

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY FOR SPIRITUALIST CHURCHES

Introduction:

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.

A large number of regulations that have been made under this Act covering certain key topics, such as chemical safety and work equipment. Many of the titles of the regulations might not automatically seem to fit in with Churches, but these regulations need to be considered.

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

Replaced the Fire Precautions Act 1971 in October 2006, it places duties on the “responsible person” for non-domestic premises to ensure that fire precautions and procedures are in place.

Duties under Health and Safety Law and Fire Safety Law are mandatory, no matter what size the premises or congregation is. It does not matter how old the building is or how many times per week the building is being used.

The general requirements exist for all Churches.

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NOTE TO ALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS, EMPLOYEES, VOLUNTARY HELPERS AND CONTRACTORS

The success of this policy will depend on your co-operation. It is therefore important that you read this document carefully and understand your role and the overall arrangements for health and safety.

SECTION A GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

Our policy, so far as is reasonably practicable, is to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all our committee members, employees, casual labour and voluntary helpers, and to provide such information, training and supervision as they need for this purpose.

We will also endeavour to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all members of the congregation, contractors, visitors and others who may visit the church and grounds.

The allocation of duties for safety matters and the particular arrangements which we will make to implement the policy as set out below.

The policy will be kept up to date, particularly in the light of any changes to our building or activities. To ensure this, the policy and way in which it has operated will be reviewed on a yearly basis and the appropriate changes made.

In order to ensure that health and safety matters are kept constantly under review, an item on health and safety will be on the agenda for all committee meetings, and sub-committees where they exist and employees and voluntary workers will be consulted on a regular basis in order to seek their views on health and safety matters.

Signed:.....
(President)

Date:.....

Review Date:.....

SECTION B

ORGANISATION AND RESPONSIBILITY

1. Responsibility of the Committee

Overall responsibility for health and safety is that of the Committee who will ensure that arrangements are in place to satisfy Health and Safety Regulations and appropriate Codes of Practice.

Specific responsibilities may be delegated to Church Committee members. As new projects emerge, the names of responsible persons will be notified and the list amended accordingly.

Responsibility to ensure that the arrangements outlined in this policy are carried out and updated as necessary is with the Committee.

2. Responsibility of Health and Safety Officer

The President unless otherwise arranged by the committee carries the responsibility for the day to day implementation of the arrangements outlined in this policy.

The responsibility of the Health and Safety Officer shall be to:

1. be familiar with Health and Safety Regulations as far as they concern church premises.
2. be familiar with the health and safety policy and arrangements and ensure they are observed.
3. ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe systems of work are in place.
4. ensure that the church and grounds are clean and tidy.
5. ensure that the grounds are properly maintained.
6. ensure that safety equipment and clothing is provided and used by all personnel where this is required.
7. ensure that all plant, equipment and tools are properly maintained and in good condition and that all operators have received the appropriate training.
8. ensure that adequate access and egress is maintained.
9. ensure adequate fire fighting equipment is available and maintained.
10. ensure that food hygiene regulations and procedures are observed.

3. Responsibility of Employees and Voluntary Workers

All employees and voluntary helpers have a responsibility to co-operate in the implementation of this health and safety policy and to take reasonable care of themselves and others whilst on church business or premises.

Employees and voluntary workers must therefore:

1. Comply with safety rules, operating instructions and working procedures.
2. Use protective clothing and equipment when it is required.
3. Report any fault or defect in equipment immediately to the President or committee.
4. Report all accidents (however minor), injuries, near misses or other potential safety hazards as soon as possible.
5. Not misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety.

SECTION C

ARRANGEMENTS (Implementation of the Policy)

This section sets out our arrangements to minimise as far as is reasonably practicable risks to the health and safety of committee members, employees, voluntary workers, members of the congregation, visitors and contractors.

1. Accidents and First Aid

The First Aid box is located

Trained/qualified First Aiders are:.....

.....

The Accident Book is located with the First Aid box:.....

All accidents and incidents are entered in the accident book and our insurers advised.

If the church or grounds are let to outside organisations, they are told in writing that in the event of an accident, details must be entered in the accident book.

