



## **Growing Support Health and Safety Policy for Volunteers**

### **Policy Statement**

Growing Support works on an outreach basis in the community and we have no premises of our own.

We expect the providers we work with to have a health and safety policy in place covering the premises from which Growing Support we work. Growing Support will take all reasonable and practical steps to provide and maintain a safe and healthy environment all its employees, volunteers and service users.

Growing Support statement of general policy is:

- to provide adequate control of the health and safety risks arising out of its work activities
- to consult with employees and volunteers on matters affecting their health and safety
- to provide and maintain safe equipment
- to ensure safe handling and use of substances
- to provide information, instruction and supervision for employees and volunteers
- to ensure all employees and volunteers are competent to do their tasks, and to give them adequate training
- to prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health
- to maintain safe and healthy working conditions
- to review and revise this policy as necessary at regular intervals

### **Responsibilities**

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

The Director is responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented on a day to day basis and has responsibility for ensuring a healthy and safe environment for staff, volunteers and service users.

All employees and volunteers must:

- co-operate with the director on health and safety matters
- not interfere with anything provided to safeguard their health and safety
- take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of other people who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work
- familiarise themselves and comply with the organisation's procedures on health and safety
- work to the highest possible standards of safety with regard to service users
- report all health and safety concerns to the Director
- report all accidents or injury that are caused by the working environment to the Director
- report to the Director if they are unsure how to perform a task safely, believe it would be dangerous to perform a specific job or use specific equipment

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

Growing Support will ensure:

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

#### **Consultation with employees and volunteers**

Employees and volunteers will be consulted on health and safety matters, through the Director. Growing Support will act on any legitimate concerns expressed by any interested party.

#### **Reporting**

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

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

#### **Monitoring health and safety**

Growing Support works on a community outreach basis and responsibility for carrying out inspections of the work area will be delegated to the employee responsible for leading the activity.

Accidents will be investigated by the Director and the safety systems will be reviewed to try and prevent a recurrence. Sick leave will be reviewed by the Director who will investigate any work-related absences.

#### **Review**

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

#### **Useful Contacts**

Further advice on Health and Safety can be obtained from the Health and Safety Executive on 0845 345 0055 or email [hse.infoline@connaught.plc.uk](mailto:hse.infoline@connaught.plc.uk)  
The Health and Safety Officer is: Dale Cranshaw, [dalec@growingsupport.co.uk](mailto:dalec@growingsupport.co.uk)

## PROCEDURES

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

Growing Support would expect first aid boxes to be provided at the premises from which we work and the Activity Leader will ensure a first aid box is on hand in case of emergencies. All employees will be shown the location of the nearest first aid box and will be given the names of the designated first aid personnel.

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

The Director is responsible for reporting accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences to the enforcing authority (see Reporting section).

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

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

### **Display screen equipment**

All staff and volunteers at Growing Support who regularly use computers and display screen equipment must undertake an assessment, which is part of the workplace assessment..

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

- Regular eye tests paid by the employer
- Free corrective eye appliance (cost of NHS lenses) if necessary to use a computer

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

All staff must complete the workplace assessment on an annual basis. The Director has a responsibility to ensure that the workplace assessment is carried out, recorded out and actioned.

### **Electricity**

The Director will arrange for the electrical testing of all portable appliances by a suitably qualified electrician every 2 years. Unless the appliance is within a year old, no untested electrical appliance will be used within the workplace.

Staff and volunteers must ensure that they use electricity in the safest possible way:

**Never** tamper with electrical equipment or electrically powered equipment,

**Do not** attempt to repair it or to remedy an electrical problem.

**Do not** overload sockets

**Do not** use taped joints to connect cables

**Do not** ignore obvious telltale signs such as faulty switching

**Do not** adjust, move or otherwise tamper with any electrical equipment or machinery in a manner not within the scope of their job duties

**Do not** handle electrical appliances, plugs and flexes with wet hands

**Do** switch off equipment before unplugging and cleaning

**Do** report electrical equipment to the line manager which is not working properly

**Do** ensure they are aware of safety precautions

### **Employees or Volunteers at Special Risk**

Growing Support recognises that some workers may from time to time be at increased risk of injury or ill-health resulting from work activities. All employees and volunteers must advise the Director if they become aware of any change in their personal circumstances which could result in their being at increased risk. This could include medical conditions, permanent or temporary disability, taking medication and pregnancy.

