

## Statement

<b>Policy Title</b>	Health and Safety Policy Statement
<b>Version Number</b>	4
<b>Date of Equality Impact Assessment</b>	August 2025
<b>Next revision due</b>	August 2027
This policy outlines Health and safety guidelines for staff and volunteers working on behalf of Healthwatch Greenwich.	
This policy can be supplied in different formats: Tel: 020 8301 8340 or email: <a href="mailto:info@healthwatchgreenwich.co.uk">info@healthwatchgreenwich.co.uk</a>	

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## **Introduction**

Healthwatch Greenwich (HWG) will take all reasonable and practical steps to provide and maintain a safe and healthy environment on its premises for all its employees, volunteers, clients and visitors. For staff and volunteers who undertake activity away from the office, HWG will implement Health and Safety policy and the relevant procedures and ensure that staff and volunteers are aware of their responsibilities.

Our statement of general policy is:

- to provide adequate control of the health and safety risks arising out of its work activities
- to consult with employees on matters affecting their health and safety
- to provide and maintain safe equipment
- to ensure safe handling and use of substances
- to provide 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
- to maintain safe and healthy working conditions
- to review and revise this policy as necessary at regular intervals

## **Responsibilities**

The Board has overall responsibility for all aspects of health and safety at HWG and for ensuring appropriate arrangements are made to comply with all statutory requirements.

The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented.

All employees and volunteers must:

- cooperate 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 that of other people who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work;
- familiarise themselves and comply with the organisation's procedures on health and safety;
- work to the highest possible standards of safety with regard to clients;
- report all health and safety concerns to their Line Manager;
- report all accidents or injuries that are caused by the working environment to their Line Manager;
- report to their Line Manager if they are unsure how to perform a task safely, believe it would be dangerous to perform a specific job or use specific equipment.

A breach of the Health and Safety policy or procedures could result in disciplinary action being taken. HWG will ensure:

- The provision and maintenance of a working environment for its employees, volunteers, clients and visitors is safe, without risks to health and with adequate facilities
- A safe means of access to and exit from the workplace
- The provision and maintenance of equipment and systems of work that are safe and without undue risks to health
- Safety in the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances
- The provision of information, instruction, training and supervision necessary to ensure the health and safety of its employees, volunteers and service users.

## **Consultation with employees**

Employees will be consulted on health and safety matters, through the CEO or during staff meetings. The organisation will act on any legitimate concerns expressed by any interested party.

## **Reporting**

All hazards in the office should be reported to the CEO. Potential hazards in services should be reported to the line manager. Once notified, action should be taken to clear the hazard. All accidents whilst at work must be recorded in the Accident book and the CEO notified.

The CEO has responsibility for meeting the requirements of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1985 and reporting such incidents to the Health and Safety Executive.

## **Monitoring health and safety**

Responsibility for carrying out Health and Safety inspections will be delegated to all staff. The CEO will also do occasional health and safety spot checks. The CEO will investigate accidents and the safety systems will be reviewed to try and prevent a recurrence.

## **Review**

The Health and Safety policy and procedures will be reviewed every two years or when risk assessments indicate policy and procedures should be amended, whichever is the soonest.

## **Useful Contacts**

Further advice on Health and Safety can be obtained from the Health and Safety Executive on:

0845 345 0055 or

[hse.infoline@connaught.plc.uk](mailto:hse.infoline@connaught.plc.uk)

## **Accidents, first aid and work-related ill-health**

A first aid box is located in the office. All employees will be shown the location of the first aid box and will be given the names of the designated first aid personnel. This information is also displayed on the notice board.

All injuries, however small, sustained by a person at work, a service user, contractor or visitor must be reported to the line manager or in their absence an appropriate substitute and recorded in the Accident Report Book. All accidents will be investigated as necessary, with any required action being taken to prevent a recurrence of the problem.

The CEO is responsible for reporting accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences to the enforcing authority.

## **Alcohol, Drugs or Substance misuse**

Any staff member thought to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs may be subject to a disciplinary investigation as per the disciplinary procedure.

## **Display screen equipment**

In accordance with legislation, employees who regularly use a display screen are entitled to:

- Regular eye tests paid by the employer

- Free corrective eye appliance (cost of NHS lenses) if necessary, to use a computer

If the employee is entitled to the eye test it is their responsibility to arrange the appointment and to submit a request for payment.

### **Employees at Special Risk**

HWG recognises that some workers may from time to time be at increased risk of injury or ill-health resulting from work activities. All employees must advise their line manager if they become aware of any change in their personal circumstances, which could result in there being at increased risk. This could include medical conditions, permanent or temporary disability, taking medication and pregnancy. As an equal opportunities employer, HWG will ensure that they make reasonable adjustments to their employment arrangements or premises in order not to place disabled people at a substantial disadvantage compared with non-disabled people.

