

## SECTION TEN: Health & Safety Policy

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WRAS is committed to ensuring the health and safety of its trustees, employees, volunteers, donors, supporters, suppliers, contractors other stakeholders and anyone affected by its activities. It seeks to provide a safe environment for all those attending its premises.

In particular WRAS is committed to maintaining safe and healthy working conditions by controlling the health and safety risks arising from its activities, providing and maintaining safe plant and equipment, ensuring the safe handling and use of substances, consulting with staff, providing appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision and taking steps to prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health.

### **What is covered by this policy?**

In accordance with WRAS' health and safety duties, it is responsible for:

- (a) assessing risks to health and safety and identifying ways to overcome them;
- (b) providing and maintaining a healthy and safe place to work and a safe means of entering and leaving its premises, including emergency procedures for use when needed;
- (c) providing information, instruction, training and supervision in safe working methods and procedures as well as working areas and equipment that are safe and without risks to health;
- (d) ensuring that equipment has all necessary safety devices installed, that equipment is properly maintained and that appropriate protective clothing and PPE is provided;
- (e) promoting co-operation between employees to ensure safe and healthy conditions and systems of work by discussion and effective joint consultation; and
- (f) regularly monitoring and reviewing the management of health and safety at work, making any necessary changes and bringing those to the attention of all employees.

The Trustees have overall responsibility for health and safety and the operation of this policy. The Trustees have nominated the Operations Director as the Principal Health and Safety Officer with day-to-day responsibility for health and safety matters.

WRAS is committed to a process of making continuous and effective improvements while at the same time complying, as a minimum, with appropriate legislation, regulation and any other requirements that it subscribes to as an organisation. As part of its commitment to continual improvement, it consistently sets and monitors measureable objectives and targets consistent with this policy.

Safety training is an integral part of an effective health and safety programme. It is essential that every employee is trained to perform their job safely. All employees will be trained in safe working practices and procedures. Training will include instruction on the safe use of any equipment provided. No employee should undertake a job until they have received adequate safety instruction and they are authorised to carry out the task.

All employees must also recognise that everyone shares responsibility for achieving healthy and safe working conditions. You must consider the health and safety implications of your acts and/or omissions and take reasonable care for your health and safety and that of others and to report any situation which may pose a serious or imminent threat to your wellbeing or that of any other person. If an employee is unsure how to perform a certain task or feels it would be dangerous to perform a specific job or use specific equipment, then it is the employee's duty to report this as soon as possible. It is the responsibility of each employee to familiarise themselves and comply with WRAS' procedures and systems on health and safety..

Any health and safety concerns should be reported to the Principal Health and Safety Officer.

WRAS recognises that some workers may from time to time be at increased risk of injury or ill-health resulting from work activities. WRAS therefore requires that all employees advise the Principal Health and Safety Officer 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.

Disciplinary action under the Disciplinary Procedure may be taken against any employee who violates health and safety rules and procedures or who fails to perform their duties under health and safety

legislation. Depending on the seriousness of the offence, it may amount to potential gross misconduct rendering the employee liable to summary dismissal.

### **Standards of Workplace Behaviour**

You must co-operate with the Principal Health and Safety Officer on health and safety matters and comply with any health and safety instructions. All employees should be aware of and adhere to WRAS' rules and procedures on health and safety

You must take reasonable care of your own health and safety and that of others by observing safety rules applicable to you and following instructions for the use of equipment (including safety equipment, PPE and protective clothing). No employee should undertake a job which appears to be unsafe.

All materials must be properly and safely used and when not in use properly and safely secured.

Work should be well-planned to avoid injuries in the handling of heavy materials and while using equipment.

Work sites must be kept clean and tidy and any spillage must be cleaned up immediately.

Employees should use handrails when going up and down stairs, should never read while walking, must close filing cabinet drawers when not in use and must keep all floor areas free of obstruction.

All waste materials must be disposed of carefully in the receptacles provided and in such a way that they do not constitute a hazard to other workers.

Any person whose levels of alertness are reduced due to illness or fatigue will not be allowed to work if this might jeopardise the health and safety of any person.

Any health and safety concern, however trivial it might seem, including any potential risk, hazard or malfunction of equipment or any unsafe working practices or conditions, must be reported to the Principal Health and Safety Officer. Horseplay, practical joking, running in the workplace, misuse of equipment or any other acts which might jeopardise the health and safety of any other person are forbidden.

You must co-operate in the investigation of any accident or incident that has led or which WRAS considers might have led to injury.

Failure to comply with health and safety rules and instructions or with the requirements of this policy may be treated as misconduct and dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure.

### **Information & Consultation**

WRAS is committed to providing information, instruction and supervision on health and safety matters for all employees as well as consulting with them regarding arrangements for health and safety management.

### **Access & Egress**

Walkways and passageways must be kept clear and free from obstructions at all times.

If a walkway or passageway becomes wet it should be clearly marked with warning signs and any liquid spilt on 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.

### **Equipment**

Machinery, tools and equipment are only to be used by qualified and authorised personnel.

All employees must use equipment in accordance with operating instructions, instructions given by managers and any relevant training. No tool should be used without the manufacturer's recommended shields, guards or attachments and approved PPE must be properly used where appropriate. It is the responsibility of all employees to ensure that any tools or equipment they use are in a good and safe

condition. Any fault with, damage to or concern about any equipment or its use must immediately be reported to the Principal Health and Safety Officer.

Employees are prohibited from using any tool or piece of equipment for any purpose other than its intended purpose.

