

# Health and Safety

## Policies and Procedures

### Contents

1. Health and Safety Policy
2. Alcohol at Work
3. No Smoking Policy
4. Occupational Health
5. Substance Abuse at Work Policy
6. Personal Safety
7. Pod/Panic Alarm Procedures
8. Fire Procedure
9. Biohazards, Evidence Handling and Blood-Borne Viruses (BBVs)
10. Accident Reporting and First Aid
11. Manual Handling Guidance
12. Driving at Work

<b>Version</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Author</b>
0.1	Approved by Senior Management Team	2014 Jun	Senior Personal Assistant
1.0	Published on SPSO website.	2015 Apr	Senior Personal Assistant
1.1	Audited	2016 May	Law At Work
2.0	Reviewed and published on SPSO website	2016 Dec	Corporate Services Manager
3.0	Reviewed and published on SPSO website	2017 Nov	Facilities Administrator

Note: Highlighter is used in this document to indicate **outstanding actions** or where **links** to other documents under review, are required.



---

# 1. Health and Safety Policy

Issued: Nov 2006

## Contents

---

Statement of Principles.....	3
Our General Health and Safety Policy Statement.....	3
Ombudsman Responsibilities .....	4
Line Manager Responsibilities.....	5
Facilities Administrator Responsibilities.....	6
Staff Duties .....	7
Hazard identification, Risk Assessments and Determining Controls .....	8
Information, Instruction and Training .....	9
Manual Handling and Lifting .....	9
Vehicles and Occupational Road Risk.....	9
Fire Safety .....	10
Young Persons.....	10
New and Expectant Birth Parents.....	10
Work Equipment.....	11
Violence.....	11
Welfare Provisions.....	12
Stress .....	12
Alcohol and Drugs .....	13
Smoking.....	13
Working from home (Health and Safety).....	13
Office Activities, including use of Display Screen Equipment .....	14
Hazardous Substances.....	15
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) .....	15
First Aid and Medical Attention .....	16
Accident and Incident Reporting and Investigation .....	16
Electricity .....	17
Gas.....	17

---

Communication and Consultation .....	17
Contractors and Sub-Contractors .....	18
Cleanliness .....	18
Waste Disposal.....	18
Safe Stacking and Storage .....	18
Working at Height .....	19
Monitoring, Audit and Review of Safety Performance .....	19
Review.....	20

Back to the main [Contents page](#)

---

## Statement of Principles

The SPSO is committed to promoting the health and safety, and well-being of all staff, and ensuring that our working environment supports this. Health and safety are key concerns for the SPSO and need to be managed robustly and effectively. The right approach will allow the SPSO to thrive, and help us control risks and cut costs.

Our systematic approach to health and safety ensures we comply with all legislative obligations. It also ensures we all know what is expected of us and what we can expect of colleagues, by setting out the correct way of carrying out our duties. Perhaps most importantly, it provides a foundation for continually improving health and safety management within the SPSO.

My commitment to you: I will ensure that health and safety continues to be an integral part of the overall management culture and will seek to develop a positive attitude to health and safety amongst staff by:

- visibly demonstrating a clear commitment to improving health and safety performance;
- promoting co-operation by recognising that we each have an important contribution to make to effective health and safety management, and providing opportunities for participation and involvement in health and safety activities, for example, health and safety committees, risk assessment etc;
- ensuring the communication of necessary information throughout the SPSO;
- securing the competence of staff from the start of their employment with the SPSO through training and coaching; and
- implementing systems, which will identify and deliver health and safety training needs arising from recruitment or changes in staff, procedures, or systems of work.

The SPSO Health and Safety Plan outlines specific objectives for the organisation, comprising realistic timescales for their accomplishment. The plan will be reviewed periodically, and implementation monitored.

## Our General Health and Safety Policy Statement

The SPSO recognises that it is our responsibility to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of staff. This duty of care extends to other persons whilst they are on our premises or affected by our activities such as visitors and contractors etc.

It is our policy to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of works for all staff and third parties. The organisation will do all that is reasonably practicable to prevent personal injury and damage to property. This policy also includes the public, when they come into contact with the SPSO or any of its services. We

will also provide such information, training and supervision as is needed to support the above.

The SPSO recognises that we have specific duties and statutory requirements, which include:

- to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions;
- to provide information, instruction, training and supervision as necessary to enable staff to perform their work safely and efficiently;
- to make available all necessary safety devices and protective equipment and to supervise their correct use;
- to communicate and as necessary consult with staff on health and safety issues;
- to provide and maintain, so far as reasonably practicable, a safe place of work and safe means of access to and egress from that place of work; and
- to provide and maintain a working environment that is, as far as reasonable practicable, safe, without risks to health and adequate as regards facilities and arrangements for welfare at work.

The policy is communicated to all staff of the SPSO. To enable the organisation to fulfil its duties and responsibilities as an employer all staff have a duty to exercise personal responsibility and to do everything within their power in the course of their employment to prevent injury or ill health to themselves or others.

The organisation will ensure that this policy is reviewed and amended to reflect any internal changes or legislative and regulatory requirements.

Signed

**Rosemary Agnew**

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

May 2017

### **Ombudsman Responsibilities**

This section outlines the organisational structure that SPSO has in place to achieve the [Statement of Principles](#) as outlined in Part 1 of this Policy Statement. The contributions to be made by managers and staff are summarised.

The Ombudsman has ultimate responsibility for ensuring the health, safety and welfare at work of the staff and will ensure, through effective delegation to the facilities administrator; line managers; and others, the effective implementation of the Health and Safety Policy.

---

This will be achieved by:

- ensuring that adequate resources are made available to enable the policy to be implemented;
- ensuring that health and safety is an integral part of the overall management culture and by developing a positive attitude to health and safety among staff by visibly demonstrating commitment to achieving a high standard of health and safety performance;
- appointing a competent person to assist the SPSO to apply the provisions of health and safety legislation;
- ensuring the establishment and maintenance of health and safety management systems within all areas, which will ensure the assessment of risks and the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of the preventative and protective measures necessary to control the risks;
- ensuring that all staff are informed and made aware of their responsibilities and duties under the Health and Safety Policy;
- ensuring that any training programmes required for compliance of this policy are provided; and
- ensuring that the effectiveness of the Health and Safety Policy and of the procedures in place are monitored on an annual basis or when there are any significant changes to the working environment.

The SPSO is responsible for:

- ensuring that those with delegated health and safety responsibilities carry them out effectively and in compliance with the Health and Safety Policy;
- co-operating at all times with the staff in conjunction with the facilities administrator and the relevant line manager to provide and maintain a safe and health working environment;
- ensuring that disciplinary action is taken on those members of staff who persistently breach the Health and Safety Policy and procedures in conjunction with the facilities administrator and the relevant line manager; and
- ensuring all accidents are correctly investigated and recorded within the accident book, and that information passed on to senior management.

### **Line Manager Responsibilities**

Line managers are responsible for their own departments and will organise the day-to-day work in compliance with the health and safety policy, and in particular must:

- implement the Health and Safety Policy in relation to their area of responsibility, monitoring its application and ensuring its effectiveness;

- ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that conditions within their control are safe and without risk to health;
- ensure that all staff are made aware of the Health and Safety Policy, arrangements and procedures relevant to their area of work. This should include any relevant regulations, approved codes of practice, or guidance notes;
- advise any person – staff, client, contractor or visitor - likely to be affected by any known hazard or risk at the workplace, of the protective or preventative measures to be taken to minimise risk;
- report all accidents and dangerous occurrences on the appropriate form as soon as possible after the incident, regardless of whether staff, client, contractor or visitor has been affected;
- investigate the causes of all accidents and dangerous occurrences, advise all persons who may be at risk and take steps to remove the hazard in order to prevent a recurrence of any incident;
- in the event of an accident resulting in a fatality or major injury, advise the Ombudsman immediately. The location of the accident should be sealed off to prevent access and to allow for an immediate investigation by the appropriate authority, for example, Police, Health and Safety Executive;
- make regular audits and inspections of workplaces and ensure that safe and healthy working practices are adopted and maintained;
- all staff must be trained in the SPSO fire procedures and evacuations;
- reporting any defects that require rectification to the Ombudsman and arrange for the work to be carried out to the appropriate standard;
- ensuring [The First Aid at Work Regulations](#) are adhered to;
- ensuring disciplinary action is taken on those members of staff who persistently breach the Health and Safety Policy and procedures;
- maintaining training records for all staff;
- ensuring any risks identified by any member of staff are acted upon immediately; and
- work with staff to provide and maintain a safe and healthy working environment and ensure any risks identified by a member of staff are acted upon immediately.

### **Facilities Administrator Responsibilities**

The function of the facilities administrator is one of administration of the health and safety management system as opposed to management. The facilities administrator will assist in but not be solely responsible for developing corporate policy. However, they will be responsible for ensuring corporate policy is implemented. The facilities administrator will:

- undergo suitable training and will familiarise themselves with the policies, procedures and arrangements as set out in the management system;



- identify training needs and organise training for other staff in relation to health and safety issues and ensure all staff receive appropriate instruction, information and training to reduce the risks associated with their work to an acceptable level;
- maintain the management system and all record-keeping systems (inspections, drills, audits, accidents) in an up-to-date and tidy condition;
- report on safety performance, safety failures, audit reports, inspections, drills, accidents and any requests for resources, support or funding for health and safety purposes;
- organise, attend and take the minutes of the health and safety committee and any other required safety meetings;
- maintain a programme of risk assessments, requesting funding and resources from the either Ombudsman or health and safety committee as appropriate and as necessary to keep assessments and control measures current. Where the facilities administrator believes that personnel are, or may foreseeably become, exposed to significant risk, direction will be sought from the Ombudsman without delay;
- ensure that health and safety considerations are taken into account in the SPSO's purchasing policy, the objective being to minimise risks as early in the purchasing chain as is reasonably practicable;
- ensure that significant safety failures are fully investigated and reported to the health and safety committee, and/or to any appropriate enforcing authority;
- initiate any suitable remedial procedures to reduce the likelihood of a similar incident recurring; and
- ensure that all fire-fighting equipment, emergency lighting, alarms and first aid facilities are regularly inspected and made good as necessary as per the control manual, and will arrange, carry out and keep records of all drills and tests.

