



## HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

*Note- 'Teddington & Hampton Wick Voluntary Care Group (THWVCG) permanent locations' refer to the organisation's office location.*

### 1. General Statement

This is the Health and Safety Policy Statement of THWVCG:

THWVCG endeavours to comply fully with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and all other relevant statutory provisions. Every effort will be made to avoid hazards to the safety and health of the Employees and other persons in the organisation's premises. Hazards to safety and health include matters such as untidy working areas, faulty maintenance, disregard of fire precautions and failure to report accidents.

The organisation's policy under the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 is to provide and maintain, so far as reasonably practicable, safe, and healthy working conditions, equipment, and systems of work for all employees of THWVCG and to supply such information, training and supervision as may be required for this purpose. The organisation takes these obligations seriously and regards the health and safety of all its employees as being of the utmost importance.

#### Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974

Our statement of general policy is to:

- provide adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from our work activities and carry out regular Risk Assessment
- consult with our employees on matters affecting their health and safety
- provide and maintain safe equipment
- ensure safe handling and use of substances
- provide information, instruction, and supervision for employees · ensure all employees are competent to do their tasks, and to give them adequate training
- prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health as far as it is reasonably practicable.
- maintain safe and healthy working conditions
- review and revise this policy as necessary at regular intervals and when there is a major change in circumstances e.g. expansion of operations, move to new premises etc.

### 2. Responsibilities and arrangements for Health and Safety Management

#### 2.1 The Board of Trustees

- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 places a statutory duty on all employers to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of all its employees at work and other people who may be affected by their activities, e.g. clients, volunteers, members of the public.
- The Board of Trustees as the employer, has overall and final responsibility for health and safety matters at THWVCG, and for ensuring that health and safety legislation is complied with.
- The Board of Trustees will periodically review the operation of its health and safety policy. And will ensure:
  - employees and volunteers, as appropriate receive sufficient information, training and supervision on health and safety matters.
  - a risk assessment is undertaken when needed and the results written up and made available to all employees
  - accidents are investigated and reported to the Board of Trustees
  - there are arrangements in place to monitor the maintenance of the premises and equipment
  - there are adequate arrangements to liaise and co-operate on health and safety matters with other organisations / stakeholders at sites operated by THWVCG.

## 2.2 All Employees and Volunteers

- All employees and volunteers have to:
  - co-operate with supervisors and managers 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
  - report all health and safety concerns to their line manager
  - be aware of any Health and Safety requirements of any location they visit.

## 2.2 Fire Officer

2.2.1 The Board of Trustees will appoint Fire Officers who shall receive appropriate training. THWVCG should have at least one Fire Officer. In some locations with multiple organisations using the space, the Fire Officer may be external of the organisation.

2.2.2 The responsibilities of the Fire Officers are to

- be instructed on potential fire hazards and the use of firefighting equipment
- ensure that landlords arrange the testing of fire alarms and fire drills
- assist with the efficient evacuation of staff and visitors
- liaise with the Fire Brigade at the exterior of the premises at the assembly point
- ensure staff, volunteers and visitors are aware of the fire alarm and fire drill.

## 2.3 First Aiders & Accidents

2.3.1 Each permanent THWVCG location should have at least one first aider, the First Aider may be external of the organisation.

2.3.2 The Methodist Church is responsible for keeping the First Aid box stocked.

2.3.3 Accidents will be recorded by all in the accident book held in the office

2.3.4 The Board of Trustees are responsible for reporting incidents which come within the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases & Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR), to the HSE

## 2.4 Risk Assessments

2.4.1 The Chair of the Board of Trustees will ensure that a risk assessment will be carried out when needed by a competent person in accordance with the 1992 Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations and the Approved Code of Practice (ACOP). This risk assessment will be written up and be made available to staff.

## 2.5 Training

2.5.1 THWVCG will ensure that new employees and volunteers receive information on health and safety as part of their induction.

2.5.2 THWVCG will organise training for employees and volunteers on health and safety matters as appropriate, including: general health and safety training, first aid, fire safety, risk assessment.

2.5.3 THWVCG will also organise training for appropriate use of equipment, and any special training needed to ensure safe systems of work.

2.5.4 If employees and volunteers consider they have health and safety training needs they should inform the office or the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

## 3 **THWVCG Permanent Location**

3.1 THWVCG has a responsibility to provide a safe and healthy environment for staff and volunteers.

3.2 All the staff and volunteers of THWVCG are responsible for spotting hazards or potential hazards. If a hazard is seen, it should be removed or dealt with as soon as possible, or if not, report it to the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

### 3.3 Examples of Hazards

3.3.1 Things Out of Reach: Chairs or other furniture must not be used to stand on for the purpose of replacing light bulbs, reaching for things off tops of cabinets, etc.

