

# **Kingston Churches Housing Association**

The Caring Professionals

## **Health and Safety Manual**

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# **KCHA**

## **Health and Safety Manual**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Our Health and Safety Policy Statement is split into three sections as follows:

#### **Section A (page 3)**

This is our general declaration, based on our obligations under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act. This section also identifies who is responsible for what.

It is stressed that all of our employees have responsibilities under the law to take care of the health and safety of themselves and others and to co-operate with management at all times in this respect.

#### **Section B (pages 4 to 8)**

This section deals with general health and safety matters and identifies nominated responsible members of staff for such issues. This section also addresses general staff welfare.

#### **Section C (pages 9 to 13)**

This section deals with specific hazards that have been identified within our environment.

# KCHA

## Health and Safety Manual

### SECTION A

#### GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

Our policy is to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all of our employees, and to provide such information, training and supervision as they need for this purpose. We also accept our responsibility for the health and safety of other people who may be affected by our activities.

The allocation of duties for safety matters, and the particular arrangements that we will make to implement the policy, are set out and documented.

The policy will be kept up to date, particularly as the business changes in nature and size. To ensure this, the policy and the way in which it has operated will be reviewed every two years.

Signed .....  
Ross Brown  
Chief Executive

Approved by the Board of Management on:

#### HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

Overall and final responsibility for health and safety is that of Ross Brown, Chief Executive, who is also responsible for this policy being carried out.

The following members of staff are responsible for safety in particular areas:

<u>Member of Staff</u>	<u>Area</u>
Housing Assistant	Central Office
Housing Services Manager	Housing properties
Sheltered Managers	Sheltered Housing Schemes

All employees have the responsibility to co-operate so as to achieve a healthy and safe workplace and to take reasonable care of themselves and others.

Whenever an employee notices a health or safety problem which they are not able to put right, they must straightaway tell the appropriate person named above. Consultation between management and employees is provided by regular Health and Safety Meetings as set out below in section B14.

# KCHA

## Health and Safety Manual

### SECTION B

#### GENERAL ARRANGEMENTS

##### 1. Accidents

- First aid boxes will be provided and kept fully stocked in all staffed premises.
- KCHA will ensure that there are sufficient employees with appointed persons first aid training, with a minimum of one on the premises during working hours. Those persons shall as a minimum include the Housing Officer and the Sheltered Managers.
- The Housing Services Manager and the Sheltered Managers are responsible for the first aid boxes on their premises and for the reporting of accidents.
- An accident book must be kept with the first aid box, and all accidents and injuries, no matter how minor, must be recorded. Near-misses and potential hazards must also be recorded and reported so that appropriate preventive actions can be taken.
- All reportable matters under the Reporting of Injuries and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013 must be reported as appropriate to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). In brief, you need to report deaths, major injuries, accidents resulting in over 7 days' incapacitation, diseases, dangerous occurrences, gas incidents.
- If in doubt, consult the Chief Executive or the HSE directly. The HSE Incident Contact Centre 0300 003 1647 is open from 08.30am to 17.00pm Monday to Friday. In the event of an out of hours emergency contact the Duty Officer on 0151 922 9235.
- The nearest Accident and Emergency (A&E) hospital is:

Kingston Hospital  
Galsworthy Road  
Kingston-upon-Thames  
KT2 7QB  
Tel: 020 8546 7711

##### 2. General Fire Safety

- As required by the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, certain KCHA premises should undergo a fire risk assessment by a competent person.
- Fire equipment must be regularly maintained and tested, and regular fire drills carried out in accordance with current regulations or good practice.
- The following procedure is to be followed in the event of a fire:
  1. On discovering the fire, raise the alarm.
  2. Call or ask someone to call the fire brigade by dialling 999.
  3. Evacuate the building by the nearest fire exit and do not stop to collect personal belongings. Close doors and windows where possible.
  4. Report to the designated "assembly point" so that the Fire Warden can account for you.
  5. Only re-enter the building when you have been given permission by the fire brigade.

