

LEEDS BLACK ELDERS ASSOCIATION



HEALTH AND SAFETY

Leeds Black Elders Association attaches great importance to the health, safety and welfare of its staff, and considers it essential that Management and staff should work together positively to achieve an environment compatible with the provision of proper services in which hazards to the health and safety of staff and others are reduced to a minimum.

The complete Health and safety Policy is included in this document, and it is important that you read it carefully.

You should ensure that you are aware of, and comply with, the safety procedures and practices that apply to the office.

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HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

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1. **General**

- 1.1 Leeds Black Elders Association undertakes to comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 as amended and the Relevant regulations and codes of practice issued under this Act.
- 1.2 The Association will endeavour to provide and maintain a safe Working environment for all employees and is committed to removing hazards to its employees, where possible, as and when they arise.
- 1.3 It is the responsibility of all staff to take reasonable care, to act in a manner both safe to themselves and others and to observe the rules and regulations set out in the Association's Health and Safety policy. **For all employees responsibilities see**

Appendix 1.

- 1.4 The Management Committee will designate a Health and Safety Officer
- 1.5 A copy of this policy is available in the office, and is therefore available to every member of staff. A discussion of this document and Health and Safety Procedures with the Line Manager or Health and Safety Officer will form part of the induction. Failure to comply with the procedures may result in disciplinary action

2. **ACCIDENTS AND FIRST AID**

- 2.1 The office should have at one member of staff who have completed a recognised First Aid course and whose certificate is still valid. The name of the member of staff will be posted on the notice board.
- 2.2 The office will have a First Aid box and the named staff member is responsible for ensuring that the First Aid box is fully stocked at all times. The location of the First Aid box should be displayed in the office.

- 2.3 An accident/incident form must be completed for each accident, and forwarded to the Manager/Management Committee. It should also be reported to the Health and Safety officer stating when, where and how it happened.

Staffs are advised to seek treatment for every injury no matter how small, as any injury that is left untreated may develop into something more serious.

In addition, any potential hazard which may lead to an accident should be reported to the Health and Safety Officer so that it can be dealt with, and entered onto an Accident/Incident form.

3. **FIRES AND DRILLS.**

- 3.1 Fire exits should be kept clear and free from obstruction at all time. Notices covering fire exits or procedures in case of fire should not be removed. Staff should make themselves familiar with the nearest fire exit to their office and with the location, operation and types of fire fighting equipment

NB: Not all fire extinguishers are suitable for an electric fire and any extinguisher which is coloured red should **NEVER** be used on an electric fire.

- 3.2 Fire drills will be carried out at least every 6 months to ensure that Staffs are familiar with procedures and a record kept of each fire drill. Health and Safety officer are responsible for organising fire drills.

- 3.3 The fire certificate should be held in the office.

See Appendix 3 for Fire Drill

4. **IDENTITY CARDS**

- 4.1 If your job requires you to visit other people's homes, other organisations on behalf of the Association or come in contact with other members of the public, you must obtain an Association identity card.
- 4.2. This card must be carried with you at all times during your working hours and must be shown to clients when requested.

5. **PERSONAL SAFETY**

- 5.1 The Association is concerned for the personal safety of all its employees. Staffs who are particularly vulnerable are Project Worker, Neighbourhood Worker, Handy Person, Painting and Decorating volunteers, Befriend, Advocacy and Gardener.

- 5.2 In order to reduce the element of risk, the Association is committed to the development of policies and procedures for identifying and eliminating risk and to providing training for all staff dealing directly with the public, in visiting and counselling skills and in assessing the risk of violence.
- 5.3 If staff are concern in any way about their personal safety, they should discuss the matter with their Line Manager immediately.
- 5.4 The Association will review its guidelines for staff safety constantly. If staff feel that these guidelines are not adequate they should raise the matter with their Line Manager.

For guidelines see Appendix 4.