3.3.2 Damaged Equipment: Regular checks must be carried out on furniture and equipment for damage which leaves sharp edges protruding or other hazards. Any damaged furniture must be reported for repair or condemnation straight away and must be removed from use.

3.3.3 Damage to Fabric of Building, Windows, etc: All such damage must be reported immediately to the competent person as named above and reported to the Methodist Church.

3.3.4 Misplaced Furniture, Equipment or Supplies: Any furniture, equipment or supplies left in an inappropriate place, for example obstructing a gangway, must be removed immediately, and placed in an appropriate, safe place.

## 4. **Good Housekeeping – Permanent Locations**

### 4.1 Walkways and Common Areas

Walkways and common areas must be kept clear from obstructions and materials must be stored in safe areas. Under no circumstances must goods or materials be stacked immediately in front of or obstructing fire doors, fire exits, fire alarms or fire equipment.

#### 4.2 Smoking

Smoking is not allowed at any premises used by THWVCG.

#### 4.3 Overcrowding

THWVCG will avoid unhealthy and overcrowded working conditions and will consult staff on any changes in office layout.

#### 4.4 Temperature

In office workplaces a minimum temperature of 16c must be maintained. Efforts will be made so far as is reasonably practical to ensure the workplace temperature does not rise to an uncomfortable level.

#### 4.5 Lighting

Adequate lighting must be provided. If lights are found to be out of order, the fault must be corrected as soon as reasonably possible.

#### 4.6 Noise

THWVCG will endeavour to ensure that noise in its office is kept to as low a level as is practicable.

#### 4.7 Equipment Storage and Usage

- Equipment must not be left lying around but must be suitably stored.
- No wires must be left trailing across floors
- No free-standing heaters using paraffin, calor gas or bar electric fires will be used at the premises of THWVCG.

#### 4.8 Electrical Equipment

- 4.8.1 All building maintenance such as electrical work, carpentry, painting, etc should be carried out by skilled people.
- 4.8.2 Staff should not endanger themselves and others by carrying out such work.
- 4.8.3 Portable Appliance Testing will be carried out every year on all electrical equipment used by the organisation. Broken, ineffective or damaged electrical equipment must be reported. Staff should use electrical equipment in accordance with instructions.

#### 4.9 Working at height

- Injuries are often caused by falls from ladders/step ladders. The poor selection, use and maintenance of equipment causes falls, e.g. using a ladder because it's easier than erecting a tower scaffold. The Working at Height Regulations place duties on employers, to ensure:
  - all work at height is properly planned
  - those working at height are competent or supervised
  - the risks of working on or near fragile surfaces are properly controlled
  - equipment for working at height is properly inspected and maintained

Work at height should be avoided where possible and equipment should be used to prevent or minimise the consequences of falls where working at height is the only option.

## **5. Welfare Arrangements**

### **5.1 Toilet and Washing Facilities**

THWVCG will ensure that suitable and sufficient toilets and washing facilities are provided for all staff and volunteers in accordance with the minimum requirements of Health & Safety legislation.

- The toilet will be in a separate, lockable room
- Washing facilities will include a supply of clean hot and cold water, soap and suitable means of drying.

### **5.2 Drinking Water**

THWVCG will ensure there is a supply of tap drinking water in all permanent locations.

### **5.3 Hours of Work**

The employees of THWVCG should not work excessively long hours, and should take adequate breaks for meals and rest as indicated within their statement of terms and conditions of employment.

## **6. Personal Safety**

It is in the nature of the organisation's work that staff or volunteers may, on occasions, find themselves in potentially dangerous situations whilst on THWVCG business. THWVCG have a policy in place to minimise this risk.

*Please see separate policy- Lone Working Policy*

## **7. Homeworking**

*Please see separate policy – remote working*

## **8 Visual Display Equipment**

### **8.1 General**

It is the policy of THWVCG to comply with the law as set out in the Health and safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992

Staff should report any issues with visual display equipment to the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

## **9. Nature and Organisation of Work**

- Appropriate seating must be available to all users.
- Staff will take regular breaks. Reasonable adjustments will be made to workstations to meet the needs of staff of all abilities.

## **10. WRULDS/RSI**

Work Related Upper Limb Disorders (also known as Repetitive Strain Injury) are often associated with keyboard work. It is the intention of THWVCG by following best advice, to provide VDU/keyboard equipment and furniture which help prevent the development of these musculoskeletal disorders. Staff should contribute to their own safety and welfare by:

- avoiding sitting in the same position for long periods
- adjusting equipment and furniture to appropriate and comfortable positions
- taking regular rest breaks from VDU work by doing some other work.

