

SAMARITANS EALING BRANCH

Health and Safety Officer's Handbook

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Responsibilities of the branch Health and Safety Officer (HSO)

The main responsibilities of the HSO are:

- To ensure that the statutory requirements underlying the Health & Safety Policy are implemented at the branch;
- To take the lead in assessing health and safety risks inherent in branch activities and work with the Branch Committee and other volunteers as necessary to reduce or eliminate those risks; and
- To provide the branch volunteers with relevant information and advice on health and safety matters.

In particular the HSO will:

1. Ensure that the Health and Safety Policy is brought to the attention of all volunteers within the branch so that the safety rules are known and understood.
2. Implement the Health and Safety Policy within the branch, including all areas and activities.
3. Create the branch safety action plan by setting target dates for actions such as risk assessments, ensuring that the risk assessment programme is undertaken, and that any remedial actions identified by the risk assessment programme are carried out.
4. Oversee the fire precautions (including completing a fire risk assessment at least annually) in all areas of the branch, ensuring that all persons know how to evacuate the premises in the event of a fire, where to assemble etc.
5. Inform all volunteers of (a) the first aid arrangements, including the location of first aid materials and where to go to for treatment, and (b) what actions to take in the event of an accident or illness. Record any accidents in the Branch Accident Book and, if required, report accidents to the appropriate regulatory body.
6. Ensure that all volunteers are aware of the channels of communication available to raise and resolve health and safety matters.
7. Ensure there is adequate heating, lighting and ventilation at branch premises and that the toilet and kitchen facilities are regularly and properly cleaned.
8. Keep the Branch Committee informed regarding health and safety compliance by completing the Monitoring Checklist included in this Handbook on a biannual basis.

ACTION PLAN FOR HSO RESPONSIBILITIES

The critical bits to do first, over the first 3 to 6 months:

A. Fire: First, go through all branch premises and ensure that there is proper signage indicating emergency exits, and what to do in the event of fire. Determine when the most recent fire risk assessment was undertaken and whether any actions identified in that risk assessment have been completed. Fire risk assessments should be completed / checked / reviewed at least annually.

ACTION: Fire risk assessment has been completed. Will be typed up and put on samsnet. No previous fire risk assessment found.

B. Induction and Training: All branch volunteers should be made aware of the Branch Health and Safety Policy and Management System

ACTION: Branch health and Safety Policy and Management System to be put on samsnet so all volunteers can read.

C. First Aid, Accidents: All branch volunteers should be made aware of the branch's first aid arrangements.

ACTION: First Aid arrangements explained in above policy so all branch volunteers should be aware. Kitchen cupboard with First Aid kit labelled and accident log book on top of First Aid kit in cupboard.

D. PAT Testing: PAT testing (Portable Appliance Testing) is not a legal requirement; however it is the best way to make sure that the branch's portable appliances are safe. Monthly you should check cables and plugs to see if they are in good condition and not frayed (most plugs are double insulated and wired in directly, this lessens the danger, however they can fray during continuous movement, so if it is a piece of equipment that is moved more often, such as a kettle, then it should be checked more regularly. It is a good idea to ask a fellow branch member to walk round and check the plugs occasionally; they may spot something that needs to be tested. PAT testers can be purchased from the internet and come with a DVD explaining their use; alternately your local yellow pages or an internet search will lead you to a company who could undertake this function for you. It is strongly recommended that the branch's hard wiring should be tested every 10 years.

ACTION: This has been done.

Then, over the next 6 to 12 months:

E. Contractors/Working at Height: The Branch will always employ professional workmen with a proven track record.

F. Disabled Volunteers and Visitors: The Equality Act 2010 requires 'associations' such as Samaritans branches to make 'reasonable adjustments' to allow disabled people to volunteer with Samaritans, to visit the branch and to participate in other branch activities. What is considered reasonable will depend on each branch's particular circumstances and depend on factors such as the practicability and cost of making any desired adjustments. As the HSO, it

would be sensible for you to discuss these matters with any disabled volunteers at the branch and make recommendations to the Branch Committee for any changes or improvements.

ACTION: A stairlift has been installed for disabled volunteers and keyboards adapted for visually impaired volunteer.

I. Lone Working: As you know, it is Samaritans policy that, in the case of listening volunteers, there must always be at least two volunteers on duty. With regard to other volunteers each branch must develop its own policy regarding whether or not to permit 'sole' access to the branch, and consider the health and safety aspects of the agreed policy.

J. Safety issues related to providing face-to-face support: Samaritans policy regarding face-to-face support, whether at or outside the branch, is contained in the Operations Manual that is available on SamsNet. You should discuss the branch's face-to-face activities with the branch committee and carry out a risk assessment for each.

REPORTING TO THE BRANCH COMMITTEE

BRANCH HEALTH AND SAFETY MONITORING

An important part of a robust health and safety management system is regular monitoring of compliance with the branch policy. A simple system for doing this is shown below.

The [Health and Safety Monitoring Form](#) should be completed by the HSO on a biannual basis and delivered to the Branch Committee, who should note its receipt in the minutes of its next meeting. These Monitoring Forms should then be formally audited on an annual basis by the Branch Committee.

