

# HEALTH & SAFETY

# POLICY

FOR OFFICE-BASED ROLES

A FU<sup>+</sup>UREPLUS GUIDE

# WHAT IS A HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY?

A Health & Safety policy should set out your organisation's general approach and commitment to health and safety, together with any arrangements you have put in place for managing health and safety in your business.

It should also outline **who does what, when, and how.**

If you are **based in the UK** and have **five or more employees**, you must write your policy down. If you have fewer than five employees you do not have to write anything down, but it is still useful to do so.

You must **share the policy** and any changes you make to it with your employees, and it should be **reviewed at least once a year.**

# DEFINITIONS



## What is a 'Hazard'?

A hazard is an object or action that could cause harm to people, such as faulty wiring, uneven flooring, harmful chemicals, or the requirement to work at height.

## What is a 'Risk'?

A risk is the chance, whether small or large, that a hazard may cause harm.

Your policy should include information on how you plan to eliminate or reduce the risks and hazards in your workplace.

## Risk Assessment

Depending on the industry your business operates in and the activities it carries out, risks to your workforce may range from immediate dangers to longer-term health risks.

All of your operational sites will need to carry out a Health and Safety Risk Assessment in order to identify any hazards and establish the risk/s to employees - even in office-based settings.

We can offer a free risk assessment template if needed - please ask for more information: [team@future-plus.co.uk](mailto:team@future-plus.co.uk)

# WHAT SHOULD THE POLICY COVER?

## + STATEMENT OF INTENT

Set out your commitment to managing health and safety effectively within the workplace and business operations.

Describe what you want to achieve and any targets your business has for Health & Safety.

The most senior member of your company should sign and review this regularly.

## + RESPONSIBILITIES FOR HEALTH & SAFETY

Provide details of who within your business is responsible for specific actions relating to health and safety including:

- Details of the Health and Safety Officer and any other other Health and Safety Officials, including a Fire Safety Officer
- Who will audit and review procedures for your business

## + POLICIES FOR VISITORS & CONTRACTORS

Provide information on how the health and safety of visitors and contractors is ensured while on your business premises.

# WHAT SHOULD THE POLICY COVER?

## + STATEMENT OF TEAM EXPECTATIONS

Include the business's expectations of team members in terms of upholding and enforcing health and safety procedures. This may include, but not be limited to, commitments to ensuring:

- Reasonable effort is taken to ensure employees' actions follow health and safety procedures.
- Care is taken to operate in a manner that does not put other people or company equipment at risk.
- That employees inform management of any breaches in Health and Safety procedures, or of any situations that could reasonably be considered to endanger others.

## + ARRANGEMENTS FOR HEALTH & SAFETY

Give details of the practical arrangements you have in place, showing how you will achieve your health and safety policy aims. This could include, for example, doing a risk assessment, training employees, and using safety signs or equipment.

This section should also include information on your risk assessment and training processes, detailing how regularly they are reviewed.

# PROCEDURES



## Legal requirements

Depending on the region/s in which your business operates, the requirements for health and safety laws will vary.

When creating your policies and procedures it is essential to ensure that they comply with the legal requirements of the territory in which you are operating.

We would encourage businesses to go beyond the legal minimum requirements, and create policies and procedures that meet the highest industry standards.

## Health & Safety Risk Assessment

You will need to carry out a risk assessment in conjunction with your policy, and ensure it is renewed annually, or whenever working practices change.

Each operational site should have a site-specific risk assessment, and if your business operations require the use of high risk equipment or practices, you may wish to complete an individual risk assessment for these.

Risk assessments should be regularly reviewed to identify actions that can be taken to mitigate risks. Where a risk cannot be mitigated, procedures for managing the risk should be established.

# PROCEDURES



## **Training and Consultation**

Information and regular training on health & safety should be provided to all staff, including training on health and safety issues such as posture when seated for long periods, or manual handling / lifting of heavy objects.

Consultation with team members on issues surrounding health and safety is also important in order to ensure risks are effectively managed, and that employees are engaged in matters surrounding their health and safety.

## **Incident Reporting and Investigation**

Your procedures should require all workplace incidents or near misses to be reported and recorded so that incidents can be properly investigated.

Where necessary, adjustments should be made to health and safety procedures to prevent future incidents.

A 'no blame' culture for reporting incidents should be adopted and a whistleblowing policy put in place.

# PROCEDURES



## Emergency Procedures

Your business should have emergency procedures that cover:

- Fire
- Emergency evacuation
- Bomb threats
- Active shooter procedures

Staff should receive regular training in responding to, managing or escaping in these situations.

Staff should not be required to put themselves in a situation in which they feel unsafe, or lack appropriate training to effectively manage the situation (e.g. fighting a fire).

## First Aid & Equipment

Emergency first aid treatment can help save lives, and prevent minor injuries becoming serious.

You should ensure you have first-aid trained staff and first aid equipment that suitably reflects any risks posed to workers.

Your procedures should ensure that first-aid equipment is regularly checked and maintained, as well as the regular training of first aid personnel.

You should also ensure you provide adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) where required as well as suitable IT and computing equipment such as computer stands.



# PROCEDURES



## **Accessibility provisions**

You should consider employee-specific needs or working requirements in your policy, such as individuals with physical disabilities or pregnant employees, and provide information on both working practices and emergency procedures.

## **Mental Health**

Long working hours, high stress levels and physical demands of a job are all factors that can contribute to anxiety and depression in workers. Processes to monitor employee wellbeing can help identify areas that could be negatively impacting employees' mental health.

## **Supplier Health & Safety practices**

Monitoring health and safety practices within your supply chain ensures that products or services that you buy or sell are produced in conditions that do not negatively impact employee health or pose a significant risk to employees safety.

Supplier audits can help your business to understand the health and safety provisions that your suppliers have in place. At a minimum, suppliers health and safety standards should meet the regulations of the country within which they operate, however we would encourage you to prioritise suppliers whose policies and procedures meet the highest industry standards.

# OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER



Make sure every member of staff has access to and receives **regular training** on your Health and Safety Policies and practices.



Include a link to your **Whistleblowing Policy** so employees are clear on how to make a complaint or raise a concern.



Every industry presents different hazards. Make sure your policies and procedures take into account your **industry specific risks** on top of those outlined in this guide.

# NEED MORE HELP?

We can supply a structured template for a health and safety policy and risk assessment. We also offer consultancy services if you would like more comprehensive support.

Please let us know if you would like more information – we would be happy to provide a quote for either service:

[team@future-plus.co.uk](mailto:team@future-plus.co.uk)