# KCHA

## Health and Safety Manual

- KCHA Fire Wardens are the Housing Assistant for Central Office and the Sheltered Managers for the Sheltered Housing Schemes. They are responsible for checking escape routes and the fire alarms.
- All employees must familiarise themselves with the fire escape procedures.

### 3. Advice and Consultancy

- To contact the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) telephone 0300 003 1747 during office hours - 8.30 am to 5.00 pm, Monday to Friday, Wednesday 10.00 am to 5.00 pm, or visit their website at [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk).
- Our health and safety consultants are:

DELCO SAFETY COMPLIANCE

5 Tudor Drive

Morden

SM4 4PD

Tel: 020 8773 3186

E-mail: [derek.andrews@delcosafety.co.uk](mailto:derek.andrews@delcosafety.co.uk)

### 4. Young Persons Regulations

- If KCHA employs people under the age of 18, it will complete explicit risk assessments in respect of the young workers. The assessments must address the specific factors identified for the safety of the young persons and the other workers who may be affected by the work of the young persons.
- KCHA will inform the parents or legal guardians of the risk assessments and the control measures to be used to provide a safe working environment.
- KCHA will provide the appropriate supervision to ensure that the young persons undertake their tasks safely.

### 5. Stress at Work

- KCHA places a high value on maintaining a healthy and safe working environment for all employees and we recognise our duty of care to mental health as well as physical health at work.
- We are committed to providing a supportive working environment that maintains and promotes the health and well being of all employees.
- We will implement a stress management policy for all employees throughout our operation.
- We will aim to:
  1. Manage stress through effective and sensitive management.
  2. Develop working practices that reduce the factors of stress.
  3. Develop systems to manage problems that do occur.
  4. Support individuals who are stressed.
  5. Increase the awareness of stress and methods to combat it.
  6. Assist staff in managing stress in themselves and others.

# KCHA

## Health and Safety Manual

### 6. Violence and Aggression

- Because of the nature of their work with the public, KCHA staff may occasionally face violent and aggressive behaviour. Appropriate training will be offered to help deal with such situations.
- KCHA will make its position clearly known in not tolerating violent or aggressive behaviour. In the event of any personal harm being suffered, KCHA will support staff in taking legal action against the offender.

### 7. Drugs

- The taking of non prescribed drugs, controlled drugs or other practices involving abuse of substances is strictly prohibited at all locations occupied by KCHA staff.
- Any person found in possession or under the influence of such substances (or reasonably believed to be in possession or under the influence of such substances) will be refused access to or removed from our premises.
- The person will then have an interview with their line manager to discuss the event. The main reason for this meeting will be to ascertain if there is a real problem where KCHA can help the employee or if it was a 'one off' where a verbal warning about behaviour at work will suffice.
- If the employee is found to have a drugs problem they will be strongly encouraged to seek help from their GP or a specialist agency.

### 8. Alcohol

- Any person found in possession or under the influence of alcohol (or reasonably believed to be in possession or under the excessive influence of alcohol) will be refused access to or removed from our premises.
- The person will then have an interview with their line manager to discuss the event. The main reason for this meeting will be to ascertain if there is a real problem where KCHA can help the employee or if it was a 'one off' where a verbal warning about behaviour at work will suffice.
- If the employee is found to have an alcohol problem they will be strongly encouraged to seek help from their GP or a specialist agency.

### 9. Smoking & Vaping

- Employees are not allowed to smoke or vape within any staffed premises.
- If an employee has been identified as a habitual smoker, KCHA will give every assistance to encourage them to give up smoking.
- For smokers who want to quit the NHS offers a range of excellent free support including local NHS Stop Smoking Services.
- For details of the free services and advice on stopping smoking, call the NHS Smoke free Helpline on 0300 123 1044 or visit [www.nhs.uk/smokefree](http://www.nhs.uk/smokefree)

### 10. Training

- The Chief Executive is responsible for arranging health and safety training.
- All new members of staff will have health and safety induction training as early as practicable during their employment. Records of such training will be entered in their personnel file.