## **Staff Duties**

Staff duties under section 7 of the Health and Safety at Work Act include co-operating with their employer to enable the employer to comply with the statutory duties for health and safety.

Staff must therefore:

- inform their line manager of any situation or condition at work, which he or she considers being unsafe, unhealthy or could become unsafe or unhealthy;
- have a regard for their own safety and welfare and that of others that may be affected by their actions or omissions at work;
- not engage in any activities that could create a hazardous or unsafe condition, which could compromise themselves, other members of staffs or equipment supplied by the SPSO for use in the workplace;

- adhere to the procedures and safe working practices, which are described in the Health and Safety Policy;
- properly use, maintain and store the personal protective equipment supplied by SPSO for their safety, health and welfare;
- ensure that any third party workers who are engaged in activities in their employer's workplace are made aware of and work within the health and safety policies and procedures that are in force;
- immediately report any accident, incident or dangerous occurrence, regardless of severity, to their line manager so that it can be investigated and all reasonable and practicable measures can be taken to remove or minimise the cause(s);
- not engage in any form of horseplay;
- not drink any form of alcoholic beverage in the workplace or enter the workplace in an intoxicated condition or consume alcohol while going about company business or when in the charge of a vehicle; and
- not ingest, inject or take in any manner whatsoever any form of drugs which could in any way affect their own ability to function in a safe manner. If drugs have been prescribed by a medical professional the member of staff must immediately inform his/her line manager if it may have an adverse effect on their ability to work in a safe manner.

### **Hazard identification, Risk Assessments and Determining Controls**

SPSO maintains procedures for the on-going identification of hazards and risks to implement the necessary control measures. The completion of risk assessments is a statutory requirement.

The risk assessment process will be conducted as follows:

- record the significant findings;
- involve staff in the process (so far as reasonable practicable);
- inform staff (of the risks identified and the precautions which they should take to ensure that the risks remain adequately controlled);
- assess any additional risks, which may arise in relation to young persons, disabled persons and pregnant woman/nursing mothers;
- confirm that the risks are adequately controlled (or to identify and implement control improvements with appropriate priority); and
- review assessments wherever there is a reason to suspect they are no longer valid.

Appropriate documentation will be produced by competent persons to record the findings of risk assessments carried out. Where necessary, safe working procedures will be developed to supplement risk assessments. Records of the completed risk assessments shall be retained and reviewed annually to ensure appropriate controls remain in place.

---

## **Information, Instruction and Training**

Line managers are responsible for ensuring that individuals under their control are fully aware of, and competent to undertake all delegated health and safety duties. Training is determined on site by reviewing the current work activities, roles and functions of the company.

These needs will be met through induction training for new recruits, general health and safety training for all staff and any other specific health and safety training as deemed necessary.

A record will be maintained as evidence that the training has been provided to staff.

## **Manual Handling and Lifting**

Manual handling operations undertaken by staff are subject to assessment under the Manual Handling Operations Regulations. Staff who are required to carry out manual handling and lifting operations as a regular part of their work will be given basic training on correct lifting and handling techniques.

Manual handling risk assessments should also be reviewed annually to make sure that the precautions are still working.

All staff suffering from an acute injury or long-term ill health condition, likely to be aggravated by manual handling or lifting, must report this condition immediately to their line manager.

See [Manual Handling Guidance](#)

## **Vehicles and Occupational Road Risk**

The SPSO's operations involve the use of road vehicles. We ensure that all staff who drive for work purposes hold a valid UK license and have appropriate insurance. Staff will be requested to provide (at periodic intervals) their current, valid UK driving licence, insurance that covers business use and a current MOT certificate if necessary. Staff must inform their line manager immediately following any change to driving licenses including penalty points or disqualification.

Disciplinary action will be taken against any other person found to be driving without authorisation. Disciplinary action will be taken against any authorised driver who is driving a vehicle whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs and/or driving in an unsafe manner.

A risk assessment will be carried out on the use of vehicles for work purposes.

See [driving at work](#)

## **Fire Safety**

The SPSO believes that the correct approach to fire safety is specifically one of fire prevention ie to prevent fires breaking out. However, it would be dangerous to assume that fires can never happen. Therefore, it is the SPSO's intention to ensure that:

- fire can be detected in a reasonable time and people can be warned reliably;
- people who may be in our buildings can get out quickly and safely;
- staff in our buildings know what to do if there is a fire;
- all premises have suitable and sufficient emergency procedures; and
- there are adequate supplies of fire-fighting equipment available.

The minimisation of property damage is important but not if it jeopardises the safety of staff or third party. The safety of life must override all other considerations at all times.

In accordance with the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 the SPSO will ensure that a fire risk assessment is carried out on each site that we operate.

See [Fire Procedure](#)

## **Young Persons**

Under the Management of Health and safety at Work Regulations 1999, an assessment of the risks to young people must be carried out, before they start work/work experience. A young person is defined as a person under the age of 18. Young people must be appropriately informed of the risks and the controls in place for their safety.

Line managers shall put in place measures to control the risks which will remove them altogether or reduce them to the lowest possible level; and let the parents/guardians of any students (and staff) below minimum school leaving age know the key findings of the risk assessment and the control measures.

It may be possible to use or adapt a general risk assessment for young people doing the same job or work experience. However, it is the responsibility of each line manager to ensure that any such adapted risk assessment is made specific to the individual young person in his/her area.

Line managers must not allow the young person to do the work where you find that a significant risk remains in spite of your best efforts to take all reasonable steps to control it.

## **New and Expectant Birth Parents**

A new or expectant birth parent is defined as a member of staff who is pregnant, who has given birth within the previous six months or who is breastfeeding. Given birth is defined

---

as a member of staff who has delivered a living child or after 24 weeks of pregnancy, a still born child.

The SPSO will assess the risks to all new and expectant birth parents within the SPSO and will review and update the assessment where necessary. We appreciate that many expectant birth parents do not wish to disclose their pregnancy until 12 weeks of the pregnancy has passed, however, we would strongly encourage any expectant birth parent to inform us at the earliest possible time to ensure that we can assess the relevant working activities and alter where appropriate.

If a significant risk is identified, all reasonably practicable measures will be taken to avoid the risk, with advice from the facilities administrator and the HR Officer. This may include temporary adjustments to your working conditions and/or finding you suitable alternative work. If neither is feasible, the SPSO may suspend you from work on full pay on maternity grounds.

### **Work Equipment**

The SPSO shall comply with all aspects of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998. The legislation covers work equipment whether owned, hired or leased by the SPSO. It covers work equipment used in all workplaces where the Health and Safety at Work Act applies.

The relevant manager shall make arrangements for assessing the suitability of work equipment with respect to:

- its initial integrity;
- the place where it will be used; and
- the purpose for which it will be used.

In addition, the facilities administrator shall make arrangements for suitable maintenance, inspection, information, instruction and training. They shall also make specific provision for conformity with European Community requirements, specific dangers, markings and warnings.

### **Violence**

The SPSO recognises the importance of including appropriate arrangements for dealing with violence in the workplace as an integral part of its Health and Safety Policy.

The company will undertake to meet the duties placed on them under the Management of Health and safety at Work Regulations 1999 by ensuring that a system is in place to identify and assess the risks from violence in the workplace.

Where significant risks are identified, appropriate control measures will be implemented to reduce the risks to the lowest level reasonably practicable. Control measures will include training where it is deemed appropriate.

Staff are encouraged to report incidents of violent behaviour (verbal or physical) to which they have been subjected to their relevant line manager who will discuss/investigate the incident and, where possible, take action to prevent a recurrence. The action taken or proposed action should be recorded.

## **Welfare Provisions**

It is policy that in each company building, provisions are made for a number of specific requirements relating to the following:

- ventilation, temperature and lighting;
- cleanliness and waste materials;
- room dimensions and space, including workstations;
- conditions of floors, traffic routes, doors and gates;
- falls or falling objects;
- organisation of traffic routes;
- sanitary and washing facilities; and
- drinking water.

## **Stress**

The SPSO recognises that, whilst a degree of pressure can be a positive force at work, excessive pressure can have a negative effect on health and on performance at work. The SPSO is committed to promoting good health at work and to provide suitable support mechanisms for staff suffering from the negative effects of stress.

The SPSO will identify stressful jobs and situations, through the risk assessment process and other appropriate means, with the objective of reducing harm from workplace stress, as far as is reasonably practicable.

The SPSO will provide suitable information to staff and managers in relation to stress. The stress information provided would include guidance on: recognising the symptoms of stress; the effects of stress at work; effective communication; handling difficult situations; time management; and good staff relations.

Where members of staff are suffering from stress, the SPSO will provide the necessary mechanisms to promote a return to full health as quickly as possible. Members of staff are encouraged to refer themselves to their line manager. All referrals will be dealt with in confidence.

---

See [Managing Work Related Stress Policy](#)

## **Alcohol and Drugs**

The SPSO recognises that the provision of a safe and healthy working environment may be affected by those who misuse alcohol and drugs and that it may affect their performance, conduct and relationships at work. Against this background the SPSO will promote the health and wellbeing of staff to minimise problems at work arising from the effect of alcohol or drugs.

See [Alcohol at Work](#) and [Substance Abuse at Work Policy](#)

## **Smoking**

The SPSO is committed to the health and welfare of all of its staff and believes that their personal well-being is essential for its efficiency and effectiveness. The Health and Safety Policy seeks to guarantee staff the right to work in air free of tobacco smoke.

Exposure to second hand smoke, also known as passive smoking, increases the risk of lung cancer, heart disease and other illnesses. Ventilation or separating smokers and non-smokers within the same airspace does not completely stop potentially dangerous exposure.

Smoking is prohibited in all areas of the business including vehicles used for work purposes. Drivers of personal cars are currently permitted to smoke unless they are carrying passengers in which case all parties, including the driver, will not be permitted to smoke.

