

# Comfort Home Care



**Comfort Home Care**  
Devon Home Care Specialists

## Health and Safety Handbook

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*This Health and Safety Handbook it is not an exhaustive list of all the hazards and risks that may be present in your workplace. It is the responsibility of your employer to review this handbook periodically and/or following a significant change to ensure it remains compliant with legislation.*

## Introduction

This Health and Safety Handbook contains health and safety information that will enable you to work effectively with your employer and contribute to a safe and healthy working environment. It provides an overview of the arrangements in place to manage risks in the workplace and the role you must play. Please read it carefully. Once you have done so you will be required to sign to confirm that it has been brought to your attention.

If you have any queries regarding the contents you must ask your line manager.

## Legal Duties

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (“The Act”) is the primary piece of legislation and imposes duties on both employers and employees to ensure health and safety in the workplace.

### Employer’s duties

Comfort Home Care (*hereafter referred to as ‘the organisation’ or ‘employer’*) has a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all its employees. The employer must provide:

- a safe place of work without risks to health;
- safe means of access to and egress from the premises;
- safe equipment which is adequately maintained;
- systems of work that are safe and without risks to health;
- arrangements for the safe use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances;
- information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary; and
- adequate facilities and arrangements for employees welfare at work

Employers must also make sure that non-employees such as visitors, customers or contractors, are not exposed to risks to their health or safety.

In this handbook you will find the commitment your employer has made on health and safety and which is signed by the person with ultimate responsibility for health and safety in the organisation.

### Employee Responsibilities

Employees also have a duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and for other people who may be affected by what they do or omit to do. This is not just a matter of not doing anything that is reckless or silly but involves an understanding of workplace hazards and complying with safety rules and procedures so that they and others are not put at risk.

Employees must co-operate with their employer and:

- take reasonable care of their own safety and others affected by their actions;
- comply with the Health and Safety Policy, safety rules and written or verbal instructions;
- use all safety equipment and/or protective clothing as directed;
- maintain all equipment in good condition and report defects to their manager;
- report any safety hazard or malfunction of any item of plant or equipment to their manager;
- report all accidents to their manager whether an injury is sustained or not;
- understand and comply with emergency procedures;
- dress sensibly and safely for their particular working environment or occupation; and
- conduct themselves in an orderly manner and refrain from horseplay

## Safety Rules

Every employee must observe the following safety rules. Failure to do so will be considered to be a breach of the contract of employment and may result in disciplinary action being taken.

Employees **must**:

- take reasonable care of their own safety and that of any person affected by their actions or inactions;
- be aware of and adhere to the organisation's rules and procedures on health and safety;
- immediately report any unsafe working practices or conditions to their line manager;
- comply with all laid down emergency procedures and ensure all fire escape routes, fire equipment and fire doors are not obstructed;
- ensure passageways and work areas are kept clean and tidy and spillages are cleaned up immediately;
- make proper and safe use of all equipment and facilities provided;
- ensure all waste materials are disposed of carefully in the receptacles provided and in such a way that they do not constitute a hazard to others;
- wear suitable clothing, footwear and PPE where appropriate;
- report all injuries/incidents to their line manager and ensure that it is properly recorded in the accident book;
- report any medical condition which could affect the safety of themselves or others; and
- comply with all hazard/warning signs and notices displayed on the premises

Employees **must not**:

- undertake a job which appears to be unsafe;
- undertake a job until they have received adequate safety instruction and they are authorised to carry out the task;
- misuse any fire fighting equipment provided;
- interfere with any protective guards and other safety devices; and
- drive or operate vehicles in connection with work whilst suffering from a medical condition or illness that may affect their driving or operating ability

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list.

### Rules Covering Gross Misconduct

An employee will be liable to summary dismissal if they are found to have acted in any of the following ways:

- a serious or wilful breach of Safety Rules;
- wilful damage to, misuse of, or interference with any item provided in the interests of health and safety or welfare at work;
- horseplay or practical jokes which could cause accidents; and
- deliberately disobeying an authorised instruction

Please note this is not an exhaustive list.