As an equal opportunities employer Growing Support would ensure that they make reasonable adjustments of their employment arrangements or premises in order not to place disabled people at a substantial disadvantage compared with non-disabled people.

Growing Support will make special arrangements for the supervision of young workers and volunteers in accordance with good practice guidelines.

### **Equipment (including gardening tools)**

All employees and volunteers will be instructed in the safe use of equipment in their induction programme. Employees and volunteers should report any equipment failure to the Activities Leader.

Company machinery, tools and equipment are only to be used by qualified and authorised personnel. It is the responsibility of all employees and volunteers to ensure that any tools or equipment they use are in a good and safe condition. Any tools or equipment which are defective must be reported to the Activities Leader. In addition, new or second-hand equipment must be checked to ensure that it meets health and safety standards before it is purchased.

No tool should be used outside of the manufacturer's guidance. Employees and volunteers are prohibited from using any tool or piece of equipment for any purpose other than its intended purpose. Approved personal protective equipment must be properly used where appropriate. Persons using machine tools must not wear clothing, jewellery or long hair in such a way as might pose a risk to their own or anyone else's safety. All tools must be properly and safely stored when not in use.

The Director shall be the point of reference for queries regarding equipment testing and he will identify all equipment that requires testing.

### **Fire**

Growing Support would expect correct fire procedures to be in place at the premises where outreach activities are being carried out. It is the responsibility of the Activities Leader to ensure the procedures are in place and to inform everyone involved in the outreach activities of the procedures.

### **Housekeeping**

It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers to ensure the following:

- Materials and equipment must be stored safely and tidily at all times
- Walkways and passageways and exits must be kept clear and free from obstructions at all times
- If a walkway or passageway becomes wet the floor should be wiped up immediately
- Trailing cables should not be left in any passageway
- Where objects are stored in or around a passageway, care must be taken to ensure that no long or sharp edges jut out into the passageway
- Where a passageway is being used by vehicles or other moving machinery, an alternative route should be used by pedestrians where possible. If no alternative route is available, the area must be clearly marked with warning signs.

### **Infectious Diseases**

For these guidelines an infectious disease is defined as one which could be transmitted either deliberately or unknowingly to another person / persons.

- All employees or volunteers who may have contact with bodily fluids should seek guidance from their GP regarding vaccinations and should wear the appropriate protective clothing i.e. gloves / aprons / masks.
- The Director must be advised if any staff, volunteer or service user is suspected of or diagnosed as having a contagious disease which may be passed to others in everyday occurrences. The member of staff or volunteers should not attend the project until medical advice has been sought. If a service user is suspected or diagnosed as carrying a contagious disease medical advice should be obtained

before the service can continue. This does not contravene our equal opportunities policies and procedures including staff declarations of HIV and Aids status.

- Once the member of staff or volunteer has sought medical advice they should inform the Director of the circumstances, who will discuss the implications with them.
- Confidentiality and dignity of the individual will be respected at all times and details of their condition will not be revealed to any third party without their agreement unless there is a significant risk to a third party
- Growing Support shall take appropriate care to prevent cross infection or contamination

### **Information, instruction and supervision**

Health and Safety leaflets are available from the Health and Safety Officer.

Further health and safety advice is available from the Health and Safety Executive helpline.

Supervision of young workers or trainees will be arranged by the Director.

The Director and Activities Leaders are responsible for ensuring that employees and volunteers working at locations are given relevant health and safety information.

### **Insurance**

The Director is responsible for insuring the activities of the organisation. Certificates can be seen on request.

### **Lone working**

It is recognised that from time to time employees or volunteers may work alone.

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

### **Manual Handling**

In all cases where Growing Support staff and volunteers have to regularly carry, lift, push or pull items as part of their duties, a risk assessment should be undertaken and recorded. . The assessment should identify any unnecessary operations. Lifting and moving should always be done by mechanical devices rather than manual handling wherever reasonably practicable. The equipment used should be appropriate for the task at hand. The route over which the load is to be lifted should be inspected to ensure it is free of obstructions.

Manual handling operations which involve the risk of injury should be avoided. Employees and volunteers should not attempt to lift or move a load which is too heavy to manage comfortably. Employees and volunteers should ask for assistance if there is any danger of strain.