## **10 Fire Safety**

### **10.1 General**

10.1.1 It is not only the responsibility of Fire Officer's, but of all staff and volunteers working at THWVCG to be aware of fire hazards, and how to minimise risk.

10.1.2 Everyone working at THWVCG permanent location must know the fire drill instructions and these will be part of the induction process for all new staff and volunteers.

10.1.3 Access to escape doors, extinguishers and other firefighting equipment must not be obstructed.

10.1.4 Staff and volunteers working in other locations including client homes should be aware of fire risks and hazards and minimise these where possible.

### **10.2 Fire Drills / Equipment**

10.2.1 THWVCG's landlords (The methodist Church) at its permanent location are responsible for the maintenance of equipment and holding fire drills as appropriate.

### **10.3 Fire Evacuation Procedures at THWVCG Permanent Locations**

10.3.1 Each location has a fire evacuation procedure. This should be shared with users, visitors, staff and volunteers using the building.

### **10.4 If You Discover a Fire**

10.4.1 Raise the alarm by operating the break glass switch at the nearest fire alarm call point and call the fire brigade.

10.4.2 Evacuate the building immediately to the assembly area

10.4.3 Only tackle a fire if it is in its very early stages and you are confident you can tackle it safely.

## **11 Hazardous Substances (COSHH)**

### **11.1 General Statement**

11.1.1 Under the 1992 COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) Regulations employers have a duty to assess the risks related to hazardous substances e.g. chemicals, noxious fumes etc. In accordance with the Approved Code of Practice.

11.1.2 All members of staff and volunteers shall avoid using hazardous substances at all times if at all possible. Where substitute materials are available, they should be used (e.g., water-based markers, correction fluid, etc). If there is no way of avoiding such use, staff must use the substance in an enclosed, ventilated environment away from other workers, and use proper protective equipment which shall be made available.

## **12. Moving and Handling**

12.1 The employees and volunteers of THWVCG should avoid manual lifting where at all possible. However, employees and volunteers may occasionally be required to manually lift and handle loads. Correct manual lifting and handling reduces the effort required and prevents strain and risk of injury.

12.2 Employees should not put themselves at risk by attempting to lift heavy loads which could be taken apart or divided into smaller quantities. The assistance of others, or clients during home visits, should always be sought for moving large quantities or for lifting heavy and awkward loads. When lifting is done by a team, instructions should be given by one person only.

12.3 Any employee feeling a strain should stop immediately.

## **13. Stress Management**

13.1 THWVCG places a high value on maintaining a healthy and safe working environment for all its staff and volunteers and it recognises its duty of care extend to mental health as well as physical health at work.

13.2 Stress is what individuals experience when they feel they have difficulty coping with the pressures and demands placed upon them.

- Pressures can arise from an individual's personal life as well as from work and people vary in their capacity and ability to cope with different types of pressure.
- Some individuals will recognise that their health is affected and will seek help; others will not recognise or acknowledge that they are stressed although it may be apparent to their manager and work colleagues.
- Although in itself, stress is not an illness, there is evidence that stress can lead to mental and physical ill health.

13.3 THWVCG is committed to effective Stress Management for all staff and volunteers throughout the organisation. This includes improving the organisational environment through effective and sensitive management; enabling individuals to cope successfully with the demands and pressures of work, and providing support for staff and volunteers whose health and wellbeing are affected by stress.

13.4 THWVCG will do all it can to eradicate problems relating to stress at work. In particular it will:

- Strive to alleviate stress through effective and sensitive management systems.
- Ensure that working practices are in place in order to reduce the factors which may lead to stress in the workplace.
- Develop procedures in order to manage problems that do occur and support individuals who are stressed.

- Assist staff in managing stress in themselves and others.

### 13.5 Preventative measures at an organisational level

THWVCG will:

- Promote a culture of consultation, participation and open communication through organisation.
- Help identify tasks or structures which may create stress in supervisions and appraisals.
- Raise the awareness of managers and staff about stress and its causes.

### 13.6. Identification and Management

THWVCG will:

- Manage pressures which may affect employees by anticipating likely problems taking appropriate actions to reduce the effects of them.

### 13.7. Supportive Measures for Employees

THWVCG will:

- Give assistance and advice to employees who are stressed.
- Provide guidance for managers regarding modification of work for employees who are stressed e.g., reviewing work responsibilities; return to work arrangement after sickness absence.