## Health and Safety Policy Statement

*Comfort Home Care* recognises that it has a legal duty of care towards protecting the health and safety of its employees and others who may be affected by its activities. As part of that commitment we will:

- maintain the workplace in a safe condition and provide adequate facilities and arrangements for welfare at work;
- provide a safe means of access to and egress from the workplace;
- identify and adequately control health and safety risks arising from our work activities;
- provide and maintain equipment and systems of work that are safe;
- make arrangements for ensuring health and safety in connection with the use, handling, and storage of articles and substances;
- ensure the workplace is clean and tidy and measures are taken to control the spread of infection;
- ensure all contractors who undertake work on our premises adhere to safe systems of work engage competent staff;
- safely and responsibly dispose of all waste generated through our activities;
- provide such information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure the health and safety at work of its employees and other persons;
- consult with employees regarding health and safety matters; and
- undertake continual monitoring and review of our performance to improve standards further

This Health and Safety Policy will be reviewed at least annually and revised as necessary to reflect changes to the business activities and any changes to legislation. Any changes to the Policy will be brought to the attention of all employees.

**Name:**

**Signed:**

**Position:**

**Dated:**

## Arrangements

This section describes the arrangements in place to implement the health and safety policy.

### Accident, Incident and Ill-Health Recording, Reporting and Investigation

All accidents resulting in personal injury must be recorded in the organisation's Accident Book, which is located in the office.



Incidents and work related ill-health must be reported directly to your Manager whereupon they will be investigated. Should you require first aid treatment, please contact your nominated first aider whose details are provided below:

*First aiders: Vicky Burston and Ryan Palmer. Telephone number: 01884 251555*

*Location of accident book is located at head office.*

### Communication and Consultation

Your employer will consult with its employees on Health & Safety matters through a variety of means including:

- individual conversations
- notice boards
- internal publications
- staff meetings
- Health and Safety meetings



The organisation will also display the 'Health and Safety Law – What You Need To Know' poster in a prominent position or communicate similar information by other means.

### Disabled Persons

All disabled employees and visitors will be treated with respect and dignity, both in the provision of a safe working environment and in equal access to the organisation's facilities. The organisation will ensure that risk assessments are undertaken of the special needs of the disabled persons and carry out reasonable adjustments to the premises and/or employment arrangements.

### Display Screen Equipment

If you operate Display Screen Equipment your employer will carry out an assessment of your workstation and implement necessary measures to remedy any risks found as a result of the assessment.

*Some practical tips you can take include:*

- adjust your chair and VDU to find the most comfortable position;
- make sure you have enough work space including under your desk;
- try different arrangements of keyboard, screen, mouse and documents;
- arrange your desk and VDU to avoid glare, or bright reflections;
- adjust your keyboard and try to keep your wrists straight when keying;
- adjust the brightness and contrast controls on the screen; and
- take regular breaks



## Driving

If you drive in connection with work (excluding the commute from home to your regular workplace) you are responsible for your safety and others who travel with you and must comply with the Highway Code and the Road Traffic Act. Further details are available from your employer. You must inform your manager of anything that could affect your driving e.g. health conditions or injuries, use of prescribed medication or changes to your licence such as limitations, offences recorded, period bans. If you are involved in any accidents/incidents whilst driving on behalf of the company you must inform them immediately.



## Electricity

When operating electrical equipment you must:

- visually check electrical equipment for damage before use and report defects;
- report any defects found to their line manager/supervisor;
- not carry out any repair to any electrical item unless qualified to do so;
- switch off non-essential equipment from the mains when left unattended for long periods;
- not bring any electrical item onto the premises until it has been tested; and
- not leave electric cables in such a position that they will cause a tripping hazard or be subject to mechanical damage



If you discover something which is defective and presents a risk you report it to the manager.

## Fire

Fire is a significant risk in the workplace and we must all take our fire safety duties seriously. The organisation will carry out a Fire Risk Assessment that will detail the preventative measures in place to stop a fire happening and what to do in the event of an emergency. In the event of fire, the safety of life will override all other considerations, such as saving property and extinguishing the fire.



Your employer does not require persons to attempt to extinguish a fire but extinguishing action may be taken if it is safe to do so. Immediate evacuation of the building must take place as soon as the evacuate signal is given and all occupants, on evacuation, should report to the pre-determined assembly points.

Re-entry of the building is strictly prohibited until the fire brigade officer, or a senior person present, declares it is safe to do so.

If you discover something which is defective and presents a risk you report it to your manager so that appropriate remedial action may be taken.