See [No Smoking Policy](#)

## **Working from home (Health and Safety)**

The SPSO has a duty as an employer, under the Health and Safety at Work Act, to ensure the health and safety of a staff member while they are at work, so far as is reasonably practical. This duty applies to everything under the employer's control. It does not extend to a place of work that is outside the employer's control, such as the home. However, employers are required to perform a risk assessment of the activities carried out by home workers.

Staff who work at home have individual responsibilities under Health and Safety regulations. They are required to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and to co-operate with the SPSO as is necessary to comply with statutory obligations.

Guidance indicates that a risk assessment is generally not required unless home working is, or is likely to be, for more than one day a month on a regular basis. However, this depends on the circumstances of each case, including the duration and the nature of the work being undertaken, so the SPSO considers that it is good practice for the staff member to carry out a risk assessment in advance of agreeing to home working in all cases.

The staff member state in writing to the Director before home working takes place, that they have been advised by their line manager, or by the HR officer, about the health and safety implications of home working and provided with the relevant health and safety information. The risk assessment can often be done without a visit and can, in most cases, be carried out by the home working staff member using the information provided by the HR officer. The risk assessment focuses on:

- space to carry out work;
- access and egress;
- lighting and heating;
- manual handling issues;
- access to basic first aid equipment; and
- accident reporting arrangements.

However, where the SPSO is providing furniture or equipment, it may not be possible to assess the risk without a home visit. If the staff member prefers not to be visited at home, then the line manager and HR officer may need to consider whether the arrangements to work from home can go ahead.

The completed risk assessment must be returned to and approved by the HR officer. The room or place used to work must be identified clearly in the risk assessment and, once approved, any changes must not be made without the prior approval of the HR officer.

A staff member working at home must follow SPSO guidance on the use of visual display units, including the guidance on taking regular breaks. Laptop computers should not be used regularly for periods of more than one hour.

### **Office Activities, including use of Display Screen Equipment**

Use of display screen equipment by our staff is subject to assessment under the Display Screen Equipment Regulations. The use of such equipment may present a risk of injury or ill health as a result of repetitive movements and we are committed to reducing these risks through suitable control measures.

Eye tests are available to all users of display screen equipment. We will make a contribution towards a frame and lens of their choice equivalent to the basic cost of a



---

frame and single reflex lens at Specsavers or other similar supplier, to any member of staff who is identified by such eye test to require them, solely in respect of their use of display screen equipment. Staff must report if they are suffering aches, pains, headaches or any other symptoms, which may be attributable to their use of display screen equipment at work.

---

## **Hazardous Substances**

The SPSO will ensure that no work is carried out which is liable to expose any staff or others to any product, chemical or substance hazardous to health unless a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks created by that activity and of the steps needed to reduce the risks has been made.

Exposure to hazardous products, chemicals or substances will either be prevented or, where this is not reasonably practicable, adequately controlled.

Measures introduced to control exposure will be maintained, examined and tested to ensure their continued effectiveness. Personal protective equipment will be provided only as a last resort means of controlling exposure to hazardous substances. Information, instruction and training will be given to staff exposed to substances hazardous to health.

Each premise shall maintain a Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) register to establish whether there are substances that are potentially hazardous to health at work, and if so then a written assessment will be required together with an in-depth study of the process/activity. The assessment must be suitable and sufficient and cover the risks created by the work and should identify the steps which need to be taken to control the risks.

Staff will be provided with all necessary, information, instruction and training to protect them from the risks associated with the hazardous substance in use. In particular, staff will be expected to follow safe working procedures and safe systems of work including the correct use of any personal protective equipment and clothing. Staff must report if they are suffering aches, headaches pains or any other symptoms, which may be attributed to their use of hazardous substances at work.

## **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

We seek, so far as reasonably practicable, to ensure the adequate control of risks by means other than through the provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) and clothing. However, the nature of the operations means that the use of such protection is required in a variety of circumstances. Staff are provided free of charge with PPE and clothing on a personal basis. Staff are instructed in the correct usage and also as necessary, in correct storage and maintenance.

Staff are required to confirm in writing that they have received the various items of PPE required for their job that have been identified as part of the risk assessment process. Staff are reminded that failure to use correctly the PPE / clothing with which they have been provided will result in disciplinary action being taken, such as verbal/written warnings or dismissal for persistent non-compliance.

---

### **First Aid and Medical Attention**

Sufficient numbers of trained persons and equipment to deal with accidents and injuries will be provided by each premise. To this end the SPSO will provide information and training on first aid to staff to ensure the needs of the business are met.

First aid requirements will be identified through the risk assessment process to ensure the adequacy and appropriateness of first aid personnel, equipment and facilities. It is company policy that sufficient numbers of first aid personnel and equipment to deal with accidents and injuries will be provided by each premise if necessary.

It should be noted that the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 only place a responsibility on employers to provide first aid for their staff. Additionally, each of our premises should also ensure they are equipped to meet the first aid requirements of persons other than staff, for example, clients/visitors/contractors.

In all cases a sufficient number of first aiders or emergency first aiders should be designated, taking into account annual leave and sickness absence etc. All first aiders and emergency first aiders will be appropriately trained by an accredited organisation.

### **Accident and Incident Reporting and Investigation**

The SPSO maintains and implements effective accident and incident reporting procedures to ensure immediate notification and investigation requirements are instigated. The prime function of these procedures is to prevent further recurrences and to identify and understand the primary and root causes.

The SPSO incident reporting procedure must be followed and all accident and/or incidents to staff and others affected by the organisation operations must be recorded in the accident book. The SPSO will ensure compliance with the requirements of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR). Fatalities, specified injuries, notifiable diseases and dangerous occurrences must be reported to the HSE Incident Contact Centre as soon as possible.

See [Accident Reporting and First Aid](#)

---

## **Electricity**

This aims to set out the SPSO's commitment to managing the risks of electricity to a high standard and ensuring that the company is fully compliant with the relevant Electrical Safety legislation across the UK.

It is policy that in all company locations where a duty of care exists that, as far as is reasonably practicable:

- all fixed electrical installations are installed and maintained in a safe condition;
- all portable electrical appliances are supplied and maintained in a safe condition;
- all persons responsible for checking, inspecting and testing electrical equipment and installations are competent;
- all persons who use electrical appliances can do so safely without risk of harm from electricity; and
- that there will be sufficient resources available to control all risks from electricity

## **Gas**

The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 require all engineers involved in the installation, inspection, servicing, maintenance and repair of gas appliances to be on the Gas Safe Register™.

No person may work on gas fittings or appliances unless they are competent to do so. The requirements apply to both natural and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG). All gas systems must be inspected and certified at least every 12 months by an appropriately qualified Gas Safe Registered Engineer.

## **Communication and Consultation**

The SPSO communicates with staff as necessary on health and safety issues by one or more than the following:

- written instructions/information by email;
- one to one meetings;
- group meetings; and
- notice boards.

All staff receive a copy of our Health and Safety Policy and any subsequent amendments along with and the specific duties relevant to the member of staff as per the annexes to this document. Staff are required to sign documentation to confirm that they have read and understand the policy and the duties it places upon them. The signed documentation is held on their training/information record.

## **Contractors and Sub-Contractors**

The SPSO requires the prospective service provider to furnish adequate and appropriate information to indicate their competence to perform the work safely and without risks to health. This may, for example require the contractor or sub-contractor to provide a method statement, supporting risk assessment, certificates of competence of their staff and/or certifications of plant/equipment to be used during the contract.

Contractors and sub-contractors must report to reception and must be met by a designated staff. This person is responsible for ensuring that the contractors are provided with the information and instruction necessary to protect them from the risks arising out of our activities.

## **Cleanliness**

We expect all staff/contractors/visitors to work in a safe and tidy manner.

- toilets, washing facilities and drinking areas are provided for staff comfort and convenience. Please keep them clean and sanitary;
- keep the housekeeping of all areas to a high standard to ensure the risk of slip or trips is as low as possible, for example, items not impeding walkways. Do not let debris, food scraps accumulate;
- spillage of any liquids should be cleaned up immediately;
- all debris and waste must be disposed of safely and as soon as it is practically possible to do so; and
- materials and equipment should be safely stored and the area regularly inspected that it is not becoming untidy.

## **Waste Disposal**

- Hazardous waste within the SPSO will be managed via the risk assessment process and where necessary a COSHH risk assessment will be carried out.
- Non-hazardous waste should be disposed of into a skip or appropriate container as soon as practical and should not be allowed to build up and create a hazard.
- Sharp debris should be dealt with appropriately before any handling takes place.

## **Safe Stacking and Storage**

- All materials, products, equipment and debris on our premises should be stored in a manner that does not create or cause a hazard.
- Safe passage should be maintained at all times.
- Materials should be kept away from doorways and fire exits.

- Materials when not being used should be stored safely.

## **Working at Height**

The SPSO shall comply with all aspects of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 for operations involving work at height. The risk assessment process will identify how the potential work at height risks arise and how they impact on those affected. This information will then be used to make informed decisions on how the identified risks will be managed.

- All work at height shall be properly planned by a competent person(s).
- Work at height will not be carried out where it is reasonably practicable to carry out the work safely otherwise than from height (avoid).
- A suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks associated will be carried out with each job task that involves work at height.
- Steps will be taken to prevent, so far as is reasonably practicable, falls from height (prevent).
- Steps will be taken to mitigate the distance and consequences of a fall where it is not reasonably practicable to prevent a fall (mitigate).
- A Safe System of Work (SSoW) will be produced for each work at height task covering all aspects of the job, including the lead up to the job, the job itself and the necessary tidying up.

All staff who are to undertake the task will be informed of the risk assessment findings and are personally responsible for ensuring that they understand and comply with the protective measures.

## **Monitoring, Audit and Review of Safety Performance**

The effectiveness of the policy will be monitored in the following ways:

Accidents at the following levels of severity will be analysed by the facilities administrator with a view to determining and eliminating their causes:

- specified injury/dangerous occurrence/industrial disease;
- lost time accidents (seven days or more); and/or
- other injury

Regular and systematic inspections will be carried out to ensure that the requirements of the policy are being met; this will be achieved by carrying out regular audits.

