

Central England Area Quaker Meeting

Health & Safety at Work Policy 2014

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Introduction

The Area Meeting is required by law (Health and Safety at Work Act 1974) to provide a written statement of its general policy with respect to the health and safety at work of our employees*, voluntary workers* and volunteers*, and the organisation and arrangements in force to carry out the policy.

This is the policy document. It is divided into three parts.

- Section 1 is the general statement of policy.
- Section 2 specifies those persons with specific areas of responsibility.
- Section 3 gives arrangements and procedures, which apply to the whole Area Meeting, to ensure that we comply with the policy. Arrangements and procedures, which apply to a specific meeting house, are included in the relevant Meeting House Handbook.

The policy will need to be formally adopted both by Area Meeting, and by each local meeting and operating committee with staff.

Each local meeting and branch needs to incorporate into this policy provisions to cover any specific needs that apply to their circumstances. This may be by way of addendum or appendix.

Each local meeting and branch must adapt this policy for their own management structures and posts.

We ask the clerk of each body to confirm to the clerk of Employment Committee by minute that this has been done.

Section 1 General Statement of Policy

Our policy is to

- provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all our employees, voluntary workers and volunteers, which comply with the relevant statutory requirements and officially approved codes of practice;
- consult with our employees, voluntary workers and volunteers on matters affecting their health and safety;
- ensure safe handling and use of substances;
- provide information, instruction and supervision to enable all employees, voluntary workers and volunteers to contribute positively to their own and others' health and safety at work;
- ensure all employees, voluntary workers and volunteers are competent to do their tasks, and give them adequate training; prevent accidents and cases of work ill health.

We also accept appropriate responsibility for the health and safety of other people who are legitimately on our premises. This includes visitors and users*.

The allocation of duties for safety matters and the particular arrangements applying to all our Meeting Houses or other premises, which we will make to implement the policy, are set out below.

This policy will be brought to the attention of all new staff, voluntary workers and volunteers. A copy of the policy will be kept at each of our Meeting Houses and other premises.

The Lone Worker Policy (Appendix 3) forms an integral part of this policy. The policy will be kept up to date as the Area Meeting and its activities change. To ensure this, the policy and the way in which it has operated will be reviewed regularly.

Section 2 Responsibilities and Organisation

Overall and final responsibility for health and safety within the Area Meeting rests with the Trustees, exercised through their Employment Committee,

Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice is delegated as follows

- For matters specific to each Meeting House, to its warden*, caretaker or equivalent post (from henceforward, referred to as “warden”), or, where there is no warden, to the Meeting’s Premises Committee*.
- For matters related to an employee who is based on other premises, to the employee’s line manager.
- For Bull Street Meeting House and Priory Rooms, to the directors of Priory Rooms (Birmingham) Limited.

All employees, voluntary workers and volunteers are responsible for:

- A. Taking reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and of other persons, who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
- B. Co-operating with management to achieve a healthy and safe working environment.
- C. Telling their supervisor or the Clerk* of Premises Committee of any health and safety problem that they are not able to put right.

Section 3 - Arrangements and Procedures common to all Meeting Houses

3.1 Accident / Injury

The Area Meeting will comply with the Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981 as follows:-

At each Meeting House:

- We provide a suitably stocked and properly identified First Aid box. The warden or Clerk of Premises Committee is responsible for maintaining the contents, and ensuring that all employees, voluntary workers, volunteers and users know where the box is.
- The most senior staff member on duty is appointed to take charge of any situation in which an injury arises. Where there is no staff, an appropriate Friend will take charge.
- We have an accident book in which all accidents and cases of work-related ill health are to be recorded.

- We will ensure that all employees, voluntary workers, volunteers and users know where the book is. The warden is responsible for reporting accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences. At each Meeting House other than Bull Street, the warden will report such incidents to the clerk of the appropriate premises committee. At Meeting Houses where there is no warden, all volunteers will take responsibility for reporting accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences to the Clerk of Premises Committee. This person will report each incident at any of our meeting houses by one of the following means:

(To be completed locally)

First-aid needs are assessed to decide whether any specific provision should be made, and reviewed after any operating changes and at least every five years.

3.2 Risk Assessment

Separate risk assessments will be carried out at each Meeting House. The clerk of each Premises Committee will decide where risk assessments are required, carry them out and ensure the relevant staff, voluntary workers and volunteers read, agree them and sign them.