Training in lifting techniques will be provided for those required to undertake the task.

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

Growing Support would expect the provider to have risk assessments in place in relation to manual handling of service users. Growing Support staff and volunteers should not attempt to assist with manual handling as this is the responsibility of the provider's staff who should be on hand during outreach activities.

### **Mobile phones**

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

### **Risk assessments**

It is a requirement of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 that Growing Support undertakes and records risk assessments. Risk assessments will be undertaken by the Director or Activities Leader and will be reviewed regularly. Where the assessor is unable to minimise the risk to an acceptable level, the findings of the risk assessment will be reported to the Director to make a decision about the findings.

Although risk assessments are undertaken prior to the activity being carried out, all staff and volunteers have a responsibility for not undertaking activity if they consider that the risks to themselves or others is significant.

### **Safe Handling of Substances**

A hazardous substance can be liquid, solid, dust powder, or gas which can damage health when it comes into contact with skin or eyes; or enters the body through the skin; or is breathed in, swallowed or even transferred to the mouth via contaminated hands.

In order to comply with Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (CoSHH) regulations 2002. Growing Support staff are required to take the following steps:-

- Identify any hazardous substances present. Consider the risks they present to people's health if the risk is significant.
- Decide who might be harmed or if others maybe affected indirectly.
- Evaluate the risk arising from the hazard and decide whether existing control measures are adequate or if more should be done.
- Record the findings and arrange for details to be inserted into the health and safety file and inform all staff and volunteers.

Assessments should be reviewed annually or until new guidance is given whichever is sooner.

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

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

### **Smoking**

Smoking is not allowed during outreach activities.

### **Training**

All employees and volunteers will receive health and safety training as part of their induction on joining the organisation. Training will include instruction on the safe use of any equipment provided and other information which is relevant to their specific role and responsibilities. Specific training sessions will be arranged if there is a change to health and safety procedures; if it is agreed as part of a member of staff's training and development plan or to inform staff of a specific health and safety concern.

Any training and development needs should be reported to the Director.

### **Violence against staff**

Growing Support will provide advice and support to staff and volunteers who may be at risk from threats or violence from their client group.

Growing Support as an employer will:

- Undertake a systematic general examination of all their work activities (including the threat of violence to staff), record the significant findings of their assessment and implement all appropriate actions to prevent further incidents.
- Provide appropriate training to employees and volunteers on dealing with difficult clients, should it be required or requested.
- Report all violent incidents which lead to a major injury, or to three days' absence from work, or if the person assaulted or involved in the incident is unable to do their normal work for three days as a result of the incident.

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

### **Working Hours**

Growing Support complies with the EU Working Time Directive by keeping a record of hours worked by their employees.

## **HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE**

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

### **Access to Restricted Areas**

Growing Support would expect the premises from which we are working to have all restricted areas clearly signed. Access to these areas is restricted to authorised personnel only. Persons who have not been authorised must not enter the areas.

### **Cleanliness and Hygiene**

Growing Support would expect the premises from which we are working to be cleaned regularly. Any concerns regarding cleanliness / hygiene should be reported to the Activities Leader. Protective clothing should be provided for all staff as required when handling bodily fluids and/or chemicals.

### **Drinking Water**

Staff and volunteers should have access to drinking water.

### **Lighting**

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

### **Temperature**

Growing Support would expect the premises from which we are working to maintain workroom / office temperature of at least 16°C after the first hour of work where employees or volunteers do most of their work sitting down or where the job does not involve serious physical effort.

If this temperature is not reached, the employee or volunteer should ask for additional heating facilities to be provided immediately and, if this is not possible, should transfer to a place of work where an appropriate temperature prevails.

There is no maximum temperature.

When working outside, Growing Support would expect staff and volunteers to follow safety precautions in relation to excess in temperatures. When working in direct sunlight Growing Support staff and volunteers should take responsibility for their own safety in relation to

drinking plenty of fluids and wearing sun cream. Growing Support staff and volunteers should prompt service users (or care staff where assistance is needed) to implement these precautions, including ensuring that service users are appropriately dressed for prolonged activities outdoors.

### **Toilets**

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

### **Ventilation**

Growing Support would expect that the premises from which we are working would have adequate ventilation.

### **Waste Disposal**

Ensure that all rubbish or items for disposal are bagged / wrapped and placed in the appropriate receptacle or area.