Staff are reminded that they have a duty to report immediately to their line manager, any defect or safety concern of which they become aware. The SPSO will review our safety

performance on a regular basis and draw upon all available information to establish plans for on-going legislative compliance and improved health and safety risk control.

## **Review**

This policy or any revision of it will be drawn to the attention of every staff member and new staff as they are recruited. The contents of documents produced under this policy will be brought to the attention of all staff to whom the contents are relevant. This policy and any documentation produced under it will be added to or modified as required and will be reviewed on a five year basis by an external health and safety consultant.

Back to the main [Contents page](#)

---

## 2. Alcohol at Work

Issued: 2006

### Contents

---

Introduction.....	2
Good Practice at Work.....	2
Dealing with a Staff Member Under the Influence of Alcohol.....	2
Dealing with Alcohol Abuse .....	3
Disciplinary Action in Relation to an Alcohol Problem .....	4
Disputes.....	4

Back to the main [Contents page](#)

## **Introduction**

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) recognises that, as an employer, it has a duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992, to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the working environment for all staff is healthy and safe.

This policy aims to contribute to a safe, healthy and productive work environment through raising awareness, by identifying problems at an early stage, by outlining appropriate management action if a staff member is suspected of having an alcohol problem and by offering support to staff who have an alcohol problem.

It is known that alcohol can contribute to inefficient working, accidents at work, absenteeism and, in extreme cases, health problems and social breakdown. Alcohol problems in the context of this policy are defined as a variety of behaviours caused by alcohol that may be problematic to the individual staff member, to other staff members and/or to the SPSO as whole. Staff need to be aware of the adverse effect on others of even small quantities of alcohol, such as the smell of alcohol giving the wrong perception to complainants.

This policy applies to all permanent and short-term staff employed by the SPSO.

## **Good Practice at Work**

This policy aims to increase awareness of alcohol at work issues amongst all SPSO staff. Implementation of this policy, and the standards embodied in it, can only take place by increasing this level of awareness.

It is not acceptable for performance at work to be affected by the consumption of alcohol. Staff must have regard to the potential consequences of substandard performance.

A member of the senior management team (SMT) must agree in advance to any celebratory occasions on SPSO premises at which alcohol may be available and served in moderation. A choice of non-alcoholic drinks must be available for those who have to return to work, drive home or choose not to drink alcohol.

Staff members are encouraged to raise any issue concerning their own use of alcohol, or that of a colleague, in strict confidence with their line manager or the HR officer.

## **Dealing with a Staff Member Under the Influence of Alcohol**

Where appropriate, the line manager has the authority to require the staff member to go home for the remainder of the working day. Where the situation is considered serious, the staff member should be advised that use of the SPSO Disciplinary Procedure could arise.



---

Staff who have driven to work must be advised against driving home whilst under the influence of alcohol. The line manager should discuss the type of the leave taken for this absence with the staff member on their return to work. In the short-term, before any discussion takes place, the absence can be recorded as paid [Other Leave](#).

Where the incidents described above are repeated, action should be taken in accordance with the procedures in the Sections below.

## **Dealing with Alcohol Abuse**

Alcohol dependence may come to the attention of a line manager in several ways. For example, directly from the staff member concerned, through information supplied by a colleague or other person, through misconduct or absenteeism, and/or through deterioration in work performance. Where colleagues provide the information, every effort will be made to keep the source of the information confidential, however, this may not be possible in dealing with the staff member involved.

On becoming aware of a serious or potentially serious alcohol problem the line manager will, in discussion with the staff member, encourage referral to the occupational health service.

Occupational health will offer support and advice, and where appropriate, facilitate referral to another agency and monitor progress. Subject to the rules of professional confidentiality (see [Absence Policy](#) for further information), the occupational health service will provide advice and information to HR as to the staff member's state of fitness in relation to work.

It is also possible for a staff member to choose to seek advice direct from a general practitioner or another outside agency. If this is the case, the normal standards of confidentiality will be observed. Where time off work for treatment during the working day is needed, the line manager needs to be informed of the proposed absence in the same way as for any other health related issue (see [Absence Policy](#)).

Where the health problem is serious and results in a considerable length of absence from work, arrangements for a return to work will be overseen by the occupational health service and the line manager.

Where dependence is not eliminated or controlled sufficiently to allow resumption of normal working arrangements within a reasonable period of time, and/or no suitable alternative employment can be found, the SPSO may take action under the [Absence Policy](#). The extent of 'a reasonable period of time' depends on the facts of each individual case, any advice received and the needs of the SPSO at that time.

## **Disciplinary Action in Relation to an Alcohol Problem**

Alcohol dependence is not in itself a disciplinary offence and is dealt with as any other health problem. The aim is rehabilitation with re-entry to the work situation being an important part of the process. It is also important that the appropriate levels of confidentiality are maintained, as would be the case with any other health issue.

Where a line manager is satisfied that an offence or work problem, such as absenteeism, violent behaviour or substandard work, results from or reflects alcohol misuse, this must be taken into account in determining the appropriate course of action.

In most cases, where the line manager and staff member acknowledge the health problem and agree a course of action aimed at rehabilitation, disciplinary action is not likely to be appropriate.

In serious cases of inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour whilst under the influence of alcohol, disciplinary action may be appropriate (see [Disciplinary Procedure](#)). However, where a staff member acknowledges the problem and agrees to accept appropriate help and/or treatment, this will be taken into account in determining whether, and at what level, disciplinary action is appropriate.

## **Disputes**

There are a number of options open to a staff member if they do not agree with a decision or action relating to this policy:

- informal discussions with their line manager as there may be some simple misunderstanding of the procedure or facts which can be resolved by an informal route;
- use of the [grievance procedure](#); and
- assistance from a third party such as a trade union representative or some other suitably experienced person.

Back to the main [Contents page](#)

---

### 3. No Smoking Policy

Issued: January 2009

#### Contents

---

Introduction.....	2
Staff Who Smoke.....	2
Assistance in Giving Up Smoking .....	2
Abuse of the No Smoking Policy .....	3
Disputes.....	3

Back to the main [Contents page](#)

## **Introduction**

The SPSO recognises that, as an employer, it has a general duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992, to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the working environment for all staff is healthy and safe and that staff members and others are not put at risk.

The Smoking, Health and Social Care (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Prohibition of Smoking in certain Premises (Scotland) Regulations 2006 came into effect on 26 March 2006. This No Smoking Policy has been developed in recognition that second hand tobacco smoke is both a public and work place health hazard and also reflects the above acts. Smoking is not permitted in any part of the SPSO premises, entrances or grounds at any time, by any person.

This policy applies to all permanent and short-term staff employed by the SPSO.

No smoking signs are displayed prominently in the SPSO office, making it clear to staff and visitors that smoking is not permitted. All visitors to the SPSO office are required to comply with the No Smoking Policy. SPSO staff members are expected to inform visitors about the No Smoking Policy. However, they are not expected to enter into any confrontation which may put their personal safety at risk.

SPSO job advertisements and job interviews will include reference to it being a No Smoking office.

## **Staff Who Smoke**

Line managers are sympathetic to the needs of both smokers and the needs of non-smokers.

All staff are encouraged to take breaks during the working day. All breaks taken where the staff member leaves the office (apart from short smoking breaks, ten minutes in the morning and ten minutes in the afternoon) are recorded as a work time debit in the flexi-time scheme.

SPSO staff who smoke are required not to do so at the front door of the SPSO Office.

## **Assistance in Giving Up Smoking**

The SPSO wants to encourage staff to give up smoking wherever possible. Help is available on an individual basis for anyone who requires it from the occupational health service, from general practitioners and from local health education units.

---

Paid [Other Leave](#) during working hours to obtain help with giving up smoking can be granted at the discretion of the line manager.

There are helplines and organisations that provide advice and assistance on stopping smoking. These include:

- the Stop Smoking Helpline ☎0800 169 0 169, and website: [www.givingupsmoking.co.uk](http://www.givingupsmoking.co.uk);
- the Smoker Helpline ☎0800 84 84 84; and
- the Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation website: [www.roycastle.org](http://www.roycastle.org).

### **Abuse of the No Smoking Policy**

Line managers are responsible for ensuring that staff do not smoke on SPSO premises.

Where a member of staff does not comply with this No Smoking Policy, this may be treated as a disciplinary offence under the [Disciplinary Procedure](#).

### **Disputes**

There are a number of options open to a staff member if they do not agree with a decision or action relating to this policy:

- informal discussions with their line manager as there may be some simple misunderstanding of the procedure or facts which can be resolved by an informal route;
- use of the [grievance procedure](#); and
- assistance from a third party such as a trade union representative or some other suitably experienced person.

Back to the main [Contents page](#)



---

## 4. Occupational Health

Issued: 2006

### Contents

---

Introduction.....	2
Confidentiality .....	3
Occupational Health Screening and Surveillance .....	3
Self-Referrals and Initial Counselling.....	3
Rehabilitation .....	4
Health Promotion.....	4
Training.....	5
Statutory Health Surveillance .....	5
The Need for Statutory Health Surveillance.....	5
Who Requires Statutory Health Surveillance? .....	6
Disputes.....	6

Back to the main [Contents page](#)

---

The SPSO is fully committed to promoting and ensuring the provision and maintenance of a healthy and safe working environment and the well-being of its staff members.

The SPSO is committed to the implementation of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and associated relevant statutory provisions. This includes compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

---

## Introduction

It is the policy of the SPSO to take a proactive approach to workplace well-being by ensuring that mechanisms are in place to prevent work-related occupational health and injury and to promote good health amongst the workforce.

In particular, the following areas are covered:

- pre-employment health assessments to ensure that staff members are fit for the job;
- fitness for work assessments after return from absence due to injury/illness (see also [Absence Policy](#));
- provision of health advice to staff members;
- provision of advice to management;
- health surveillance for staff members exposed to work-related health risks; and
- health promotion.