The accident book is regularly reviewed.

RIDDOR Report of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995

These accidents will be reported by the Responsible Person.

Fatal accidents, major injuries and dangerous occurrences must be reported immediately by a responsible person by the quickest practicable means (normally the telephone) to the relevant enforcing Local Authority Environmental Health Department under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995. Following the initial notification, a written report on the approved form F2508 must be sent to the enforcing authority within 10 days of the accident or occurrence. If there is any doubt as to whether the accident is reportable, or to which authority it should be reported, the advice of the Health and Safety Executive should be obtained.

The following is a summary of the injuries or occurrences which must be reported (for further information, refer to the Regulations or contact the HSE or Environmental Health Officer):

- *Any fatality to committee members, employees or non-employees including volunteers.*
- *Major injuries to committee members and employees (this includes fractures, amputations, dislocations, loss of sight, electric shock, exposure to harmful substances, any injury resulting in admission to hospital for more than 24 hours and any accident that causes more than three consecutive days off work.).*

- *Injuries to non-committee members and non-employees which require the injured person to be taken straight to hospital for treatment.*

SECTION C

ARRANGEMENTS (implementation of the Policy)

2. GENERAL FIRE SAFETY

Our policy is to fulfil our obligations under the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulation 1997 (as amended 1999). In order to achieve this, we undertake the following:

1. An assessment of the fire risks in the church. This is carried out either as a specific exercise or as part of our general health and safety risk assessments.
2. A check that a fire can be detected in a reasonable time and that people can be warned.
3. A check that people who may be in the building can get out safely.
4. To provide reasonable fire fighting equipment.
5. A check that those in the building know what to do if there is a fire.
6. A regular check that our fire fighting equipment is in place and is serviceable, and that it is serviced annually with a reputable company.
7. A Fire Safety Risk Assessment is available for inspection and is located:

.....

Fire Extinguishers

Fire extinguishers are kept in the following locations:

Location	Type of Extinguisher and Capacity
.....
.....

The extinguishers noted above are checked every month by the Responsible Person to ensure that they are still in place and have not been discharged.

The extinguishers noted above are maintained annually by:

.....

Other Fire Protection Equipment

Location	Type of Equipment
.....
.....

The equipment noted above are checked every month by the Responsible Person to ensure that they are still in place and have not been used.

The equipment noted above are maintained annually by:
.....

Evacuation Procedures

For all services, circles, healing sessions, etc our procedures for stewarding/evacuation are as follows:

1. All designated fire doors must be unlocked before the service/event commences and be clearly marked as fire exits using the “Running Man” symbol.
2. A check must be made that all doors can be opened.
3. A committee member must be allotted to each door.
4. Responsibility for using each fire extinguisher will be allotted to committee members.
5. In the event of an emergency an announcement to leave the building will be made by the chairperson, circle leader, healing leader etc.
6. Persons will assemble
7. The emergency services will be contacted immediately by a nominated person using the telephone located in:
.....

Evacuation Drills

Fire evacuation drills will be carried out annually. All committee members, employees and voluntary workers should ensure they are familiar with escape routes and ensure these are kept clear and unobstructed.

If you discover a Fire (no matter how small)

1. Immediately raise the alarm.
2. Telephone the emergency services.
3. Check the building for occupants.
4. Attack the fire if possible within your capacity using the appliances provided, but without taking personal risk.
5. If not possible to attack the fire or if you are unsure which fire extinguisher to use, assist in the evacuation of the building, ensuring that all doors are closed behind you. The general rule is People before Property.
6. Evacuate to the designated assembly point.
7. Ensure clear access for the emergency vehicles.