# KCHA

## Health and Safety Manual

- 11. Control of Substance Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH)**
  - KCHA has reviewed materials stored and used under this category. Only general purpose proprietary cleaning material is used and kept within the offices.
  - This material is securely stored and clearly identified as to its contents and method of application. Access to this material is restricted to staff or cleaners with responsibility for cleaning duties and with appropriate training.
  - KCHA keeps update on the latest developments the most recent being EH40/2005 Fourth Edition (2020).
  
- 12. Asbestos**
  - KCHA maintains an Asbestos Register in which are recorded details of materials known to it in its properties that may contain asbestos.
  - The Register also includes Material Risk Assessments and Priority Risk Assessments of these materials that are monitored by annually by Delco Safety.
  - Summary information is included in all instructions to carry out works issued to contractors.
  
- 13. Contractors and Visitors**
  - All contractors and visitors must comply with the KCHA safety rules and are briefed on these as soon as practicable.
  - Contractors must keep in force policies of insurance against liabilities arising from their acts or omissions.
  - In addition to safe working practices, contractors are required to observe a high standard of housekeeping at all times. Rubbish and waste must be removed from site at regular intervals and in compliance with all waste management legislation such as the Hazardous Waste and WEEE Regulations.
  - From time to time KCHA may instruct their safety consultants to undertake contractor safety and waste audits to ensure full compliance in this area.
  - Contractors undertaking major works are to provide copies of all risk assessments and methods for work being undertaken on KCHA property.
  
- 14. Health and Safety Meetings**
  - Regular staff meetings will be held for all central office and sheltered housing scheme staff. Every staff meeting will include a formal agenda item on health and safety.
  - Safety information will be cascaded throughout the organisation by training sessions, memos, notice board information and e-mails.
  
- 15. Risk Assessments and Method Statements**
  - Risk assessments will be carried out to identify activities or materials that constitute actual risk to health and safety. Where practicable such risks will be eliminated, but where this cannot be achieved they will be minimised or controlled and monitored.
  - Contractors are to provide copies of all risk assessments and methods for major works being undertaken on KCHA property.

# KCHA

## Health and Safety Manual

### 16. KCHA Insurances

- KCHA maintains a policy for Employers' Liability Insurance, Public Liability Insurance and Personal Accident Insurance.
- Employers' Liability Insurance covers paid employees in the event of an accident, disease or injury caused or made worse as a result of work. By law employers must take out and maintain an approved insurance policy, and display the certificate of insurance prominently in the workplace.
- Public Liability Insurance covers individuals (other than employees) and organisations in the event of an accidental injury or death, damage to or loss of property caused through the negligence of someone acting with that organisation's authority.
- Personal Accident Insurance provides cover for accidents or death arising from paid work or volunteers, but not due to the organisation's negligence.
- As of April 2021, KCHA will also provide Directors and Officers Liability Insurance following the removal of this from the National Housing Federation Affiliation package.



# KCHA

## Health and Safety Manual

### SECTION C

#### KCHA SPECIFIC HAZARDS

##### 1. Introduction

- KCHA aims to comply with the relevant statutory provisions in order to promote a culture of health, safety and welfare in the workplace.
- The following are provided for general information to aid all employees in identification of potentially hazardous situations:
- The six main categories of serious injury are:
  1. Falls from a height, e.g. down a staircase or from over reaching.
  2. Contact with electricity, e.g. from damaged cables or badly wired repairs.
  3. Struck by falling objects, e.g. goods from a shelf.
  4. Repetitive strain injuries.
  5. Contact with moving parts of office machinery, e.g. shredders, guillotines.
  6. Struck by moving vehicles.

##### 2. Office Health and Safety Pointers

###### DO:

- Lift loads correctly
- Obey the fire rules
- Observe all warning signs and take appropriate action
- Report accidents or unsafe working conditions/activities
- Ensure that you are authorised to be working in any particular area
- Only use equipment for which you have been trained to use
- Familiarise yourself with this document

###### DO NOT:

- Disable safety devices
- Indulge in horseplay
- Leave equipment in a dangerous state
- Smoke anywhere in the building
- Disobey safety rules and instructions. They are in the interests of your health and safety
  
- The following are identified as office specific safety issues for KCHA.