Adequate facilities and arrangements should be available to enable staff and their representatives to raise concerns about occupational health matters. Policies should be regularly monitored and subject to independent audit where deemed necessary. The SPSO has appointed the Institute of Occupational Medicine, a specialist occupational health consultancy, to provide, assistance and guidance to the organisation on the following occupational health issues, where appropriate:

- minimise and eliminate hazards;
- deal with cases of drug and alcohol abuse, and advise on HIV/AIDS issues;
- offer pre-employment health assessments;
- maintain relations with appropriate bodies and individuals;
- monitor the health of staff after an accident, illness and during and after pregnancy;
- manage clinic facilities, basic health checks and first aid;
- advise on medical severance and ill-health retirement;
- advise on ergonomic issues and workplace design;
- promote good health education programmes;
- promote healthy eating;
- monitor symptoms of work-related stress;
- provide advice and counselling;



- work with special needs groups; and
- ensure compliance with health and safety regulations.

## **Confidentiality**

The SPSO's occupational health service provides impartial advice to both management and staff members and has a duty to maintain confidentiality of medical information. The occupational health service will, at all times, observe the provisions of the Data Protection Acts, ie only the 'providers' of the occupational health service (not the SPSO) and the particular individual will have access to the medical information entered on the occupational health record. Occupational health records will be securely held by the 'providers' of the occupational health service. Where the occupational health physician needs to have the medical opinion of the staff member's general practitioner/consultant, then the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988 will apply and written consent will be obtained from the staff member.

The SPSO needs to be able to respond appropriately to situations where work is affecting health or health is affecting work, therefore, the occupational health service will provide the SPSO only with information that is appropriate to enable the staff member to have the necessary support and to facilitate the improvement of work place health and safety. Where the provision of medical information is necessary (in order to protect the health of the staff member) this will be with the written consent of the staff member. Any reports from general practitioners or specialists will only be seen by the occupational health providers and, on request, the staff member, and not the SPSO.

## **Occupational Health Screening and Surveillance**

The SPSO's occupational health service will provide pre and post-employment occupational health screening and surveillance for relevant staff members and advise on fitness of staff to work in particular jobs.

## **Self-Referrals and Initial Counselling**

The SPSO's occupational health service will provide a confidential advice and support to staff members who have concerns about their health affecting work or work affecting health.

The occupational health provider will offer a confidential 'listening ear' and will be able to give advice on other appropriate agencies for more specialised support and counselling.

Any staff member can have direct access to the occupational health provider if they feel that their work is affecting their health or that their health is affecting their work, or want to

discuss any issues that may be troubling them. This can be done by contacting the occupational health provider for an appointment.

In certain circumstances the occupational health provider may advise the staff member to speak to their manager regarding the effect of their health on their work, especially where safety is at risk or the staff member has developed a long term illness which will require appropriate support and/or a change in duties. The manager will then liaise with the Director to ensure that all reasonable action is taken to support the staff member.

The SPSO as employer must ensure that the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act are met. This Act is concerned with making sure that a positive and practical approach is taken towards meeting the needs of the staff member and the requirements of the job. This includes reasonable adjustments to the workplace.

### **Rehabilitation**

The SPSO's occupational health service will provide advice on the rehabilitation and placement in suitable work for staff who become disabled by illness or injury at home or at work. (See also [Absence Policy](#).)

Where a staff member needs to have an alteration in job specification due to illness or injury, either permanent or temporary, the occupational health provider will advise the staff member's manager and the Director. These managers will work together to try and achieve the best outcome for the staff member and employer, while complying with the Disability Discrimination Act.

### **Health Promotion**

The SPSO's occupational health service will design and deliver health promotion initiatives in order to raise awareness of health issues and facilitating the prevention of ill health.

The SPSO is committed to ensuring that all staff have access to information and opportunities to enable them to make healthy choices regarding their own lifestyle and also to raise awareness of workplace health issues.

The occupational health provider will undertake health promotion initiatives both with groups of staff and on an individual basis, for example, the recognition and management of stress, and will contribute to the development of those workplace policies and procedures which facilitate health at work.

The occupational health provider will be responsible for developing an ongoing and proactive programme of health promotion activities and for working with the Director in the development of a Health Promotion Strategy.

---

## **Training**

The SPSO's occupational health service will provide advice and training on good health management practice in the workplace and occupational health related issues such as stress management and other health related topics.

The occupational health provider will advise on good health management practice in the workplace. In conjunction with HR, training can be provided on health related topics such as stress management.

## **Statutory Health Surveillance**

The SPSO's occupational health service will provide statutory health surveillance in the workplace and facilitating compliance with relevant legislative requirements. Health surveillance, required by statutory regulations, is a means by which early signs of work-related ill health can be detected and acted upon amongst staff members exposed to certain health risks. The objectives are:

- the protection of the health of staff members by the detection at as early a stage as possible of adverse changes which may be attributed to substances hazardous to health;
- to assist in the evaluation of the measures taken to control exposure;
- the collection, maintenance and use of data for the detection and evaluation of hazards to health; and
- to assess, in relation to specific work activities involving biological agents, the immunity of staff.

## **The Need for Statutory Health Surveillance**

Statutory health surveillance, including the keeping of health records, will be appropriate for staff members exposed to substances which are likely to cause disease or adverse health effect depending upon the nature and degree of exposure. In these circumstances there must also be a valid technique for detecting indications of the disease or effect. Suitable statutory health surveillance procedures within the SPSO will include:

- biological monitoring and biological effect monitoring;
- enquiries about symptoms, inspection or examination;
- medical surveillance where necessary;
- inspection by appointed responsible persons; and
- keeping and review of individual health records and occupational history during and after exposure.

## Who Requires Statutory Health Surveillance?

The requirement for staff members to have statutory health surveillance will be identified by risk assessment.

A risk assessment must be completed for work with substances hazardous to health including respiratory sensitisers, irritants and carcinogens. Where assessment identifies the need for statutory health surveillance, an immediate request for statutory health surveillance must be sent to the Director.

## Disputes

There are a number of options open to an SPSO staff member if they do not agree with a decision or action relating to this policy:

- informal discussions with their line manager as there may be some simple misunderstanding of the procedure or facts which can be resolved by an informal route;
- use of the [grievance procedure](#); and
- assistance from a third party such as a trade union representative or some other suitably experienced person.

Back to the main [Contents page](#)

---

## 5. Substance Abuse at Work Policy

Issued: 2006

### Contents

---

Introduction.....	2
Good Practice at Work.....	2
Dealing with a Staff Member Under the Influence of Drugs .....	3
Dealing with Substance Abuse .....	3
Disciplinary Action in Relation to a Substance Abuse Problem .....	4
Disputes.....	5
Annex 1 – 'Substance' in the context of this policy includes: .....	6
Annex 2 - Recognising Substance Abuse.....	7

Back to the main [Contents page](#)

## **Introduction**

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) recognises that, as an employer, it has a duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992, to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the working environment for all staff is healthy and safe.

It is known that excessive or inappropriate use of drugs can result in physical and/or mental illness and may significantly affect work performance. The misuse of drugs, whether prescribed or illicit, together with volatile substances, will be referred to collectively as 'substance abuse' for the purpose of this policy (see [Annex 1](#)). Substance abuse problems in the context of this policy are defined as a variety of behaviours caused by substance abuse that may be problematic to the individual staff member, to other staff members and/or to the SPSO as whole.

This policy aims to contribute to a safe, healthy and productive work environment through raising awareness, by identifying problems at an early stage, by outlining appropriate management action if a staff member is suspected of having a substance abuse problem, by offering support to staff who have a substance abuse problem and by informing staff about the possible consequences if they are caught using or supplying controlled drugs.

Under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, the SPSO would be colluding in a crime if it were to knowingly permit the production or supply of any controlled drugs, the smoking of cannabis, or certain other activities to take place on its premises. The SPSO will not allow staff to be involved in illegal drug activities whilst on the SPSO premises. The SPSO will take disciplinary action, including referring offences to the Police, and any drugs found will also be handed over to the Police.

The SPSO may also take action against SPSO staff who have been involved in illegal drug activities off the SPSO premises, if such conduct has or could have an impact on the reputation of the SPSO (see [Conduct and Behaviour Policy](#)).

This policy applies to all permanent and short-term staff employed by the SPSO.

## **Good Practice at Work**

This policy aims to increase awareness of substance abuse at work issues amongst all SPSO staff. Implementation of this policy, and the standards embodied in it, can only take place by increasing this level of awareness.

It is not acceptable for performance at work to be affected by substance abuse. Staff must have regard to the potential consequences of substandard performance.

---

Staff members are encouraged to raise any issue concerning their own use of drugs, or that of a colleague, in strict confidence with their line manager or HR.

### **Dealing with a Staff Member Under the Influence of Drugs**

A staff member arriving or returning to work, being under the influence of drugs and who is determined by their line manager to be incapable of carrying out their duties, at risk to themselves or others, or of bringing the SPSO into disrepute by behaving in an inappropriate manner, must be interviewed immediately and advised of the seriousness of the situation.

Where appropriate, the line manager has the authority to require the staff member to go home for the remainder of the working day. Where the situation is considered serious, the staff member should be advised that use of the **Disciplinary Procedure** could arise. Staff who have driven to work must be advised against driving home whilst under the influence of drugs. The line manager should discuss the type of the leave taken for this absence with the staff member on their return to work. In the short-term, before any discussion takes place, the absence can be recorded as paid **Other Leave**.

Where such incidents are repeated, action should be taken in accordance with the procedures in the Sections below.

### **Dealing with Substance Abuse**

Substance abuse in itself is not a disciplinary offence (unless it takes place on the SPSO premises, has an adverse effect on the staff member's performance or brings the SPSO into disrepute), and in most cases will be dealt with as any other health problem.

Whilst acknowledging the overriding responsibility of the SPSO to ensure the safety of staff and others, the management aim in relation to substance abuse is rehabilitation with appropriate guidance and support provided by the occupational health service. The appropriate standards of confidentiality will be observed throughout. However, a suspected problem cannot be ignored as to do so would risk committing an offence in relation to the Misuse of Drugs Act.

Substance abuse may come to the attention of the line manager in several ways. For example, directly from the staff member concerned, through information supplied by a colleague or other person, through misconduct or absenteeism, through deterioration in work performance, or through the characteristics identified in **Annex 2**. Where colleagues provide the information, every effort will be made to keep the source of the information confidential, however, this may not be possible in dealing with the staff member involved.