6. **OFFICE SECURITY**

The importance of office security cannot be overstated. The office is particularly vulnerable since it open to the public. Staff will be given specific instructions on office security by their Line Manager. **For general guidelines, see Appendix 5.**

7. **THE USE OF VDU EQUIPMENT**

- 7.1 Display screen users may be at risk of problems associated with continuous use of display screens. These mainly lead to musculoskeletal problems (e.g. tynosynnavitis), visual fatigue and stress. This being the case, LBEA aims to minimise that risk as far as is reasonably possible whilst recognising that the user also has a responsibility to adhere to advice given.
- 7.2 LBEA will endeavour to position and maintain workstations so as to reduce the risk of Health and Safety problems to the user.
- 7.3 Any member of staff using VDU equipment (i.e. word processor, PC etc) will have periodic breaks or changes in activity, so as to reduce any risk to health. It is recommended that VDU users should be on a machine no longer than one hour before taking at least 5 minutes away from the screen.
- 7.4 All permanent members of staff and temporary staff employed by LBEA for three months or more who are VDU users are encouraged to have regular eye tests.
- 7.5 Guidance will be given on the safe use of VDU equipment to all potential users during the induction process. Appropriate equipment will be supplied where necessary e.g. anti-flare screens. The Line Manager is responsible for ensuring that this instruction and training is carried out.

8. **SMOKING**

Staff who smoke should be aware of the potential health danger to others and should take all possible and practicable steps to ensure that non-smoking members of staff have their interests and rights protected.

9. **TRAINING**

LBEA will provide adequate procedures and guidance during the induction process to reduce the possibility of hazards occurring and to provide members of staff with the knowledge and skills to perform their job efficiently and in a safe manner.

Appendix 1

Employees Responsibilities

Health & Safety is a two way process and under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, certain duties are laid down for all employees. Primarily these are to co-operate with the Association to enable it to carry out its own responsibilities.

In particular, staffs have a duty to:

Work safely, and without endangering the Health & Safety of themselves, their colleagues, and general public or other person who has access to the Association's premises at any time.

Adhere to safety procedures as laid down by the Association, and to confirm to all instructions given appertaining to Health & Safety.

Report all accidents, near-miss occurrences and hazardous situations to the Line Manager for prompt attention.

Wear safety and protective clothing, where appropriate, and use protective equipment and safety devices where these are provided for work.

Meet with other Statutory obligations, including that laid down in section 8 of the Act, "no person shall intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare".

General points to consider are;

- floors, stairs, passages and fire exits must be kept clear of obstruction at all times
- wires to telephone, electrical equipment etc must not trail or be placed so that they cause a hazard to others and as a preventive method,
- electrical appliances should be disconnected at the end of the day to avoid risk of fire.
- Office layout must be such that staff and others can use it safely e.g. filing cabinets must not open into passages or doorways.

It is the responsibility of Line Manager to ensure Health & Safety regulations are complied with.

Appendix 2

1. Accidents

- i) When an accident does occur, a trained First Aider should be called and if necessary, an ambulance. It is not advisable to move an injured person, unless in danger of further injury, in case of broken bones. Where there is any doubt as to the severity of the injury, qualified medical help should be sought immediately.
- ii) Accidents involving external bleeding; following procedures above and wherever possible put on a pair of protective latex gloves. Further information in dealing with accidents can be found with the First Aid Box.
- iii) Splashes of blood or other bodily fluids on the skin should be washed off immediately with ordinary soap and water.
- iv) After accidents resulting in bleeding, surfaces should be cleaned as quickly as possible in accordance with section 2(iii) below.

2. Infection Control

It is important to remember that any individual may be affected by a virus without displaying symptoms of this. It is essential not to rely on measures that are only brought into effect when a case of infection is identified, but to assume its presence at all times. The following points will help to restrict the spread of infection:

- i) Anyone with cuts on hands or arms should ensure that the cuts are covered with an elastoplast dressing and, in these circumstances, should wear latex gloves for any tasks that require the use of water.
- ii) If dealing with items contaminated by blood, vomit, urine, excrement, semen or sputum, staff must wear disposable latex gloves. Dispose of the contaminated items using the toilet if appropriate, or by double-bagging the items using refuse sacks, firmly securing the top, either by tying the top of the bag into a knot or by using elastic bands.
- iii) Spillage's of blood, vomit, faeces or urine should be cleaned up by sprinkling Ajax or equivalent on the spillage and leaving until the powder has absorbed much of the liquid (approximately 15 mins). Clear up using paper towels and disposable latex gloves. Wash the affected area with a solution of bleach diluted with water (1 part bleach to 10 parts water). Dispose of the articles used as described in Section (3ii) above).
- iv) Items where the staining is uncertain should be disposed of as described in Section (3ii) above.