##### 3. Maintenance of Workplace Equipment, Devices and Systems

- All equipment, devices and systems which fall under the scope of these regulations, including the workplace itself and in particular any passenger lifts, will be maintained (including cleaned as appropriate) in an efficient condition and in a good state of working order and repair.
- Where appropriate, this will include such items being subject to a suitable system of maintenance.

# KCHA

## Health and Safety Manual

### 4. Ventilation

- Effective and suitable provision will be made to ensure that every enclosed workplace is ventilated by a sufficient quantity of fresh or purified air.
- Any plant used to achieve this purpose will give visible or audible warning of any failure of the plant.

### 5. Indoor Temperature

- Although no values are accorded to temperature in the regulations, we will ensure that, during working hours, the temperature inside the building is reasonable i.e. has achieved 16 degrees centigrade within one hour of work commencing.

### 6. Lighting

- Every workplace within the premises will be provided with suitable lighting.
- Such lighting will, as far as is reasonable, be natural and emergency lighting will be provided in any room in circumstances where employees would be exposed to dangers in the event of the failure of artificial lighting.
- If specific tasks require, then additional lighting will be provided.

### 7. Cleanliness, Floors, Traffic Routes and Waste Materials

- Furniture, furnishings and fittings will be kept sufficiently clean. Surfaces of walls, floors and ceilings of all workplaces will be capable of being kept clean, and waste materials will not be allowed to accumulate other than in suitable receptacles.
- Floors and traffic routes will be suitable for the purposes for which they are used, including the absence of unevenness, holes (unless suitably guarded to prevent falls), slopes (unless suitably hand railed) and slippery surfaces that may constitute a risk to health and safety.
- All floors will have an adequate means of drainage where necessary.
- Floors and traffic routes will be kept free of obstruction, articles and substances that may cause a person to slip, trip or fall.
- All staircases will be fitted with suitable handrails and where appropriate, guard rails.

### 8. Workstations and Seating

- Workstations will be so arranged so that it is suitable both for the person doing the work and the work required to be carried out.
- A suitable seat will be provided for each person at work in the workplace whose work includes operations which can or must be done sitting. Footrests will be provided where necessary.

### 9. Falls or Falling Objects

- Effective measures will be taken to prevent any of the following events:
  1. Any person falling a distance liable to cause personal injury.
  2. Any person being struck by a falling object liable to cause personal injury.
- Any area where there is a risk to health and safety as a result of the above will be clearly identified with appropriate warning signs.

### 10. Electrical and Gas Safety

# KCHA

## Health and Safety Manual

- Items of portable electrical equipment supplied by KCHA will be tested and visually inspected by a competent person regularly.
  - Fixed electrical installations will be checked and maintained by a NICEIC registered electrical contractor and tested periodically in line with legal requirements.
  - Fixed gas appliances will be checked and maintained annually by a GAS Safe registered installer.
  - Any faults in machinery or equipment, wiring, plugs or other installations must be reported immediately.
- 11. Transparent or Translucent Doors, Gates and Walls**
- Where necessary any window or glazed panel in a door or gate will be of safety material or be protected against breakage, and will be marked so as to make it apparent.
- 12. Windows, Skylights and Ventilators**
- All windows will be so designed or constructed so as to be able to be cleaned safely. Where this is not the case alternative access arrangements will be provided so that the window cleaning operation is safe and without risks to health.
- 13. Organisation, etc. of Traffic Routes**
- Workplaces will be organised so that pedestrians and vehicles can circulate in a safe manner. Traffic routes will be suitable for the persons and vehicles using them.
- 14. Sanitary Conveniences**
- Sanitary conveniences will be provided at readily accessible places, will be adequately ventilated, lit and be kept in a clean and orderly condition. Separate rooms containing sanitary conveniences will be provided for male and female staff.
- 15. Washing Facilities**
- Washing facilities will be provided at readily accessible places.
  - Washing facilities will be sited in the immediate vicinity of every sanitary convenience and changing room, and will include a supply of clean hot and cold running water, soap or other suitable means of cleaning as well as drying facilities (towels, paper, dispenser or hot air dryer).
  - The rooms containing washing facilities will be well lit and ventilated and will be kept in a clean and orderly state.
- 16. Drinking Water**
- A supply of drinking water will be provided at suitable places and be marked by an appropriate sign where necessary.
  - Sufficient cups will be provided unless the supply of drinking water is in a jet from which persons can drink easily.
- 17. Accommodation for Clothing**
- Secure accommodation will be provided for the clothing of anyone at work which is not worn during working hours, and for special clothing which is worn at work but which is not taken home.