On becoming aware of a potential problem, the line manager will, in discussion with the staff member, encourage referral to the occupational health service. Occupational health will offer support and advice, and where appropriate, facilitate referral to another agency and monitor progress. Subject to the rules of professional confidentiality (see [Absence Policy](#) for further information), the occupational health service will provide advice and information to HR as to the staff member's state of fitness in relation to work.

It is also possible for a staff member to choose to seek advice direct from a general practitioner or another outside agency. If this is the case the normal standards of confidentiality will be observed. Where time off work for treatment during the working day is needed, the line manager needs to be informed of the proposed absence in the same way as for any other health related issue (see [Absence Policy](#)).

Where the health problem is serious and results in a considerable length of absence from work, arrangements for a return to work will be overseen by the occupational health service and the line manager.

Where dependence is not eliminated or controlled sufficiently to allow resumption of normal working arrangements within a reasonable period of time, and/or no suitable alternative employment can be found, the SPSO may take action under the [Absence Policy](#). The extent of a reasonable period of time depends on the facts of each individual case, any advice received and the needs of the SPSO at that time.

### **Disciplinary Action in Relation to a Substance Abuse Problem**

Substance abuse may not in itself be a disciplinary offence and if so, will be dealt with as any other health problem. The aim is rehabilitation and support with re-entry to the work situation being an important part of the process. It is also important that the appropriate levels of confidentiality are maintained, as would be the case with any other health issue.

Where a line manager is satisfied that an offence or work problem, such as absenteeism, violent behaviour or substandard work, results from or reflects substance abuse, this must be taken into account in determining the appropriate course of action.

In most cases, where the line manager and staff member acknowledge the health problem and agree a course of action aimed at rehabilitation, disciplinary action is not likely to be appropriate.

In the more serious cases of inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour whilst under the influence of drugs or other substances, disciplinary action may be appropriate (see [Disciplinary Procedure](#)). However, where a staff member acknowledges the problem and agrees to accept appropriate help and/or treatment, this will be taken into account in determining whether, and at what level, disciplinary action is appropriate.



---

Staff should be left in no doubt as to the possible consequences (ie disciplinary action and police involvement) if they are caught using, growing, possessing and/or supplying controlled drugs in the workplace.

## **Disputes**

---

There are a number of options open to a staff member if they do not agree with a decision or action relating to this policy:

- Informal discussions with their line manager as there may be some simple misunderstanding of the procedure or facts which can be resolved by an informal route.
- Use of the **grievance procedure**.
- Assistance from a third party such as a trade union representative or some other suitably experienced person.

**Annex 1 – 'Substance' in the context of this policy includes:**

Examples

illegal drugs

amphetamine, cannabis, ecstasy, cocaine, heroin

---

controlled prescribed drugs

anabolic steroids, diamorphine, DF118, methadone, tuinal

other prescribed drugs

diazepam, temasepam

other substances

over the counter medication, solvents which when used inappropriately or excessively can be dangerous

## Annex 2 - Recognising Substance Abuse

It is important to recognise that the following characteristics may in isolation appear insignificant, but when appearing in combinations may indicate the presence of a substance abuse problem.

### Absenteeism

- multiple unauthorised leave
- excessive sick leave
- absence on certain days, particularly near weekends
- excessive lateness
- leaving work early
- frequent occurrences of certain illnesses, for example, diarrhoea, colds, flu, gastritis etc

### High accident rate

- frequent accidents both in and out of work

### Difficulty in concentration

- work requires greater effort
- tasks take more time
- difficulty in recalling instructions, details etc
- increasing difficulty in handling complex assignments

### Spasmodic work patterns

- alternate periods of high and low productivity
- increasing general unreliability and unpredictability

### Generally deteriorating job efficiency (unusual for the staff member)

- missed deadlines
- mistakes due to inattention or poor judgement
- wasting materials, supplies etc.
- making bad decisions
- improbable excuses for poor work performance

### Poor staff relations at work (unusual for the staff member)

- over-reaction to real or imagined criticism

- unreasonable resentments
  - irritability
  - complaints from co-workers
  - avoidance of line manager or colleagues
- 

Back to the main [Contents page](#)

---

## 6. Personal Safety

Issued: November 2013

### Contents

---

When in the office .....	2
When visiting complainants or other office .....	2
Lone Workers .....	2
<i>Does the workplace present a special risk to the lone worker? .....</i>	3
<i>Are the welfare facilities adequate?.....</i>	3
<i>Can all the equipment involved in the work be safely handled by one person?.....</i>	4
<i>Is there a risk of violence?.....</i>	4
Travel.....	4
Social Media .....	5

Back to the main [Contents page](#)

## **When in the office**

Ensure:

- the foyer doors are locked at all times to allow front office staff to check visitors prior to allowing access to the office<sup>1</sup>;
- no visitor who appears aggressive in the foyer area be allowed access to the office;
- when an aggressive visitor is detained in the foyer area all members of staff avoid exiting the building via the front door – a member of the advice team will communicate this to all teams where practicable;
- when staff feel the threat of any type of aggression or violence from a visitor they call '999' and request emergency assistance;
- the panic alarm can be used if front office staff or staff within pods feel threatened and require backup assistance from a colleague; ([see more](#));
- if you are alone in the office before or after normal office hours, do not answer the front door unless you know it is safe to do so;
- a manager is made aware of any incidents as soon as possible;
- a file note is taken by the staff member(s) involved in the incident and passed to the facilities administrator, with an incident slip from the police if relevant; and
- if relevant, a file note is placed on Workpro detailing the incident.

## **When visiting complainants or other office**

- please ensure that you have familiarised yourself with this guidance;
- take an office mobile telephone with you, and ensure that at least one member of your colleagues knows your whereabouts; and
- if you have any concerns about your own personal safety, discuss this with your manager and do not, in any circumstances, attend the interview alone.

## **Lone Workers**

The SPSO does not recommend that staff members should work in the office on their own. If you do, you should ensure that someone knows you are in the office and at what time you are planning to leave.

Before embarking on work away from the office, staff members will need to consider the implications for their health and safety and ensure that appropriate arrangements have

---

<sup>1</sup> Please ensure you have your swipe pass available for your own access in and out of the building. Report lost swipe passes and/or front door keys to the facilities administrator who will issue a replacement at a cost of £5 on a cost recovery basis.

been made to protect them against risk. If a member of staff is in any doubt, they should discuss the doubts with their line manager in the first instance.

It is important that staff always let somebody know where they are going and their expected time of return. A formal checking in and checking out system, or buddy system, should be employed by managers who have responsibility for lone workers. If undertaking lone working, staff should consider how they can raise the alarm in the event of an emergency or difficulty, for example, by carrying a personal mobile telephone. In certain circumstances it may be necessary to double up on visits.

Staff should avoid getting into dangerous situations in the first place! Staff should remember that they are empowered to walk away from a situation where they feel their health and safety is being compromised.

Where there is regular work entailing special risks or precautions, the appropriate arrangements for the protection of individual staff will be made by the line manager. This will be done on the basis of a risk assessment.

Staff who visit the premises of other organisations should ensure that they safeguard their own safety by reporting in and out, familiarising themselves with evacuation procedures, and abiding by any other procedures and conditions laid down for visitors.

Consideration needs to be given in terms of risk assessment in the case of a staff member working in the building alone outwith normal hours. Lone workers should not be at more risk than other staff and extra risk control measures may be required.

Precautions should take account of normal work and foreseeable emergencies such as fire, equipment failure, illness and accidents. Those with responsibility for carrying out risk assessments should ask questions such as:

*Does the workplace present a special risk to the lone worker?*

Is there a safe way in and out for one person? If working outside of normal hours, checks should be made to ensure that all exits from the building can be used as means of escape in case of an emergency. Lone workers should not be expected to leave their workplace by way of dark corridors or stairways. Special arrangements may need to be made to ensure that lights are kept on in the building when people are working outside normal hours.

*Are the welfare facilities adequate?*

For example, there should be adequate heating and access to drinking water and toilets outside normal hours.

*Can all the equipment involved in the work be safely handled by one person?*

Consider whether the work involves lifting objects too large or heavy for one person or whether more than one person is needed to operate essential controls for the safe running of equipment.

---

*Is there a risk of violence?*

Are women or young workers especially at risk if they work alone?

The assessment should take account of the fact that a lone worker is more vulnerable when the unexpected happens. Where there are concerns, the staff member should approach their line manager. Risk assessments are only undertaken on an individual basis, and should identify foreseeable events, any appropriate emergency procedures to be undertaken, and the staff member trained in them. Lone workers should be capable of responding correctly to emergencies and should have access to adequate first-aid facilities. Occasionally risk assessment may indicate that lone workers need training in first aid.

## **Travel**

Staff members who are driving their own vehicle on the business of SPSO must comply with all legislation concerning the use of vehicles on the highway.

Drivers on business must be alert to any circumstances that may increase the risk of accidents and act in an appropriate manner. It is important to take rest breaks during long journeys, or during periods of bad weather when the dangers increase and alertness must be maintained.

If materials for use at work are to be carried, it is the responsibility of the driver to ensure that safe conditions of stowage and carriage are achieved. Work equipment should be carried in the boot or in a covered load area whenever practicable.

Staff are reminded of the legal duty they have to ensure that they are not unfit to work or to drive safely due to alcohol or drugs of any kind. Any action taken by the police, or any other substantive evidence of driving under the influence of drink or drugs whilst on SPSO business, will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence.

Staff should also remember to follow the undernoted guidance in respect of their personal safety:

- try to travel on busy routes, where possible
- it is not recommended to pick up hitch-hikers
- always lock your car after entering or leaving it



- 
- have your keys ready when you approach your vehicle to avoid delay in entering
  - check the interior of your car before entering it - especially the back seat - and carry a torch after dark
  - keep valuables secure and out of sight
  - if you are followed, do not get out of the car, make sure that doors and windows are locked, sound the horn or flash your lights to attract attention and use your mobile phone (if you have one) to call for help

## **Social Media**

Social media refers to a variety of online interactive media that allows parties to communicate, share information, opinions or knowledge instantly in a public forum. Social media sites are continually developing but some examples include online social forums such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn as well as blogs and video - and/or image-sharing websites such as YouTube, Flickr and Instagram.