At each Meeting House other than Bull Street/Priory Rooms:

- The warden will undertake risk assessments in collaboration with a member of the Premises Committee.
- The findings of the risk assessments will be reported to the clerk of the Premises Committee.
- The clerk of each Premises Committee will report the findings of risk assessments to the clerk of the Employment Committee.
- If action is required at Area Meeting level to remove/control risks, the clerk of the Property Committee, will be responsible for ensuring the action is implemented and checking that it has removed/reduced the risks. Where action is needed to remove/control risks is local to a specific Meeting House, the warden of that Meeting House, in conjunction with the clerk of the Premises Committee, is responsible for ensuring the action is completed and checking that it has removed/reduced the risks.
- Assessments will be reviewed every five years or when the work activity changes, whichever is sooner.

At Meeting Houses without a warden, the Clerk to Premises Committee will be responsible for risk assessments. At other premises, the manager will take this responsibility.

3.3 Consultation with employees

Consultation with employees on health and safety issues is through the clerk of Employment Committee and property link trustees.

3.4 Safe Plant and Equipment

The warden of each Meeting House will be responsible for

- identifying all equipment/plant needing maintenance

- ensuring effective maintenance procedures are drawn up ensuring that all identified maintenance is implemented
- checking that new plant and equipment meets health and safety standards before it is purchased.

At Meeting Houses without a warden, the Clerk of Premises Committee will be responsible for safe plant and equipment. At other premises, the manager will take this responsibility.

Any problems found with plant/equipment should be reported to the warden of the relevant Meeting House and to the clerk of Premises Committee or to the manager at other premises.

3.5 Safe handling and use of substances

It is the preferred policy to avoid the use of substances which fall within the Control Of Substances Hazardous to Health regulations (COSHH). Where this is not possible, the warden of each Meeting House will be responsible for -

- identifying all substances which need a COSHH assessment
- undertaking COSHH assessments
- ensuring that all actions identified in the assessments are implemented
- ensuring that all relevant employees are informed about the COSHH assessments
- checking that new substances can be used safely before they are purchased.

Assessments will be reviewed every five years or when the work activity changes, whichever is sooner.

Where there is no warden, these responsibilities will fall to the Clerk of Premises Committee. At other premises, the manager will take this responsibility.

3.6 Visual Display Units

The Area Meeting will comply with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 by doing the following:

A. Assess workstations and reduce risks to users.

New assessments are needed if there are new workstations, changes to a workstation, or a new user of a workstation.

B. Ensure workstations meet minimum requirements.

C. Arrange eye tests on request, and provide spectacles if special ones are needed.

We shall make arrangements if and when an employee requests a test.

D. Provide health and safety training and information.

The Health and Safety Executive's leaflet **Working with VDUs** is recommended for this purpose.

These actions will be carried out at Meeting Houses by a member of the Premises Committee with relevant expertise. In the absence of such, a Friend will be co-opted. At other premises, the manager will take this responsibility.

We believe that the work of staff naturally provides adequate breaks from display screen use. Should any employee find they need more breaks than they are able to arrange for themselves, they should contact their line manager.

3.7 Information, instruction and supervision

The warden or Premises Committee of each Meeting House and the manager at other premises is responsible for:-

- Displaying the Health and Safety Law poster.
- Arranging and undertaking or monitoring the supervision of any young workers/trainees employed at the Meeting House.
- Displaying the certificate of employers liability insurance

Health and safety advice is available from the pooled resources of the Trustees' Property and Employment Committees and through Quaker Life.

The employee's line manager is responsible for ensuring that any of our employees working at a location under the control of another employer is given relevant health and safety information.

3.8 Competency for tasks and training

Induction and job- or role-specific training will be provided for all employees, voluntary workers and appropriate volunteers, as follows:-

- By Premises Committee for the warden of a Meeting House.
- By the warden of each Meeting House for others employed or volunteering there.
- By their line manager for any other employee.

Additional special training is required for working on the roof of a Meeting House, so this activity should generally be carried out by specialist contractors.

Training records are kept at Area Meeting Office.

Training will be identified, arranged and monitored by the Trustees.

3.9 Monitoring

The warden of each Meeting House is responsible for investigating accidents at the Meeting House. The Clerk of Premises Committee will investigate work-related causes of sickness absences and will act on investigation findings to prevent a recurrence.

Where there is no warden, responsibility falls to the Clerk of Premises Committee. At other premises, the manager will take this responsibility.

Each Premises Committee will organise an annual inspection of the premises to monitor health and safety issues.