# KCHA

## Health and Safety Manual

- If required, the accommodation will include facilities for the drying of clothing.
- 18. Facilities for Changing Clothing**
- Facilities will be provided to change clothing where the person has to wear special clothing for work.
  - Separate changing facilities for males and females will be provided as required.
- 19. Avoiding Trip Hazards**
- Trailing cables from VDU's, telephones, etc., should be kept to a minimum and should be positioned so as not to cause a tripping hazard, or suitably covered using cable protectors.
- 20. Filing and Storage**
- Filing cabinets can become unstable if too many drawers are opened at one time and may topple over. Cabinets should have the lowest drawer loaded first and only one drawer open at a time.
  - All racking or shelving shall be of adequate strength for the loads placed upon them and shall be rigidly secured to adjacent racks or walls. Heavy items should not be placed on the higher shelves.
- 21. Visual Display Units (VDU's)**
- The introduction of VDU's and other display screen equipment has been associated with a range of symptoms relating to the visual system and working posture, e.g. fatigue and stress, upper limb pains and discomfort etc. The provision of good ergonomic and environmental conditions must be considered in the planning of the work station for VDU's.
  - **Posture and Good Practice**
    1. Each user is an individual size and shape; therefore they must participate in the organisation of their workstation. The following must be considered:
    2. To find the best working position, sit on your chair, then sit rigidly upright, and then relax a little. Now adjust your chair to support your back in this position.
    3. Use a foot rest if that helps.
    4. Adjust the height of the chair such that when your fingers are resting comfortably on the keyboard's "home keys", the elbow is at an angle of approximately 90 Degrees.
    5. It is often more comfortable to have 100 mm of workbench in front of the keyboard to rest the hands upon.
    6. Arrange the VDU in such a manner that you do not face, or have a window as a background and so that the light sources do not reflect glare into your eyes.
    7. Adjust the screen height such that the top rows of the characters on the screen are level with or just below your eye level.
    8. When copy typing, use a copy holder or some other device which allows you to look from copy to screen without excessive head or neck movement. If the copy and screen are the same distance from your eyes then your eyes will not have to constantly change focus.
    9. Leave sufficient space to gain access to the VDU for any maintenance that may be required to be performed.

# KCHA

## Health and Safety Manual

10. Cables must be kept tidy at all times and not cause an obstruction to the operator or others who may have cause to enter the area - BEWARE OF CAUSING TRIP HAZARDS !
- **Work Patterns**
    1. VDU's should not be used continually. It is not the length of break taken away from the VDU that is important but the frequency.
    2. Break up work patterns with other tasks so that you get a regular rest from the VDU.
  - **Eye and Eyesight Tests**
    1. There is no reliable evidence that work with display screen equipment causes any permanent damage to eyes or eyesight, but it may make users with pre-existing vision defects more aware of them. This (and/or poor working conditions) may give some users temporary visual fatigue or headaches.
    2. It is recognised that uncorrected vision defects can make work at display screens more tiring or stressful than it should be, and that correcting defects can improve comfort, job satisfaction and performance.
    3. In accordance with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations, KCHA will arrange for sight testing for users of display screen equipment if requested.

### COVID-19 STATEMENT

At the time of writing (January 2021) the global pandemic virus 'Covid-19' remains prevalent. KCHA adheres to all legislation and guidance set by Public Health England and in addition follows the guidance published by the National Housing Federation and Regulator of Social Housing specific to our sector.

The unprecedented nature of the virus combined with the complex and regularly evolving instructions from central government do not currently support the publishing of a detailed set of instructions. KCHA will adhere to the emergency 'Coronavirus Act 2020' and the aforementioned guidance.