## First Aid

The organisation will make sufficient provision for first aid to deal with accidents and injuries that arise at work. Nominated personnel will be trained to administer first aid. An adequately stocked first aid box containing supplies will be held on site. The location of the first aid box is:



*Main office*

Portable first aid kits will be available for staff members required to work away from the normal workplace, where access to facilities may be restricted.

## Hazardous Substances (COSHH)

All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure all exposure of employees to substances hazardous to health is prevented or adequately controlled.



The organisation will carry out risk assessments and give sufficient information and training to ensure full understanding of the hazards to health posed by substances in the workplace and the importance of the control measures provided. Information will also be given to others who may be affected such as contractors, temporary staff and visitors where appropriate.

Employees should **not** use any hazardous substance unless they have received the information and training for the safe use of that substance. Appropriate PPE must be worn where stipulated.

## Ill Health

Employees who have a medical condition that may prevent them undertaking a task should notify their Manager/Supervisor beforehand.

## Infection Control, Clinical Waste and Sharps Disposal

For some work activities, staff may be at risk of infection or of spreading infection. The company aims to prevent the spread of infection through work-based activities by adopting suitable control measures.

Employees must:

- wash hands after attending to service users
- cover all cuts and abrasions
- use disposable gloves, aprons, masks, safety glasses etc. (PPE) as directed
- clean up spills and body fluids immediately ensuring PPE is worn to prevent any contact
- dispose of sharps in purpose containers as supplied. All sharps whether contaminated or not must be discarded directly
- not re-sheath needles by hand, bend or break them prior to disposal
- not detach needles from a syringe as they should be disposed of as one unit, and only detach needles from a syringe when there is a need to decant blood into a specimen container. In such a case if provided on the sharps box the 'needle remover' should be used
- dispose of clinical waste correctly and not fill the bags more than three-quarters full. Bags should be coloured coded (yellow plastic) and retained in a segregated and designated area to await collection
- use disinfection and sterilisation procedures for cleaning of instruments.

## Vaccination

Employees at risk of infection will where possible be offered vaccinations without charge. Please contact your manager/supervisor to make arrangements.

## Training and Information

Training and information will be provided to all employees who are identified from the risk assessment as being potentially exposed to infections. Training will be given for any tasks they are employed to do, the equipment they will be using and any safe procedures to adopt.

## Staff Illness and Reporting

It is important to remember that infection can also be passed onto people from staff. Staff should notify their manager if they develop any infectious disease that may affect work or people around them, for example:

- skin infections or exposed areas of infestation
- severe respiratory infection (e.g. pneumonia, TB)
- severe diarrhoea
- jaundice
- hepatitis
- chicken pox, measles, mumps, rubella
- HIV.

Managers will need to discuss with the individual suitable controls. In some cases, employees may need to be referred to an Occupational Doctor or their GP for advice.

Staff should also report any illness or disease which has been contracted through work. In some circumstances if a staff member contracts a disease whilst at work, this is reportable under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations). Certain diseases including Leptospirosis, Hepatitis, TB, and Tetanus are specifically required to be reported.

## Confidentiality

Confidentiality will be maintained at all times in relation to an employee who is known to have any infectious disease.

No health information will be disclosed without the written consent of the employee concerned and any breach of such confidentiality, either inside or outside the organisation, will be regarded as a disciplinary offence and may result in disciplinary action.

## Lone Working

If you are required to work alone or unsupervised for significant periods of time the organisation will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that you are protected from risks to your health and safety.



You will be given all necessary information, instruction, training and supervision to enable you to recognise the hazards and appreciate the risks involved with working alone.

## Manual Handling

To prevent injuries and long term ill-health from manual handling the organisation will ensure that operations which involve manual handling are eliminated, so far as is reasonably practicable.



Where it is not practical it will carry out an assessment to determine what control measures are required to reduce the risk to an acceptable level. This may include introducing mechanical aides and equipment, designing the workplace to take into account your activities. Where manual handling is necessary you will be trained accordingly. You must also familiarise yourself with the guidance on the principles of safe handling techniques.

## New and Expectant Mothers

If you are a new or expectant mother there may be occasions when, due to your condition, different and/or additional risk control measures will be necessary. Should you become pregnant or are returning to work after having a baby, then you are requested to notify your manager at the earliest possible opportunity so an individual risk assessment can be carried out.