- v) Care should be taken not to allow solutions that may be contaminated to come into contact with the skin, but if they do, the affected area should be washed immediately with soapy water.

3. **Possible Infections**

i) **Hepatitis**

Hepatitis is an infectious disease, which causes liver damage. Hepatitis A can be caught by eating and drinking infected food and water. Whilst it is unpleasant, it is rarely dangerous and does not persist.

Hepatitis B is spread in much the same way as the HIV virus, by exchanges of body fluids. Unlike AIDS, Hepatitis B is highly infectious. Most people recover fully from Hepatitis B but it is possible to remain a carrier of the disease after recovering from its symptoms.

ii) **TB**

Tuberculosis is caused by a germ, which usually affects the lungs, but may also affect the bones and joints. It is caught by breathing in the germ or by swallowing contaminated food. Outside the body, the germ does not survive for very long, and there is little or no risk of infection provided normal preventative measures are taken.

iii) **AIDS**

Aids (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) is a complete or partial breakdown of the body's natural ability to fight off infection. This damage is caused by a virus known as HIV (Human Immune Deficiency Virus), and leaves the person prone to a whole series of infections which their immune system would normally be capable of fighting off. Not all people who are HIV positive go on to develop the full syndrome.

Whilst Aids is a serious condition, all the evidence indicates that it can be contracted only in very specific ways, by some kinds of sexual contact involving the exchange of bodily fluids or by taking infected blood into your bloodstream.

Like the common cold it is a virus, but unlike most viruses, it is very weak. It does not live outside the body for more than a few minutes, and is easily killed by the use of any household bleach or cleaner.

4. **Dealing With Potential Infection**

If a member of staff has reason to believe that they may have contracted an infection through the course of their work, they should discuss the situation with their Line Manager who may authorise tests and treatment at the expense of the Association.

Appendix 3

Fire Drill - Office

If you discover a fire;

1. Raise the alarm immediately. Staff should make themselves aware of all fire points in the building.
2. On hearing the alarm;

Staff should dial 999 and ask for the Fire Brigade and should take out the sheet kept in office.

Everyone else should leave the building immediately by the nearest exit, whilst ensuring any visitor also leaves the building.
3. Go immediately to the designated assembly area and stay there. The Staff on duty will then check that everyone is present and/or accounted for.
4. For your own safety, do not delay in leaving the building.

DO NOT STOP TO COLLECT YOUR BELONGINGS. DO NOT RE-ENTER THE BUILDING UNTIL YOU HAVE BEEN ADVISED TO DO SO.

Personal Safety Guidelines for Staff Making Visits

1. When making home visits to clients, you should sign out of the office, stating clearly the name and address of the person(s) you are visiting and when you will be expected back in the office.

Guidelines on Office Security.

1. Always make sure that the door into the building is kept locked.
2. Take care of your office key(s) – if you do lose a key, report it immediately to your Line Manager.
3. Ensure that your office is safe and secure when you leave it at night (e.g., make sure windows are shut, locks secured where necessary, and external doors or fire escapes are locked and that all lights, heaters etc., are switched off and alarms set). You will be informed of security arrangements and procedures for the building where you are working as soon as you start employment with the Association.
4. If you see a stranger wandering around the office, do not assume that he or she has a right to be there, ask who they are, who they wish to see or whether you can help.
5. Take great care of your personal belongings; particularly handbags, purses etc. The Association cannot accept responsibility for these items, so make sure you do not leave them lying around.
6. Ask for the identity cards of people claiming to be Gas/Electricity/Water Officials, etc. They all carry such cards and do not object to producing them for inspection.
7. No member of staff will be expected to work on their own in an office building. On leaving the building after office opening hours members of staff should check that they are not leaving a colleague alone in the building without warning them that this is the case.