3. ELECTRICAL SAFETY

1. A list of all our portable electrical appliances is maintained by the Responsible Person.
2. Every quarter plugs, cables and sockets will be inspected by the Responsible Person to ensure that there are no loose connections, worn flexes or trailing leads. Any repairs needed will be reported to the committee.
3. Every year all our portable electrical equipment will be tested by a competent contractor (who is a member of the NICEIC (National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting), ECA (Electrical Contractors Association) or other approved body) to ensure that all appliances are safe. Any unsafe equipment will be safely disposed of.
4. Every 6 months a visual inspection will be carried out of the fixed electrical installation by the Responsible Person. Any defects will be reported to the committee for action.
5. Every five years, our fixed electrical system will be inspected and tested by a competent contractor who is a member of the NICEIC, ECA or other approved body. Any necessary remedial will be carried out.
6. Second hand electrical goods unless they have been tested by a suitably qualified person and a register of such equipment is maintained.

Misuse and abuse of electricity is a significant cause of fires and injury. Faulty electrical equipment can kill. All committee members, employees and voluntary workers must observe the following:

- i) Visually check all electrical equipment before use.
- ii) Report all Faults immediately to the Responsible Person
- iii) Do not attempt to use or repair faulty equipment

- iv) No electrical equipment is to be brought onto the premises and used until it has been tested by the approved person and entered in the Electrical Equipment book
- v) Flexible cables should be so positioned and so protected that they do not constitute a tripping hazard and are not subject to mechanical damage

4. GAS EQUIPMENT SAFETY

1. Our gas boiler is maintained and checked annually by a competent contractor who is a CORGI registered gas installer. Any necessary work required for safety is implemented immediately.

These arrangements are checked by the Responsible Person.

5. HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

The Responsible Person will maintain a list of all hazardous substances used in the church.

Where at all possible, we have eliminated the use of hazardous substances. Where this is not possible, our safety arrangements are as follows:

For all hazardous substances, which include substances marked as “Harmful, Irritant, Corrosive, Toxic, Very Toxic, Flammable, Highly Flammable, Extremely Flammable, Explosive, Oxidising or Dangerous for the Environment”, data sheets or product information provided by the manufacturers are used to determine the correct method of use, protective clothing needed, method of storage, and action to take in the event of an accident e.g.

Do not mix chemicals.

Do not store chemicals in unmarked containers.

6. LADDERS

Ladders may only be used when they can be safely secured. This may necessitate the use of ladder ties or two person operation.

7. SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS - Condition of floors, steps and paths

In order to reduce as far as is reasonably practicable the risk of slips, trips and falls, an inspection will be made every quarter by the Responsible Person of all floors and steps in the church, and all paths and steps in the church grounds.

Particular note will be made of moss, algae and leaves on paths. Any defects will be reported to the committee who will arrange for repairs or remedial measures to be carried out.

8. LIGHTING

In order to ensure that the church is adequately lit, an inspection will be made every month by the Responsible Person to ensure that all lights in the church, and church grounds are working. Any bulbs which require replacing will be reported to the President who will ensure that the safety procedure for the replacement of bulbs is followed.

9. WORKING AT HIGH LEVELS

The following areas are designated as high levels:

Interior-	All Ceilings	Exterior	-	All Roofs
	Auditorium windows			Entrance canopy
	Auditorium curtains			All parapets
	Auditorium windows			

Only approved contractors, competent committee members and competent volunteers may work at high level.

The following procedures must be followed:

Ladders must be used in accordance with Section C – 6. If ladders are used from the carpark or drive a person must be present to warn drivers of the hazard.

Any scaffolding used must be installed by a competent scaffolding company.

Only the following work is authorised without special agreement:

Replacing light bulbs.

Cleaning of the auditorium windows.

The appropriate training will be given and a system of recording will detail who is working where at any time.

10. PREPARATION OF FOOD

1. We ensure that we follow the appropriate regulations governing the preparation and storage of foodstuffs.
2. We ensure that all food handlers have received adequate supervision, instruction and training.
3. We ensure that the appropriate assessment of risks is carried out for the foods to be prepared and stored including storage at correct temperatures.
4. Before any preparation commences, all surfaces coming into contact with food must be washed down and disinfected.
5. Foodstuffs may only be prepared in the kitchen.

