

A Health and Safety Compliance Checklist

Business Information Factsheet
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Introduction

All employers in the UK are legally obliged to consider the health and safety of their employees, and anyone else affected by their work activities. The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 stipulates that employers must:

- Identify risks at work and any possible precautions against those risks.
- Identify the person responsible for implementing the precautions.
- Provide a means of carrying out their health and safety policy and establish a procedure for reporting accidents.
- Identify relevant legal standards that apply in each part of the workplace.
- Have a written statement of general policy (if they have five or more employees) with respect to health and safety at work.

Since the introduction of the Act, various regulations have been introduced to address specific areas of workplace health and safety in more detail.

Under Section 1 of the Deregulation Act 2015, the Government amended Section 3(2) of the Act which imposed a general duty on the self-employed to protect themselves and others from risk to their health and safety. Under the amendment, self-employed people whose work activities pose no potential risk of causing harm to others are now exempt from health and safety law.

Self-employed people who carry out a business activity which may pose a risk to the health and safety of other persons, or is of a 'prescribed description' such as agriculture, construction, quarrying, mining, offshore work or high-risk chemical sites, must still protect themselves and others from risks to their health and safety.

This checklist covers the main aspects of health and safety law to help ensure that employers comply with all the relevant legislation.

Health and safety policy

- If an employer has five employees or more, there is a legal requirement to have in place a written policy on health and safety.
- Employers of fewer than five staff don't need a written policy, but must still conduct workplace risk assessment.
- Employers should also identify the employees who have specific responsibilities related to health and safety, such as first-aiders and fire safety officers.

- The health and safety policy should include a general statement detailing the employer's concern for health and safety issues, as well as an outline of the key staff involved in health and safety in the workplace and an explanation of their duties.
- All employees must have easy access to the policy. It could be included in the staff handbook, placed on a noticeboard or be accessible on a staff intranet. The policy needs to be easy to read and understand.

See BIF 2, *An Introduction to Health and Safety Regulations*, for further information.

Risk assessments

- Employers must make a reasonable assessment of any risks to the health and safety of their employees and must record any significant risks found during the assessment. Employers of fewer than five staff don't need to record their findings, but must still conduct a risk assessment. This assessment must also cover the risk to the health and safety of any person affected by work activities, including members of the public.
- Self-employed people who carry out a business activity which may pose a risk to the health and safety of other persons must assess the risks to themselves and others, including customers and members of the public.

See BIF 289, *A Guide to Carrying Out Health and Safety Risk Assessments*, for further information.

Working environment

- Employers must provide a safe place of work and provide and maintain safe access to and exit from that workplace.
- Employers must ensure that the access points and paths leading up to their business premises or site are safe and that any handrails are secure.
- Employers must provide 'adequate welfare facilities' - this includes toilet and washing facilities, lighting, and maintaining a reasonable room temperature.

See BIF 198, *A Guide to the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992*, for further information.

Providing information and training

- Employers must provide health and safety training to new employees as part of the induction process. New recruits need basic induction training in how to work safely, including fire safety, evacuation procedures and first aid. Training should also cover the employer's health and safety policy, how it is implemented and the safety procedures used in the workplace.
- Employers should provide refresher training to employees who need it, especially when there are changes to procedures or legislation.
- People changing jobs or taking on new responsibilities will need to know about any additional health and safety implications.

- Particular attention should be given to the training needs of young employees, aged 17 or under, who can be vulnerable to accidents. New, inexperienced employees must also be adequately supervised.

Safety committees

- If any employees are represented by recognised trade unions, and the employer is requested in writing by two or more safety representatives to set up a safety committee, the employer must do so. The role of a safety committee is to ensure that health and safety is kept under review and to make sure that any practical measures are implemented.
- If trade unions are not recognised by the employer, the employer must consult with their employees either direct or through elected 'representatives of employee safety' on issues regarding health and safety.

Reporting accidents and ill health at work

- A 'responsible person' (the employer or people in control of the premises) must report all workplace deaths, major injuries and dangerous occurrences to the relevant enforcing authority immediately, without delay, by phone or e-mail, followed by an accident report form sent to the enforcing authority within ten days.
- An accident that leaves an employee unable to do the full range of their normal duties for more than three days must be reported to the relevant enforcing authority within ten days via an accident report form.
- Work-related diseases must also be reported to the enforcing authority on a disease report form (F2508A).
- Records must be kept for three years after the incident and enforcing authorities can ask for these records to be produced on request.

Go to www.hse.gov.uk/riddor or see BIF 481, A Guide to the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR), for further information.

Fire safety

- A responsible person must carry out a fire risk assessment, which must focus on the safety in case of fire of all 'relevant persons', especially those with special needs.
- If five or more people are employed, the significant findings of the fire risk assessment must be written down and recorded.
- The employer must have a plan to deal with emergencies, and all premises must be equipped with appropriate fire-fighting equipment, fire detection devices and alarms.
- If flammable or explosive materials are used or stored on any premises, adequate protection must be provided. Where possible, dangerous substances must be replaced with safer substitutes.