Social media is a popular and accessible way to connect people and create a sense of community, however, you should be aware that these platforms can put at risk your personal information and safety. You should therefore ensure that you take appropriate steps to safeguard your personal information and protect your personal life from unwanted intrusion.

Regularly check the security/privacy/account settings of your social media accounts and think carefully about who you want to talk to, what you want to say and which pictures you share. The internet is a public space so take care when sharing more information than is sensible or safe. The public nature of our work at SPSO means that members of the public may be able to access your information through links to social media accounts.

Police Scotland provide further support and advice on the precautions you should take to protect your identity and personal data which you might like to consider:

- choose a user name that does not include your real name or hint at your date of birth or where you live;
- set your profile to private so that only your friends will be able to see what's on your profile. You will still be able to get friend requests, but are less likely to be pestered by strangers; and
- limit the amount of personal information you make available online such as your address and date of birth, even more so if it may provide a hint as to your password - even to friends.

When sharing information on social networking sites, Police Scotland also advise:

- if it is not something you would be happy for someone close to you or a total stranger to see, then do not share it;
- you may not know who your friends' friends are. Remember that there is always a chance that someone else/you do not know will see your information;
- do not feel pressured into posting something you are not comfortable with, such as personal telephone numbers or photographs;
- think before you check in at a location or say you are going on holiday – could someone unknown to you see it and establish where you live and that your home may be empty?;
- respect friends and the online community – do not communicate any potentially damaging messages and do not get drawn into any online arguments or conflict;
- something you think is funny might not seem funny to others. What seems like a harmless joke in private may embarrass or humiliate someone in public; and
- remember that the click of a button makes your information publicly known worldwide and only you can control who sees this. Think before you post and if in doubt, do not click!

If you are concerned that your social media profile and personal information has been compromised, you should report this to your line manager immediately. If you experience bullying, harassment or threats or are a victim of crime through social media you should alert the social media provider, your line manager and/or the Police as appropriate.

You should also be aware that people you share and communicate with might then share information from your social media account with others, for example by sharing your post in Facebook, Re-Tweeting your comments in Twitter. The [Conduct and Behaviour](#) policy provides guidance around expressing personal views on social media. Also relevant is the [Communications Policy](#) handbook which contains policies on Social Media in the office.

Back to the main [Contents page](#)

---

## 7. Pod/Panic Alarm Procedures

### Contents

Activation of alarm .....	2
Procedure on activation of panic alarms.....	2
Deactivation of alarm.....	2
Safety and disability guidance when using pod .....	3

Back to the main [Contents page](#)

## **Activation of alarm**

Panic alarms are positioned under the reception desk and under the pod desk. To activate a panic alarm in an emergency press both panic buttons under the desk simultaneously.

Activation sounds an alarm on each floor with direct connection to a grade 1 personal attack alarm response from Police Scotland.

## **Procedure on activation of panic alarms**

On activation, managers within the office should immediately make their way to the advice team to provide assistance and support. No more than two managers should enter the advice team area to provide support. Once two managers have arrived on the ground floor, another staff member should stand within the ground floor hall advising colleagues not to enter the advice room, reception area or exit the front door. Ground floor number 6 should also be informed about the security situation. Managers responding to the alarm and advice staff members should be aware that:

- bringing more people into a conflict situation can make the visitor feel outnumbered and escalate the situation,
- standing side by side, directly facing the individual can appear intimidating, splitting up and standing separately can help split the focus, of attention and make it harder for the individual to focus all their attention in one direction,
- stepping into someone's personal space can make them feel very uncomfortable,
- physical contact can exacerbate the situation, even if the intention is for it to be supportive, and should be avoided, and
- to encourage someone to stop shouting and de-escalate the situation, gradually lower your voice

## **Deactivation of alarm**

The code number to deactivate the alarm is 1224. Both alarms are deactivated at the keypad in the reception hall by entering the code number. Then press enter once and escape twice.

The panic alarm that has been activated must be reset by the facilities administrator with the small plastic grey keys which can be found in the corporate services team key cabinet.

The panel on the underside of the panic buttons has a small window that should change from green to red.

Note: If one panic alarm is not reset all alarms are deactivated – so always make sure the alarm is reset. If in doubt, please contact the facilities administrator.

Sounders are situated on the:

- top floor at the back
  - first floor in the ,main office area
  - ground floor main foyer
- 

### **Safety and disability guidance when using pod**

Staff should generally use the pod for meeting complainants. Before meeting a visitor staff can arrange with the advice team to interrupt the interview if they hear raised voices, or are in any way concerned with the way the meeting is going. If there is any indication that the visitor could be aggressive, two staff members should attend the meeting.

Visitors should sit at the rear of the pod facing. Staff should position themselves nearest the door. A tip to ensure you get seated in this position is to simply enter the pod first and place your papers on the seat you would like to use and then invite the visitor in to join you at the seat across from you.

If you become concerned for your safety during an interview, try and excuse yourself and exit the pod. If you cannot do so, or the situation escalates, set the pod alarm off and someone will come to help.

If an existing complainant for whom we have a complaint on file comes to the office without an appointment and you have any concerns about safety or security, you can decline to meet with them and may wish to consider offering them an alternative date and time, or arrange to telephone them.

On occasion, we do receive visitors who wish our advice on a new complaint. If the advice team have any concerns about a member of the public who arrives at reception they will not ask the duty complaints reviewer to meet with them in the pod and will simply offer general advice across the reception desk.

Any visitors to the office that require wheelchair access would need to use an internal meeting room as the pods are not wheelchair accessible. Your line manager or a member of the management team should always be informed of where your meeting is being carried out.

Please note a portable induction loop system is available for use in the pods for visitors who are hard of hearing (this is available from the advice team).

Remember – safety is paramount. If you are in a situation that you cannot control, set the alarms off and someone will come to your assistance and your initial and instinctive feeling should be trusted when making an assessment of a situation. You should also never ask a colleague to meet with someone that you would not feel safe to meet yourself.

Back to the main [Contents page](#)

---

---

## 8. Fire Procedure

### Contents

If You Discover a Fire .....	2
Fire Alarm and Evacuation Procedure .....	2
On Hearing the Evacuation Signal.....	2
Exit Routes .....	2
General Guidance .....	3
Visitors to the Office .....	4
Fire Wardens .....	4
Checking Routes in Evacuation.....	4
<i>Top Floor</i> .....	4
<i>Middle Floor</i> .....	5
<i>Ground</i> .....	5
<i>Basement</i> .....	5
General Information .....	5
Break Glass Alarm Points.....	6
Automatic Doors .....	6
Location of Automatic Door Closers .....	6
Location of Fire Extinguishers .....	6
Types of Fire Extinguishers .....	8

Back to the main [Contents page](#)

## **If You Discover a Fire**

Immediately - operate nearest break-glass fire alarm call point.

Attack the fire only if it is safe to do so and you are sure which fire extinguisher to use - otherwise evacuate premises by nearest exit. Do not take personal risks.

## **Fire Alarm and Evacuation Procedure**

A continuous tone from the alarm sounders is the evacuation signal and all persons should leave the premises immediately on hearing it.

### **On Hearing the Evacuation Signal**

- Leave your floor by the nearest exit.
- Leave the building by the nearest staircase.
- Do not stop to collect personal belongings.
- Do not use the lift.

The assembly point is at the corner of Melville Street and Stafford Street (do not cross the road). Do not re-enter the building until told to do so by the chief fire marshal.

### **Exit Routes**

#### Route 1 – No 4 side

- Second / first / ground floor (main staircase) - from the general office areas make your way down the main staircase to front door on ground floor level. Turn left and continue to make your way to the assembly point.
- If you go too far and find yourself in the basement area at bottom of stairs turn left through door into team area. Fire exit immediately ahead which leads to basement at front of building turn right climb stairs to pavement level. Turn left to assembly point.

#### Route 2 – No 6 side

- Second / first / ground floor (secondary staircase) - from the general office areas make your way down the staircase to ground floor level through the glass panelled doors and out through black door (fire exit only). Turn left and make your way to the assembly point.
- If you go too far and find yourself in the basement area at bottom of stairs turn left through door into passageway through door immediately ahead into the training room



---

area. Fire exit ahead which leads to basement at front of building turn right climb stairs to pavement level. Turn left to assembly point.

#### Route 3 – Ground Floor

- Ground floor from reception office area turn left through door and out through the back exit down metal staircase to car park area.
- From bottom of main staircase turn right through door and out through back exit down metal staircase to car park area.
- Turn right and continue to the end of the street through archway. Beware of cars. Turn right to the end of the street to assembly point.

#### Route 4 - Basement

- Lift area straight ahead through door into passageway then through door immediately in front of you through the office area. Fire exit immediately ahead which leads to basement at front of building turn right climb stairs to pavement level. Turn left to assembly point.
- Basement meeting room, through door turn right through door into the office area. Fire exit immediately ahead which leads to basement at front of building turn right climb stairs to pavement level. Turn left to assembly point.
- Bottom of stairs turn left through door into basement office area. Fire exit immediately ahead which leads to basement at front of building turn right climb stairs to pavement level. Turn left to assembly point.

#### Route 5 - Training room

- Basement training area fire exit door leads to basement area at front of building turn right climb stairs to pavement level. Turn left to assembly point.

#### Route 6 - Kitchen

- Through door at rear of kitchen area then turn immediately right to fire exit. Turn left and climb flight of stairs into car park area. Turn right and continue to the end of the street through archway. Beware of cars. Turn right to the end of the street to assembly point.

### **General Guidance**

In the event of alarm activation, the Chief Fire Marshal (or Deputy in their absence) will check the fire panel (located in the main foyer) to ascertain where the fire is located and telephone the Fire Brigade ((9) 999).