Employees must ensure that health and safety equipment is not interfered with and that any damage is immediately reported. Employees must not adjust, move or otherwise tamper with any electrical equipment or machinery in a manner not within the scope of their job duties.

No employee should attempt to repair equipment unless trained and designated to do so. Failure to report damage to or a fault with equipment or failure to use it as directed may result in action under the Disciplinary Procedure.

### **Manual Handling**

Lifting and moving of objects 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 load to be lifted or moved must be inspected for sharp edges and wet patches.

When lifting or moving a load with sharp or splintered edges, gloves must be worn.

The route over which the load is to be lifted should be inspected to ensure it is free of obstructions.

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

When lifting an object off the ground, employees should assume a squatting position, keeping the back straight. The load should be lifted by straightening the knees, not the back.

Employees should not attempt to obtain items from shelves which are beyond their reach. A ladder or stepping stool should be used. Employees should not use chairs or any makeshift device for climbing and should never climb up the shelves themselves.

### **Accidents & First Aid**

Any accident at work involving personal injury should be reported to the Principal Health and Safety Officer so that details can be recorded in the Accident Book. All employees must cooperate with any resulting investigation.

Details of first aid facilities and trained first aiders are displayed on notice boards at WRAS' premises.

If you suffer an accident at work you (or someone on your behalf) must report that fact to the Principal Health and Safety Officer as soon as possible. All accidents should be reported, however trivial. The accident will be recorded in the Accident Book which can be found with the First Aid Kit in the Prep Room.

Accident records are crucial to the effective monitoring of health and safety procedures and must therefore be accurate and comprehensive. The Principal Health and Safety Officer will inspect the Accident Book on a regular basis and all accidents will be investigated and a report prepared, with any necessary action being taken to prevent a recurrence of the problem.

First Aid Kits are located in the Volunteer Room and the Prep Room.

### **National Health Alerts**

In the event of an epidemic or pandemic alert WRAS will organise its business operations and provide advice on steps to be taken by employees, in accordance with official guidance, to reduce the risk of infection at work as far as possible. Any questions should be referred to the Principal Health and Safety Officer.

It is important for the health and safety of all WRAS' employees that you comply with instructions issued in these circumstances. Failure to do so will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure.

### **Emergency Evacuation & Fire Precautions**

Fire is a significant risk within the workplace. All employees have a duty to conduct their operations in such a way as to minimise the risk of fire and they are under a duty to report immediately any fire, smoke or potential fire hazards, such as faulty electric cables or loose connections. Employees should never attempt to repair or interfere with electrical equipment or wiring themselves.

You should familiarise yourself with the instructions about what to do in the event of fire which are displayed on notice boards and are available from the Principal Health and Safety Officer. You should also know where the fire extinguishers are, ensure that you are aware of your nearest fire exit and alternative ways of leaving the building in an emergency.

The Principal Health and Safety Officer is responsible for the maintenance and testing of fire alarms and firefighting, prevention and detection equipment.

Smoke detectors and manually operated fire alarms are located at strategic points throughout the workplace. If a smoke detector sounds or fire is discovered, it is the responsibility of any employee present to activate the alarm and evacuate the building. Employees are expected to tackle a fire themselves only if it would pose no threat to their personal safety to do so. If the situation is dangerous or potentially dangerous, the employee should activate the fire alarm and evacuate the building immediately.

Fire doors designed to slow the spread of fire and smoke throughout the workplace have been installed at strategic points. Fire doors are designed to close automatically after opening and must never be blocked or wedged open. Fire exits are also located at strategic points throughout the workplace. Fire exit doors and corridors must never be locked, blocked or used as storage space. All employees must ensure they are familiar with their evacuation route and designated assembly point in case of fire. Practice fire drills will be conducted on a regular basis to ensure employee familiarity with emergency evacuation procedures. These drills are important and must be taken seriously.

You should notify the Principal Health and Safety Officer as soon as possible if there is anything (for example, impaired mobility) that might impede your evacuation in the event of a fire.

On hearing the fire alarm, do not delay. You should remain calm and, walking quickly, not running, evacuate the building immediately. Do not stop to collect personal possessions, do not use any lifts and do not re-enter the building until you are told that it is safe to do so.

You must report to the Assembly Point having evacuated the premises. The Assembly Point is by the rubbish bins in the corner of the car park.

If you are with a visitor to the premises, you must ensure that they accompany you during any evacuation. If your visitor is disabled, you must make sure they have heard the alarm and, if appropriate, assist them in evacuating.

You should always remember the following:

- **LEAVE THE BUILDING IMMEDIATELY**
- **DO NOT STOP TO COLLECT PERSONAL BELONGINGS**
- **DO NOT RE-ENTER THE PREMISES UNTIL AUTHORISED TO DO SO**

### **Risk Assessments, DSE & Manual Handling**

General workplace risk assessments are carried out when required or as reasonably requested by employees or management. The Principal Health and Safety Officer is responsible for ensuring that any necessary risk assessments are undertaken and that recommended changes to the workplace and working practices are implemented.

If you use a computer for prolonged periods of time you can request a workstation assessment by contacting the Principal Health and Safety Officer.

### **Visitor & Contractor Safety**

All visitors to the Casualty Centre, including contractors, are required to sign in and out upon arriving at and leaving the building. This does not apply to volunteers or people bringing in casualties. Visitors should not be permitted to look around the Casualty Centre without the prior approval of a senior manager.

WRAS endeavours only to engage suitably competent contractors. If you see a contractor behaving in a way that poses a risk to either themselves or another, report the same to a senior manager immediately. You should never interfere with or offer to assist a contractor without prior authorisation from a senior manager.