See BIF 122, A Guide to Fire Safety Measures, for further information.

First aid

- Employers have a duty to provide adequate equipment and facilities in the workplace to enable first aid to be given to employees if they are injured or become ill at work.
- All staff should be made aware of the arrangements for first aid and the procedures for first-aid treatment. These should be clearly identified in the health and safety policy.
- At least one notice should be posted in all premises to highlight the location of the first-aid kit and the names and locations of trained first-aiders or appointed employees.
- The HSE recommends specific numbers of first-aid personnel to be available at all times when there are employees at work. The number of first-aiders should be based on the assessment of risk and number of employees.

See BIF 181, A Guide to First Aid Requirements in a Small Business, for further information.

Hazardous substances

- Employers must control any exposure to hazardous substances, such as chemicals that employees work with on a day-to-day basis, and conduct an assessment of the associated risks.
- Employers are required to find out whether the building they occupy contains asbestos and what condition it is in, to assess the risk and to put together a risk management plan.

See BIF 22, A Guide to the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH), for further information.

Protective equipment

- Employers must assess which types of personal protective equipment (PPE) are suitable to protect employees against specific hazards and ensure compatibility where more than one item of equipment needs to be worn.
- Employers must provide employees with suitable PPE for use at work wherever there are risks to health and safety that cannot adequately be controlled in other ways.
- Equipment should be kept clean and in good repair, be replaced when necessary and kept properly stored when not in use.
- Employers must provide employees with adequate information, instruction and training to ensure that protective equipment is used properly.
- Employers must provide some protection for non-employees, such as visitors, contractors or, if necessary, the general public.

See BIF 265, A Guide to the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992, for further information.

Manual handling

- Employers should avoid hazardous manual handling operations in the workplace if at all possible. This can be done through eliminating or redesigning processes, or by introducing mechanical operations to move or support loads.
- Where such measures cannot be implemented, employers should properly assess the risk involved in the hazardous operation.
- Following on from the risk assessment, employers should develop and implement strategies to reduce the risk of injury from the operation to the lowest level reasonably practicable.

See BIF 200, A Guide to the Regulations Covering Lifting and Manual Handling in the Workplace, for further information.

Working at height

- Employers should try to avoid employees working at height, unless completely necessary.
- Employers must ensure that any employees working at height are competent and adequately trained, or supervised by competent persons.
- Employers must provide suitable work equipment and implement other safety measures to prevent falls. All equipment must be inspected regularly.

Noise

- Employers must take steps to reduce the risk of damage to employees' hearing as a result of exposure to workplace noise, minimise exposure to noise and provide personal ear protectors where noise rises above a certain level.

Computers and display screens

- Employers should plan work so that computer users have regular breaks from the same activity. Continuous keyboard sessions should not last for more than two hours without a break of five to ten minutes. The timing of breaks should be at the discretion of the employee.
- Employers need to give employees who use computers the right to free eye and sight tests. If glasses are required specifically for computer-based work and nothing else, employers must provide these.
- Employers must provide employees with adequate information and training to enable proper and safe use of IT equipment. This should be provided to all new employees during working hours as part of their induction to the workplace.

See BIF 412, A Guide to Health and Safety Regulations for IT Equipment, for further information.

Further information

To access hundreds of practical factsheets, market reports and small business guides, go to:

Website: www.scavenger.net

BIF 2 An Introduction to Health and Safety Regulations
BIF 22 A Guide to the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH)
BIF 95 Choosing and Using a Health and Safety Consultant
BIF 122 A Guide to Fire Safety Measures
BIF 140 A Guide to the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
BIF 181 A Guide to First Aid Requirements in a Small Business
BIF 198 A Guide to the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
BIF 200 A Guide to the Regulations Covering Lifting and Manual Handling in the Workplace
BIF 263 A Guide to the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
BIF 265 A Guide to the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992
BIF 289 A Guide to Carrying Out Health and Safety Risk Assessments
BIF 376 A Checklist for a Health and Safety Risk Assessment
BIF 412 A Guide to Health and Safety Regulations for IT Equipment
BIF 466 A Guide to the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
BIF 481 A Guide to the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)

Legal publications

'Health and safety made simple: The basics for your business'

Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

Website: www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg449.pdf

'Risk assessment: A brief guide to controlling risks in the workplace'

HSE

Website: www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf

'Workplace health, safety and welfare: A short guide for managers'

HSE

Website: www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg244.pdf

'RIDDOR - Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013'

HSE

Website: www.hse.gov.uk/riddor

'Health and Safety Advice Pack for Smaller Firms'

Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA)

Website: www.rospa.com/occupational-safety/advice-and-information/small-firms-health-and-safety/advice-pack

Useful contacts

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is responsible for health and safety regulation in Great Britain. It publishes guidance on the health and safety obligations of employers.

Tel: 0300 003 1747

Website: www.hse.gov.uk

The Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland (HSENI) is responsible for health and safety regulation in Northern Ireland. It provides information on the health and safety obligations of employers.

Tel: 0800 032 0121

Website: www.hseni.gov.uk

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