11 MANUAL HANDLING - Lifting, carrying and moving loads

1. Our policy is to eliminate the need for manual handling as far as is reasonably practicable.
2. Where it is not possible to avoid the need to move loads, we will carry out risk assessments.
3. The necessary training will be given to all those committee members, employees and voluntary workers who are required to undertake manual handling.
4. Only those persons who have received the appropriate training are authorised to undertake manual handling tasks.
5. No more than two chairs to be lifted at once by one person.
6. Two people are required when lifting any of the tables including folding tables.

12. DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT

Our policy is to assess the risks to all habitual users of computer work stations and to reduce those risks to the lowest level possible. The following factors will be considered when carrying out risk assessments:

1. Stability and legibility of the screen.
2. Contrast and brightness of the screen.
3. Tilt and swivel of the screen.
4. Suitability of keyboards, desks and chairs.
5. The work station environment.
6. The user friendliness of the software.

Daily work routines will involve periods away from the screen.

Where necessary risk assessments will be carried out by the Responsible Person.

13. HAZARDOUS BUILDINGS AND GLAZING

1. Our policy is to ensure that our building is safe and without risks to the health, safety and welfare of all who work in and use them. In order to achieve this, the building is inspected every quarter by the Responsible Person.
2. Any defects noted are immediately reported to the committee and the procedures put in hand for repairs.
3. Where necessary temporary measures are taken to ensure that there is no risk of accident or injury until permanent repairs can be carried out.
4. A check is made of any asbestos in the building noting its location, type and condition. Where necessary, asbestos will be removed by an approved contractor. Information regarding any asbestos remaining in the building is given to all contractors and anyone else who may be affected.
5. Asbestos is present in

.....

These will be replaced in due time.

A check is made of all glazing in the buildings to ensure that any glass in windows below waist height and in doors and beside doors below shoulder height is of a safety material or is protected against breakage.

14. CHILD PROTECTION

A permanent record will be maintained of all accidents involving children.

15. PERSONAL SAFETY

1. When any one is in the church on their own the lock on the front door is to remained locked until someone else arrives.
2. The Treasurer is to empty the safe if at all possible when other people are present.

When private sittings and healing is taking place there must be a third person present within the church.

16. RISK ASSESSMENTS/ACTIVITIES

Risk assessments will be carried out on all areas of the church premises and all activities that carry a significant risk at regular intervals by a competent person in order to meet our obligations under The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

17. CONTRACTORS

Anyone entering church premises for the purposes of carrying out work, other than a committee member, employee or voluntary worker of the church, will be regarded as a contractor. All contractors, including the self-employed, must abide by the following:

1. Have their own health and safety policy (where required by law) and be able to provide a copy of the same.
2. Produce evidence that they have appropriate public and employers' liability insurance in place. A record of this evidence will be maintained.
3. Comply with all the requirements of this health and safety policy and co-operate with the church officials in providing a safe place of work and a safe system of operation.
4. Where plant and machinery is brought onto the church premises by contractors, they must be able to show where necessary that the equipment has been inspected and tested to ensure its safe operation.
5. Contractors may only use sub-contractors or persons other than their own direct employees with the express permission of the church officials. However, responsibility will remain with the contractors.
6. All contractors will be given detailed instructions regarding the areas where they are permitted to work and the extent of the work they are authorised to undertake. This "permit to work" will also specify any safety precautions they must undertake.
7. Particular care needs to be taken for "hot works" and a "Hot Work Permit" will be issued where necessary.

Certain work to the church will be subject to The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations.

This includes works that will last for more than 30 days, involve more than 500 person days of work, involve 5 or more people on site at any one time or involves any demolition works.

A Planning Supervisor, Designer and Principal Contractor need to be appointed and a Health and Safety Plan produced.

The Responsible Person will ensure that the necessary arrangements are put in hand under The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations.

18. INFORMATION AND ENFORCEMENT

Environmental Health Service Information:

Address:.....

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Tel No

Fax:

Food Safety & Health & Safety Team:

Tel.....

Fax.....

Employment Medical Advisory Service Information

Health and Safety Executive.

Address.....

..... Tel No:.....

19 HEALTH AND SAFETY POSTER

A copy of the HSE poster “Health and Safety Law – What you should know” is displayed:

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