### **Equipment**

All employees will be instructed in the safe use of office equipment in their induction programme and as part of Health and Safety training. Employees should report any equipment failure to the CEO.

### **Fire**

Fire instructions are displayed at various points around the building. All employees have a duty to conduct their operations in such a way as to minimise the risk of fire and they are under a duty to report immediately any fire, smoke or potential fire hazards, such as faulty electric cable or loose connections. Employees should never attempt to repair or interfere with electrical equipment or wiring themselves.

Smoke detectors and manually operated fire alarms are located at strategic points throughout the workplace. If a fire is discovered, it is the responsibility of any employee present to activate the alarm and evacuate the building. Fire extinguishers are also located at strategic points throughout the workplace. Employees are expected to tackle a fire themselves only if it would pose no threat to their personal safety to do so. If the situation is dangerous or potentially dangerous, the employee should activate the fire alarm and evacuate the building immediately via the nearest exit. The assembly point is across the road, outside of the Royal Arsenal Medical Centre.

Fire doors are designed to slow the spread of fire and smoke throughout the workplace. Fire exit doors and corridors must never be locked, blocked or used as storage space. All employees must ensure they are familiar with their evacuation route and designated assembly point in case of fire.

### **ID Cards**

All HWG staff and volunteers are required to show ID cards when conducting Enter and Views, home visits or attending meetings representing the organisation. Such cards remain the property of the organisation and shall be surrendered upon request.

### **Insurance**

The CEO is responsible for insuring the activities of the organisation. Insurance certificates shall be displayed in the office.

### **Lone working**

It is recognised that from time to time staff and volunteers will work alone both at HWG premises and at other venues.

It is acknowledged that guidelines cannot cover eventualities / circumstances which are not possible to anticipate. However, all staff and volunteers have a duty to ensure that priority is given to their own safety and to that of colleagues, service users, contractors and the public wherever possible.

Guidelines for personal security and safety are given in the Lone Working policy.

## **Manual Handling**

In all cases where HWG staff and volunteers have to regularly carry, lift, push or pull items as part of their duties, a risk assessment should be undertaken and recorded. The assessment should identify any unnecessary operations.

Manual handling operations, which involve the risk of injury, should be avoided.

Employees should not attempt to lift or move a load, which is too heavy to manage comfortably. Employees should ask for assistance if there is any danger of strain.

Employees should not attempt to obtain items from shelves, which are beyond their reach. A ladder or stepping stool should be used as long as the staff member has been instructed how to use this safely. Employees should not use chairs or any makeshift device for climbing and should never climb up the shelves themselves.

## **Mobile phones**

The use of mobile phones, with or without a hands-free adaptor, is prohibited whilst driving on HWG business. A mobile phone should only be used after the vehicle has stopped safely and the engine turned off. The use of a mobile phone whilst driving is not only a legal offence but will also be seen as a disciplinary offence.

## **Risk assessments**

It is a requirement of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 that HWG undertakes and records risk assessments. The line manager will undertake risk assessments. Although risk assessments are undertaken prior to the activity being carried out, all staff and volunteers have a responsibility for not undertaking activity if they consider that the risks to themselves or others is significant.

## **Safe Handling of Substances**

HWG is required to carry out an assessment under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 in order to assess the workplace for risk to health from substances used on their premises. A hazardous substance can be liquid, solid, dust powder, or gas which can damage health when it comes into contact with skin or eyes; or enters the body through the skin; or is breathed in, swallowed or even transferred to the mouth via contaminated hands. In order to comply with CoSHH regulations the organisation is required to take the following steps:

- Identify the hazardous substance present.
- Decide who might be harmed or if others may be affected indirectly.
- Evaluate the risk arising from the hazard and decide whether existing control measures are adequate or if more should be done.
- Record the findings and arrange for details to be inserted into the health and safety file and inform all staff and volunteers.
- Assessments should be reviewed annually or until new guidance is given whichever is sooner.

Staff and volunteers required to use certain substances / chemicals will be required to comply with the following procedures:

- To use substances /chemicals in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. If in doubt, they should check before use with their Line Manager.
- To use protective clothing / footwear /gloves / masks / eye protection as appropriate.
- To clean any spillage / soiling of such substances in an appropriate manner.
- To report any accidents / incidents or injuries to their Line Manager.

## **Smoking**

Smoking is not allowed in the HWG office or in clients' homes.