3.10 Emergency procedures - fire and evacuation

The warden or Clerk of Premises Committee of each Meeting House is responsible for ensuring the fire risk assessment is undertaken and implemented.

At other premises, the manager will take this responsibility.

Section 4 General

4.1 Training and induction

Any new employee, voluntary worker or appropriate volunteer should be given appropriate health and safety and fire training

Anyone starting a job or role, which includes extensive use of a computer, should read the Health and Safety Executive's leaflet Working with VDUs (see also 3.6 above),

Anyone employed as a cleaner must be trained. The training will include safe use of cleaning materials and disposal of rubbish.

Anyone in a post requiring lifting and handling people or heavy objects must undertake manual handling awareness training.

4.2 Records

Accidents & work-related ill health:-

The current accident book is kept **to be completed locally**

Old accident books are filed **to be completed locally**

4.3 Advice

The General Secretary of Quaker Life acts as a link for employers and employees and is able to offer guidance and advice on resources. The following links may be helpful

<http://www.quaker.org.uk/wardenship-resources>

<http://www.quaker.org.uk/employers>

Appendix 1: Definitions

Attenders: regular attenders at Meeting for Worship, who are not in membership.

Clerk: Premises Committees are usually 'led' by a Clerk, but some may have a convenor.

Employee: an employee is here defined as someone paid a wage or salary for work that they undertake. It excludes people who undertake work on a self-employed basis or contractors taken on to undertake a specific task (e.g. builders, plumbers, etc.).

Members: members of the Religious Society of Friends.

Premises Committee: all local Meetings with Meeting Houses are required to have a Premises Committee which takes responsibility for the building and its environs. Area Meeting Property Committee has model Terms of Reference for Premises Committees.

Users: many Meeting Houses are used by other organisations and it is important that Premises Committees ensure that each group has a responsible person, who has signed an agreement for using the premises. Area Meeting Property Committee has a model agreement.

Voluntary Worker: Voluntary workers are not paid a wage, because of an exemption under the National Minimum Wage 1998 (section 44). The exemption is designed to allow people who genuinely wish to work for a charity or voluntary organisation without profit to do so without fear of qualifying for the national minimum wage.

Voluntary workers are entitled to core employment rights including the right to:

- A minimum period of holiday (annual leave).
- Minimum length of rest breaks.
- Not work more than 48 hours on average per week or to opt out of this right if they choose.
- Protection against unlawful discrimination.
- Protection for 'whistleblowing' (reporting wrongdoing in the workplace)

The contract you have agreed with your voluntary worker may specify additional rights, in which case these will also apply to your particular arrangement.

Please note that the law does not allow for any middle ground between a 'voluntary worker' who does not receive a wage and an employee who must receive a wage at minimum wage levels or above. If you pay any wage, then it must be at least at Minimum Wage levels.

Volunteer: a volunteer undertakes work on a voluntary basis because they want to – there is no contract obliging them to do so. He or she does not have a contract of employment and is not paid for the work they want to do.

For the purposes of this policy, "volunteer" includes people appointed in line with CEAQM's Volunteer Policy (draft available) as well as Members and Attenders.

Some wardens (see below) will be volunteers.

Most volunteers undertaking tasks at a Meeting House will be Members or Attenders of the Meeting. Some will be given specific responsibilities, for example, as members of Premises Committee or Children's Committee, but others may take on responsibilities on an ad hoc basis. Premises Committees need to be vigilant about informal volunteering where it may involve repairs or maintenance, as they must ensure that tasks are undertaken safely, both in relation to the volunteer's safety and in terms of maintaining a

safe environment for others. The diffuse nature of responsibility in a Local Meeting means that in practice Premises Committee will need to ensure that all Members and Attenders are aware of health and safety, and in particular know where the first aid kit is and what the fire or emergency evacuation procedure is.

Warden: some wardens will be employees, others will be volunteers or voluntary workers (see above). In this document, the term “warden”, has been used to identify all those with designated responsibility for premises. A variety of job titles are in use, including caretaker and meeting house manager.