- Ensure you know where to find the nearest escape routes, break glass fire alarm call points and fire extinguishers.
- Act quietly and close all doors behind you.
- Know who your floor fire wardens are. Let your fire warden know if you need assistance (or anyone else around if they are not available).
- On arrival at the assembly point – group together with those on your floor.
- When Chief Fire Marshal or Deputy Chief Fire Marshal are not onsite please use your common sense. Only one person should be liaising with the Fire Brigade.

### **Visitors to the Office**

Visitors are the responsibility of the person organising the training event or meeting and should be escorted by that person to the Assembly Point.

### **Fire Wardens**

Floor fire wardens will ensure evacuation is complete of toilets, kitchens, stairwells, hallways and common areas on their floor. They should be the last person to leave their respective floors. Each floor is assigned a warden and a deputy to cover in case of absences.

### **Checking Routes in Evacuation**

Remember, if there is a fire, your fire wardens may not be on the floor or in the building to complete their checks. If that is the case agree quickly with your colleagues who should check your area, then exit the building by the appropriate route. Whoever checks the area should pay particular attention to the staircases, ensuring as far as possible that nobody has entered a checked area from a different staircase.

#### *Top Floor*

*Warden* - working from women's toilet in No 4 (next to lift) through main office area to managers office.

*Deputy* – Check side 6 office area, check kitchen then leave through first door on the left to check gents toilet then make your way down the stairs of No 6 (secondary staircase) descend one flight of stairs, along landing down a second flight of stairs and out through the glass panelled doors to the black door of No 6. Ensure all internal doors are closed or closing as you leave each area.

---

### *Middle Floor*

*Warden* -working from women's toilet in passage at the lift through main office area, checking, Ombudsman's room.

*Deputy* - checks kitchen, small office and Board Room, then down stairs and out through the glass panelled doors one floor down then out through the black door of No 6 (secondary staircase). Ensure all internal doors are closed or closing as you leave each area.

### *Ground*

*Warden* - checks the office, mens toilet at ground floor rear entrance, reception and pod and leaves via either the rear or front ground floor entrance. Ensure all internal doors are closed or closing as you leave each area.

*Deputy* - checks the ground floor No 6 office. Directors office, kitchen then leave by No 4/6 main exits. Ensure all internal doors are closed or closing as you leave each area.

### *Basement*

*Warden* - check disabled toilet, basement meeting room, comms room (door should be left open if in use) plant room, office working area and leave via No 4 cellars.

*Deputy* - checks basement kitchen and cupboard, toilet/shower room, cupboard, training room and leave via No 6 cellars.

Once all staff and visitors are present and accounted for, one fire warden from each floor should find the Chief Fire Marshal and confirm staff accounted for and areas clear or not. The visitor book contains details of our business continuity plan and should be passed to the Chief Fire Marshal at the assembly point.

## **General Information**

The fire alarm is connected directly to the Fire Brigade. On activation, they will send fire engines to the office. The Chief Fire Marshal (or Deputy in their absence) will telephone Fire Brigade ((9)999) to confirm there is a need for them to attend.

Automatic doors will be activated when alarm sounds and doors should close on their own. However, if you notice any door still open as you sweep the office please close it.

Fire wardens should be aware of any staff that have a disability including the ones you cannot see ie trouble with their hands, hearing, sight, back etc. Staff should take responsibility for their own safety by informing fire wardens if they think they would need assistance on evacuation. However, as fire wardens will be sweeping the areas it may be

necessary for them to ask another member of staff to assist in evacuating the disabled person. Please remember that if you need assistance you should wait until the majority of members of staff have left the area before you make your escape. If evacuation is not possible, the staff member should be left in a room with the door closed and the Chief Fire Marshal should be alerted to tell Fire Service on arrival.

---

Fire wardens are not required to rescue injured members of staff. If you find a locked toilet or cannot open a door that would normally open freely then you should assume that there is a person in that area. If you cannot open the door leave the area immediately and let the Chief Fire Marshal (or Deputy in their absence) know that you think there is someone left in the building giving the location. The Chief Fire Marshal will check with the managers to see if there is anyone unaccounted for, if there is, the Chief Fire Marshal will let the Fire Brigade know that a person is missing.

Reception area should check the front of the office and lift the visitors book with envelope containing Emergency Plan and emergency telephone numbers.

### **Break Glass Alarm Points**

These are found on every floor on the landings of both No 4 and No 6 staircases including basement areas. They are also found at all fire exit doors.

### **Automatic Doors**

Doors from the main foyer into the office and the doors from the foyer into the reception area will automatically release on activation of alarm. This means that you will not need to search for the button to open the doors.

### **Location of Automatic Door Closers**

Top floor	between the two office areas
Middle floor	IPA room, door into board room, door at entrance to lift
Ground	glass panelled door at the entrance to the foyer of No 6 (secondary exit)
Basement	entrance to services area from kitchen and lift, entrance to basement meeting room

### **Location of Fire Extinguishers**

Top Floor	#4	landing on staircase	1 Foam and 1 CO2
-----------	----	----------------------	------------------

	#6	landing on staircase	1 Foam and 1 CO2
Middle Floor	#4	landing on staircase	1 Foam and 1 CO2
	#6	landing on staircase	1 Foam and 1 CO2
Ground Floor	#4	next to notice board	1 Foam and 1 CO2
	#4	in office area	1 Foam and 1 CO2
	#4	inside of mailbox on front door	
	#6	office door next to back stairs	1 CO2
	#6	on wall in back office	1 CO2
	#6	on wall next to photocopier by kitchen	1 Foam
	#6	on wall next to glass doors	1 Foam and 1 CO2
Basement	#4	on wall at bottom of stairs	1 Foam
	#4	on wall at Comms room door	1 CO2
	#4	in office on wall at fire exit	1 Foam and 1 CO2
	#6	in wall at bottom of stairs	1 Foam and 1 CO2
	#6	in kitchen at rear fire exit door	1 CO2
	#6	in kitchen under clock at rear fire exit door	Fire blanket
	#6	in training room on wall at fire exit	1 Foam
	#6	lift Engine Room - door locked – on inside wall at left of door	1 CO2

## Types of Fire Extinguishers

Type	Colour Code	Description and Uses
Water	Red	this is the most common portable extinguisher. Used for fires involving most solid materials. Do not use on electrical, flammable liquid or fat fires
Foam	Cream	used for burning liquids (for example, oils). It works by smothering the fire
Carbon Dioxide CO2	Black	used for electrical fires

Back to the main [Contents page](#)

---

# 9. Biohazards, Evidence Handling and Blood-Borne Viruses (BBVs)

## Contents

---

Overview.....2

Back to the main [Contents page](#)

## **Overview**

Due to the nature of SPSO work, the risk to staff from exposure to biohazards is relatively small. If contaminated with blood or other body fluids, staff members should take the following action without delay:

- wash splashes off the skin with soap and running water;
- if the skin is broken, encourage the wound to bleed, do not suck the wound – rinse thoroughly under running water;
- wash out splashes in your eyes, nose or mouth with plenty of tap water – do not swallow the water;
- record the source of contamination;
- report the incident to the facilities administrator and contact the nearest Accident and Emergency department for advice without delay.

Blood-borne viruses (BBVs) are viruses that some people carry in their blood and which may cause severe disease in certain people and few or no symptoms in others. The virus can spread to another person, whether the carrier of the virus is ill or not.

The main BBVs of concern are:

- Hepatitis B virus (HBV), hepatitis C virus and hepatitis D virus, which all cause hepatitis, a disease of the liver;
- Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) which causes acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), affecting the immune system of the body.

These viruses can also be found in body fluids other than blood, for example, semen, vaginal secretions and breast milk. Other body fluids or materials such as urine, faeces, saliva, sputum, sweat, tears and vomit carry a minimal risk of BBV infection, unless they are contaminated with blood. Care should still be taken, as the presence of blood is not always obvious, and staff should follow the steps outlined above. Prompt medical advice is important. The circumstances of the incident need to be assessed and consideration given to any medical treatment required. Treatment might be appropriate following infection with a BBV, but to be effective, it may need to be started quickly, so contact should be made with the nearest Accident and Emergency department for advice, without delay.

Experience, however, shows that the risk of BBV infection is low for the majority of occupations, as direct contact with blood and body fluids does not occur regularly.

Generally, there is no legal obligation on staff members to disclose they have a BBV or to take a medical test for it. If a staff member is known to have a BBV, this information is



strictly confidential and must not be passed on to anyone else without the staff member's permission.

Back to the main [Contents page](#)

---



---

# 10. Accident Reporting and First Aid

Issued: November 2006

## Contents

---

Accident Reporting .....	2
Incident Reporting .....	2
First Aid Arrangements .....	2

Back to the main [Contents page](#)

## **Accident Reporting**

Staff must report all accidents, injuries, cases of ill health arising out of work activities, potentially hazardous incidents and near-misses (such as incidents that might have resulted in a reportable occurrence but for luck or the exercise of due care) to the facilities administrator.

All accidents and cases of work related ill health are to be recorded in the accident book. The accident book is kept by the facilities administrator.

The facilities administrator is responsible for investigating incidents and for taking any necessary follow up action after an accident/incident.

## **Incident Reporting**

Staff are requested to report any incident (or near miss) to the facilities administrator. Feedback will be given to staff member reporting an incident and if necessary action will be taken as soon as possible to rectify any reported incident.

## **First Aid Arrangements**

First aid boxes are located in each kitchen area. These are audited each quarter for supplies.

Appointed persons are listed on the staff notice board and the first aiders/medical advisers are the appointed person's responsible for calling an ambulance in an emergency situation.

If the facilities administrator is not in the office, then a manager will substitute for the facilities administrator.

Back to the main [Contents page](#)

---

## 11. Manual Handling Guidance

Link to the [Manual Handling guidance](#) document

---

Back to the main [Contents page](#)



---

## 12. Driving at Work

Links to:

- Guidance on [Driving at Work](#)
- [Drivers Annual Check Form](#)
- Travel and Subsistence Policy in the [Governance, Risk and Finance Handbook](#)
- Annual [Private Vehicle business use form](#)

Back to the main [Contents page](#)