## **Training**

All employees and volunteers will receive health and safety training as part of their induction on joining the organisation. Training will include instruction on the safe use of any equipment provided and other information, which is relevant to their specific role and responsibilities.

Specific training sessions will be arranged if there is a change to health and safety procedures; if it is agreed as part of a member of staff's training and development plan or to inform staff of a specific health and safety concern. Any training and development needs should be reported to the line manager.

## **Violence against staff**

The organisation will provide training and support to staff and volunteers who may be at risk from threats or violence from their client group. HWG as an employer will:

- Undertake a systematic general examination of all their work activities (including the threat of violence to staff), record the significant findings of their assessment and implement all appropriate actions to prevent incidents.
- Provide appropriate training to employees on dealing with difficult clients,

should it be required or requested.

- Report all violent incidents which lead to a major injury, or to three days' absence from work, or if the person assaulted or involved in the incident is unable to do their normal work for three days as a result of the incident.

Any member of staff or volunteer who feels that they may be at risk from verbal abuse, threats or actual violence should report this to the line manager immediately.

### **Working Hours**

HWG complies with the EU Working Time Directive by keeping a record of hours worked by staff in their employ.

## **HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE**

HWG aims to protect its staff and volunteers' health from injury or long term illness; ensuring their safety by affording protection from immediate danger and their welfare by providing facilities for personal comfort at work.

### **Cleanliness and Hygiene**

Any concerns regarding cleanliness/hygiene should be reported to the line manager. Protective clothing should be provided for all staff as required when handling bodily fluids and/or chemicals.

### **Drinking Water**

Staff and volunteers will have access to drinking water.

### **Lighting**

HWG should ensure that there is adequate lighting, preferably natural light to avoid visual fatigue.

## **Stress**

Under the management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999, HWG as an employer will make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to the health and safety of their employees to which they are exposed whilst at work. This is now recognised by the courts as including excessive stress levels whether it is caused by difficult time pressures, bullying by co-workers, violence from within or outside the organisation or any other employee reported source of unacceptable stresses. The line manager will assess risks to employees and volunteers.

## **Temperature**

HWG is expected to maintain workroom / office temperature of at least 16°C after the first hour of work where employees do most of their work sitting down or where the job does not involve serious physical effort. If this temperature is not reached, the employee should ask for additional heating facilities to be provided immediately and, if this is not possible, should transfer to a place of work where an appropriate temperature prevails. There is no maximum temperature.

## **Toilets**

Every workplace should have at least one 'conveniently accessible' toilet. This means that it must be near to where people work. A second toilet is needed as soon as the number of employees exceeds 16. Sanitary disposal units must be provided if there are female employees. Suitable washing facilities should be provided with hot and cold water, soap and towels.

## **Ventilation**

HWG is required to ensure that there is adequate ventilation e.g. for workplace fumes and for toilets (toilets should be ventilated to the outside where possible).

## **Waste Disposal**

HWG will ensure that all rubbish or items for disposal are bagged / wrapped and placed in the appropriate receptacle or area

# Appendix 1 – Contact Information

## HWG CEO:

**Name:** Joy Beishon

**Title:** CEO – HWG

**Address:**

Gunnery House,

9-11 Gunnery Terrace,

Royal Arsenal,

SE18 6SW

**Telephone:** 020 8301 8340

**Email:** [joy@healthwatchgreenwich.co.uk](mailto:joy@healthwatchgreenwich.co.uk)

**Secondary email (not confidential):** [info@healthwatchgreenwich.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchgreenwich.co.uk)

## Health and Safety Executive

To report a concern:

T: 0845 300 9923

## Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment Form

EIA screening determines whether the policy has any relevance for equality, i.e. is there any impact on one or more of the protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010. These are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief Including lack of belief)
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

<b>1 Name of policy/procedure being assessed:</b>	Health and Safety Policy Statement
<b>2. Is this a new or existing policy/procedure?</b>	Existing (revised)
<b>3. What is the function of the policy/procedure?</b>	Provide guidelines for a safe working environment for staff and volunteers of HWG
<b>4. What is it trying to achieve and why?</b>	Safe, risk assessed working environment
<b>5. Who is intended to benefit and how?</b>	Staff and volunteers
<b>6. Is there any potential for differential impact (negative or positive) on any of the protected characteristics?</b>	No
<b>7. Is there any possibility of discriminating unlawfully, directly or indirectly, against people from any protected characteristic?</b>	No
<b>8. Could there be an effect on relations between certain groups?</b>	No

**9. Does the policy explicitly involve or focus on a particular equalities group i.e. because they have particular needs?**

No

**Designated responsible officer of the policy under review**

**Name: Joy Beishon**

**Position: Chief Executive**

**Date: August 2023**