Appendix 2: Local arrangement requirements

Under the terms of the policy, local meetings and branches are responsible for establishing the necessary detailed provisions for health and safety at their particular premises. In order to do this they should ensure that the following matters are included, and an annual record of review written, signed by all concerned and filed:-

- Fire instructions, including activating alarms, evacuation and assembly details
- Fire fighting equipment information and maintenance requirements
- Training and making the information known to users of the premises
- What to do in the event of gas leaks or plumbing failures
- First aid provision
- Disorderly incident procedures
- Overnight accommodation rules where applicable
- Safety of children
- Safety of staff, including
 - Safe handling of furniture and equipment, and correct lifting procedures
 - Opening and closing the buildings, and dealing with users and callers
 - Ensuring that Working at Height Regulation requirements are met, in particular working on ladders, in lofts and on roofs
- Control of cash and ensuring safe banking procedures are followed.
- Regular checks as required on emergency lighting, portable electric appliances, and fire alarms, fire extinguishers, first aid boxes, gas appliances, and fixed electrical appliances
- Risk assessments in line with Property Committee annual procedures.

Appendix 3: Lone Workers Policy

In this appendix “staff” refers to employees, voluntary workers and volunteers*.

1. POLICY STATEMENT

1.1 Central England Area Quaker Meeting (CEAQM) takes very seriously the health, safety and welfare of all its staff. It recognises that some staff* are required to work by themselves for significant periods of time without close or direct supervision in its Meeting Houses. The purpose of this policy is to enable CEAQM to meet its obligation to protect these staff so far as is reasonably practicable from the risks of lone working.

2. SCOPE

2.1 This policy applies to all staff including temporary staff. It forms an integral part of CEAQM's Health and Safety Policy. The policy applies to all situations involving lone working arising in connection with the duties and activities of our staff.

3. DEFINITION OF A LONE WORKER

3.1 CEAQM defines lone workers as:

‘Staff whose working activities involve situations where they are without any kind of close or direct supervision. Employees whose activities involve a large percentage of their working time operating in situations without the benefit of interaction with other workers. Lone work is not the chance occurrence of finding oneself on one's own, for example, when somebody arrives first in the office or leaves last, or where an individual has to go unaccompanied to another part of the workplace. Lone work is specifically intended to be unaccompanied work, or work without immediate access to another person for assistance.’

4. POLICY AIMS

4:1 This policy aims to:

- increase staff awareness of safety issues relating to one working;
- make sure that the risk of working alone is assessed in a systematic and ongoing way, and that safe systems and methods of work are put in place to reduce the risk so far as is reasonably practicable;
- make sure that appropriate training is available to staff in all areas, that equips them to recognise risk and provides practical advice on safety when working alone;
- make sure that appropriate support is available to staff who have to work alone;
- encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working; and
- reduce the number of incidents and injuries to staff related to lone working.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Lone working environments present a unique health and safety problem. Although there is no specific legal guidance on working alone, under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992, we must organise and control the health and safety of lone workers.

5.2 Trustees are responsible for:

- making sure that there are arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing risk associated with lone working;
- providing resources for putting the policy into practice; and
- making sure that there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that the Area Meeting Management Committee regularly reviews the effectiveness of the policy
- making sure that all staff are aware of the policy;
- making sure that risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly;
- putting procedures and safe systems of work into practice which are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with working alone;
- making sure that staff groups and individuals identified as being at risk are given appropriate information, instruction and training, including training at induction, updates and refresher training as necessary;
- making sure that appropriate support is given to staff involved in any incident; and
- managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through an effective system of reporting, investigating and recording incidents.

5.2 All staff are responsible for:

- taking reasonable care of themselves and other people who may be affected by their actions
- cooperating by following rules and procedures designed for safe working;
- reporting all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others and asking for guidance as appropriate;
- taking part in training designed to meet the requirements of the policy; and
- reporting any dangers they identify or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone.

6. ASSESSING THE RISK

6.1. Lone workers should not face any more risks than other staff within the organisation. Setting up safe working arrangements for lone workers is no different to organising the safety of other staff, so we must all follow the general principles of risk assessment. If a risk assessment shows that it is not possible for the work to be done safely by a lone worker, other arrangements must be put in place. Risk assessment should take account of both normal work and foreseeable emergencies such as fire, illness and accidents. The risk assessment process is summarised below, separated into five distinct stages and action points to support effective assessment of the risks involved in lone working.

	Process	Action point
1	Identifying lone workers	Establish and identify lone workers for each work area.
2	Identifying associated hazards	Isolate the range of dangers associated with whole work areas of work and/or work processes. Review a generic risk assessment to make sure you have included these issues.
3	Assessing the degree of risk for generic or individual situations	Review the generic risk assessments and complete individual or local risk assessments if necessary. Then prioritise the level of associated risk.