Tick the boxes on the Form to respond 'yes' or 'no' to each of the six questions below. It's ok if you need to respond 'no' on occasion! If that happens, then complete the '[Resulting Actions Required](#)' section so that everyone (Branch Committee, particular set of volunteers) is aware of the actions required.

Questions

During this quarterly reporting period, have you:

1. Ensured that the Health and Safety Policy and Management System has been brought to the attention of all new volunteers within the branch so that the safety rules are known and understood?
2. Implemented the Health and Safety Policy within the branch, including all areas and activities?
3. Created the branch safety action plan by setting target dates for actions such as risk assessments, ensuring that the risk assessment programme is undertaken, and that any remedial actions identified by the risk assessment programme have been carried out?
4. Overseen the fire precautions (including completing a fire risk assessment if none has been completed in the last 12 months) in all areas of the branch? Are you confident that all volunteers know how to evacuate the premises in the event of a fire, where to assemble etc.?
5. Informed all volunteers of (a) the first aid arrangements, including the location of first aid materials and where to go to for treatment, and (b) what actions to take in the event of an accident or illness? Have you record any accidents a in the Branch Accident Book?
6. Ensured there is adequate heating, lighting and ventilation at branch premises and that the toilet and kitchen facilities are regularly and properly cleaned?

HEALTH AND SAFETY MONITORING FORM

This monitoring checklist is part of the Health and Safety management system and is to be maintained quarterly and formally audited on an annual basis. The questions 1-6 refer to the questions listed on the previous page - [Reporting to the Branch Committee](#).

Year: 2017	First six months [date:12 March 2017]		Second six months [date:]	
	Y	N	Y	N
Question 1	Produced, to be put on samsnet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Question 2	Policy implemented.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Question 3	health and safety checklist filled out.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Question 4	Fire risk assessment carried out.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Question 5	Again, all volunteers will be aware once docs on samsnet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Question 6	yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

RESULTING ACTIONS REQUIRED

Please complete the below if you have ticked the “no” box for any particular question on the [Monitoring Form](#)

Question number	Action required	Person identifying and date	Person responsible for action	Date action to be completed	Date action actually completed	Review due date

RISK ASSESSMENT

The purpose of a risk assessment is to identify the hazards in the branch, evaluate the risk posed and decide whether the precautions in place are adequate to control that risk or whether further actions are required.

The following steps should be considered when carrying out the Branch Risk Assessment:

1. Identify the hazards from an activity/ process
2. Decide on the harm that may occur
3. Identify the people who might be harmed
4. Identify existing controls
5. Evaluate the risk - by calculating the RR by multiplying the severity score with the risk score
6. Decide if further controls are required
7. Calculate the residual risk where appropriate by calculating RR after the implementation of further controls
8. Identify who is responsible for implementing the controls and the date for completion
9. Record the findings on the risk assessment form
10. Review the assessment and revise it if necessary

RISK ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE

The risk assessment process should not be time consuming as potential hazards are usually easy to identify. The following will help you carry out a risk assessment.

The appendix contains examples of risk assessments that you may use as a guide to think through some of the hazards in your branch and the steps you need to take to control the risks. Please note that these are not generic risk assessments that you can just put your branch name on and adopt wholesale without any thought.

Every branch is different – you will need to think through the hazards and controls required in your individual branch.

Task

This outlines the task being undertaken such as cleaning, providing face-to-face support, etc.

Hazard

Decide what could reasonably be expected to cause harm. Ignore the trivial and focus on the significant hazards that may result in serious harm or affect a number of people.

Use the following examples as a guide:

- Slipping/Tripping hazards (e.g. poorly maintained floors or stairs)
- Fire (e.g. from flammable materials)
- Work at height
- Vehicles
- Electricity (e.g. poor wiring)
- Manual handling
- DSE (this is terms used in the health & safety regulations for computers – it stands for ‘digital screen equipment’)
- Poor lighting
- Low temperature

Many hazards can be overcome simply by providing adequate information and training. Once a hazard has been identified, most Health and Safety considerations are just common sense. Sources of information you may wish to use include:

- Volunteers/staff who already do the job or who are familiar with the process
- Guidance available from the Health & Safety Executive’s website, www.hse.org.uk.
- Manufacturer’s instructions
- Industry or Trade Association guidance
- Accident records
- National and Industry standards
- Approved Codes of Practice

Harm

Decide on the type of harm that may occur for example cuts, sprains, fractures etc.

Persons Affected

Think about who are exposed whilst at your branch and who may be affected as a result of your branch's activities.

You need to pay particular attention to:

- New and expectant mothers, people with disabilities, etc who may be at particular risk

DEFINITIONS

Hazard – Something with the potential to cause harm (e.g. chemical, electricity, working from ladders, etc).

Harm – The type of injury likely to occur

Risk – The likelihood of the harm occurring on a scale of 1 – 6 i.e. not very likely =1, inevitable = 6

Severity (S) – The severity of the injury on a scale of 1 – 6 i.e. trivial or no injury = 1 or multiple deaths = 6

Risk Rating (RR) - This is the product of the score for severity and risk. The number is used to prioritise action i.e. the higher the number the higher the priority of action required. The rating can then be converted to high, medium or low with reference to the risk matrix.