working alone in the building must ensure that all exterior doors are locked.
- i) Staff or volunteers must avoid working alone in a building if they are suffering from a medical condition which would make it unsafe to do so.
- j) Staff or volunteers must avoid taking personal risks e.g. overstretching or climbing on inappropriate surfaces, especially if working alone.
- k) If any member of staff or volunteer feels stressed by a case or workload they should contact their line manager as soon as possible to arrange for a debriefing session.
- l) Members of staff or volunteers who have a medical condition which affects their ability to work should discuss this with their line manager
- m) Food waste must be left only in the kitchen bins

### **Outreach Offices**

- a) If staff or volunteers are working in an outreach office, then they will have obligations under any Health and Safety arrangements for that building as well as under the Signposts Health and Safety Policy
- b) Staff and volunteers will be provided with information about fire arrangements for the building.
- c) First Aid arrangements will be provided.
- d) Where practicable the nominated person will make regular Health and Safety checks.

### **Staff or volunteers visiting people's homes (also see Lone Working Policy)**

- a. Staff or volunteers visiting people in their homes need to be aware of potential dangers and avoid taking any personal risks.
- b. Personnel on such visits should always follow the Signposts Lone Working Policy particularly guidance on home visiting.
- c. Where check call doesn't take place the office manager or other designated person will set enquiries in motion.
- d. Where accidents, near misses or dangerous occurrences take place whilst personnel are on Signposts business, these should be reported as soon as possible to the nominated person who will enter them into the accident book.
- e. It is important that, on entering people's homes, staff or volunteers should guard against accidents occasioned by torn or frayed carpets, loose rugs and slippery floor surfaces or trailing cables and flexes.
- f. Take care on unlit corridors or stairs.

### **VDU Users**

The provisions in this section are intended primarily for 'designated users', but other users of VDUs should also follow them where possible.

- a. Ensure that the screen is adjusted, with regard to brightness and contrast, to suit individual users.
- b. Users should take short but frequent breaks - ideally five to ten minutes in each hour - by varying the type of work done.
- c. Users may request free eye tests where use of the VDU is felt to cause an eye problem.
- d. Each user should ensure that chairs, desks, VDU casings and keyboards are adjusted to suit the individual.
- e. If needed, use any PPE (Person Protective Equipment) provided e.g. screen filters and footrests.
- f. Ensure there is no reflected light on the screen.
- g. Report any glare or flicker to the nominated person.
- h. Report any environmental or hardware problems which may be specific to a user to the nominated person.
- i. Risk assessments should be carried out when new equipment (including software) is installed. Individuals may request sight of such assessments.

### **Risk Assessment**

- a) Written risk assessment will be carried out where an unsafe condition or work practice is identified.
- b) A competent person shall be appointed to carry out such assessment.
- c) Signposts will define and implement procedures for serious and imminent danger.
- d) Assessment will be carried out with executive committee/staff/volunteer cooperation.
- e) Information will be made available to relevant workers.

### **Manual Handling**

- a) When moving heavy items staff and volunteers should have regard to Manual Handling techniques.
- b) Staff and volunteers must take account of their individual capability and ask for assistance with heavy or bulky loads.
- c) Instructions for Manual Handling will be provided.

## **FIRE PROCEDURE**

### **ON DISCOVERING A FIRE**

- Immediately operate the nearest fire alarm point
- Do not attempt to fight the fire unless you can do so safely

### **ON HEARING THE FIRE ALARM**

- Leave the room without collecting personal belongings and close the door
- Evacuate the building by the nearest escape route
- Go to the designated assembly point for the premises: the assembly points for all buildings are prominently displayed on Fire Notices and these should be made aware to all the team in induction.
- Report in to the person in charge

### **REMEMBER**

- Never think it is a false alarm
- Do not open a closed door unless you can be certain there is no fire behind it  
feeling for heat would not help because all internal doors are fire retardant
- The appointed fire prevention officer will ensure all areas are cleared.

Chief Executive

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