4	Putting control measures in place, and developing safe systems of work	Assess how effective the existing control measures are and update them if appropriate. Develop local procedures or action plans if necessary.
5	Evaluating and review	Evaluate and record how effective the control measures are. Review when the assessments or controls are no longer required.

6.2 Risk assessments must be carried out in all areas of work where working alone poses an actual or potential risk to staff. The risk assessment will involve identifying all potential dangers and the risks associated with specific work tasks or activities. It should identify who will be affected and how, and the control measures which are needed to get rid of or reduce the risk to the lowest level reasonably possible. Risk assessment should be carried out by competent people and should be recorded and shared with relevant others. Factors to consider when carrying out the risk assessment include the following:

- Does the workplace present a special risk to the lone worker?
- Can the risks of the job be adequately controlled by one person?
- Is the person medically fit and suitable to work alone?
- What training is needed to make sure the staff member is competent in safety matters?
- Have staff received the training which is necessary to allow them to work alone?
- How will the person be supervised?
- Is there a risk of violence?
- Are people of a particular gender especially at risk if they work alone?
- Are new or inexperienced staff especially at risk if they work alone?
- Are younger workers especially at risk if they work alone?
- What happens if a person becomes ill, has an accident, or if there is an emergency?
- Are there systems in place for contacting and tracing those who work alone?

6.3 Details of the risk assessment should be recorded and should include:

- the extent and nature of the risks;
- factors that contribute to the risk including job content and specific tasks and activities; and
- the safe systems of work to be followed to eliminate or reduce the risk.
- Information from the risk assessment should be passed to staff. Where specific tasks have been found to be inappropriate for lone workers (e.g. working on ladders or roofs) this should be recorded in writing and signed by the employee in acknowledgement. Risk assessments should be reviewed and updated each year (or sooner should circumstances change).

7. MANAGING RISK

7.1 The risk which lone workers face should be reduced to the lowest level that is reasonably practicable. Issues to consider in developing safe systems of work include:

- joint working with others for high-risk activities;
- improvements to security arrangements in buildings;
- security lighting in parking areas;
- using checking-in and monitoring systems; and
- using personal protective equipment or mobile phones and personal alarms.

Note: CEAQM has a recommended Lone Worker Alarm system; details are available from the Clerk to the Trustees' Employment Committee.

7.2 Arrangements for managing risk should include:

- guidance for lone workers on assessing risk;
- details of when to stop and get advice; and
- the procedures to be followed in the event of an incident or emergency. All staff must be familiar with these procedures.

8. STAFF TRAINING

8.1 CEAQM will provide training where required to allow lone working. The training will be based on the needs identified through local risk assessment.

9. REPORTING & RECORDING

9.1 Staff should report all incidents (including near misses) to their line manager at the earliest opportunity. These should be reported on an incident form and the line manager should investigate all reports. In order to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy and incident reports should be reviewed regularly.

10. MONITORING & REVIEWING

10.1 Trustees will monitor and review this policy to make sure that it is achieving the aims of the policy. The review processes will include:

- collecting and monitoring all reported incidents;
- every year, reviewing this area of the AM Risk Management Policy;
- and every year, reviewing progress in reducing risk and incidents and, if necessary, making
- recommendations for improvement for the forthcoming year.

Appendix 4: Lone Worker Risk Assessment (including volunteers)

Description of task involving lone working:-	People exposed to the risk	
	High, Medium, Low or Nil Risk	
Do staff work alone?		
Do staff work outside normal working hours?		
Do staff meet with clients in isolated places?		
Is there sufficient security provision?		
Is there good access to the premises?		
Is there first aid available if staff need it?		
Do staff activities involve working in confined spaces?		
Do the activities involve handling dangerous substances?		
Any other risks? (give details)		
Existing control measures – tick if in place		
Do you provide joint working where dangerous substances or confined working are involved?		
Is CCTV available?		
Do you use entrance security systems such as swipe cards or digilocks?		
Is there security lighting in place?		
Have you made panic buttons (linked to monitoring) available?		
Do you use reporting/checking in systems?		
Do you carry out regular supervision or colleague checks?		
Do you use two way radios or other communication systems?		
Do staff have information and training on basic personal safety?		
Are staff trained in strategies for preventing and managing violence?		
Do staff have access to forms to report incidents, and are they aware of the need for these precautions?		
Other measures? Give details)		
Are these procedures adequate?	Y/N	Action required:-
Assessor:	Date:	

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