## Personal Protective Equipment

You will be provided with personal protective equipment (PPE) when the risk presented by a work activity cannot be eliminated or adequately controlled by other means. When it is provided, it is because health and safety hazards have been identified that require the use of PPE to further reduce the risks. You must:

- wear the PPE as instructed or where indicated by signage;
- maintain it in good condition;
- report any defects to your supervisor/manager; and
- ensure the PPE fits correctly, is comfortable and fully adjusted

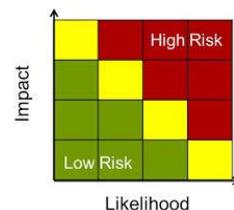


PPE is available from the main office. Please contact Ryan Palmer, Deputy Manager.

## Risk Assessment

The purpose of a risk assessment is to identify things that have the potential to cause harm (hazards) and assess how likely it is that they will harm you. Suitable control measures can then be put in place to protect you. Hazards will all fall under one of the following categories in your workplace:

- **Physical** (e.g. slip, trips and falls, machinery, fire, electricity, cuts, burns and scalds etc)
- **Chemical** (e.g. exposure to hazardous substances, disinfectants, paints, dusts etc.)
- **Biological** (e.g. Bacteria and viruses transmitted in body fluids or contaminated surfaces)
- **Psychological** (e.g. workplace violence, abusive customers, lone working, stress, shift work)



Your employer will carry out suitable and sufficient risk assessments and bring the results to your attention. General risk assessment of all known and reasonably foreseeable health and safety hazards covering all our premises, equipment and activities are available from Vicky Burston, main office.

Specific risk assessments will also be carried out as determined by the general assessment and are available from Vicky Burston, main office.

In the first instance, risks will be tackled at source using engineering means in preference to systems of work. Personal protective equipment is only an acceptable alternative where risks cannot be controlled by such other means.

## Slips, Trips and fall

The most common cause of injury in the workplace is slips, trips and falls. Hazards include trailing cables, boxes, materials and spillages. You must remain attentive to any slip or trip hazards on the premises and maintain good housekeeping standards at all times. Make sure passageways are free from trip hazards and never obstruct a fire exit. If a spillage occurs you must ensure it is attended to without delay.



## Smoking

It is the policy of the organisation that all of its premises are smoke-free and that all employees have a right to work in a smoke-free environment.



## Stress

The Health and Safety Executive define stress as “the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them”. This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress which can be detrimental to health.

Stress at work can come about for a variety of reasons. It may be excessive workload, unreasonable expectations, or overly-demanding work colleagues. As a reasonable company, we try to ensure that you are in a pleasant working environment and that you are as free from stress as possible.

Employees who experience unreasonable stress which they think may be caused by work should raise their concerns with their Manager or through the company’s grievance procedure. If deemed appropriate, the company will provide access to confidential counselling for employees affected by stress caused either by work or external factors

## Training for Health and Safety

Training in health and safety is a legal requirement and also helps create competent employees at all levels within the company, which enables them make a far more effective contribution to health and safety, whether as individuals, teams or groups.

You will receive health and safety induction and refresher training which will cover general health and safety issues, emergency evacuation and assembly procedures and specific training in relation to particular duties at work.



## Violence to Staff

The organisation recognises that in certain situations violent behaviour towards staff may occur and therefore will take all reasonable measures to protect staff from violence and aggression. Violence and aggression includes:

- actual or threatened physical assaults on staff
- psychological abuse of staff
- verbal abuse which includes shouting, swearing and gestures
- threats against employees



If you are a witness or receive any violence or aggression towards you, then you should report this to your manager/supervisor so that this can be recorded and investigated. Where appropriate your employer will support the decision of any employee wishing to press charges against the individual(s) involved. Access to counselling can also be provided where required.

## Safeguarding

The company will promote awareness and best practice to deal with situations of suspected abuse or neglect and situations in which employees are best placed to observe such signs and the procedure to the appropriate local contact.

## Vulnerable Adult

In general terms, an adult (a person aged 18 or over) is classed as vulnerable when they are receiving one of the following services:

- Health care;
- Relevant personal care;
- Social care work;
- Assistance in relation to general household matters by reason of age, illness or disability;
- Relevant assistance in the conduct of their own affairs.

The company is responsible for ensuring a safe environment. This is particularly important where the public and include vulnerable members of society in our care are concerned.

We will ensure that care professionals and their support staff:

- are subject to a safe recruitment process
- receive relevant training
- are aware of and comply with child and adult protection procedures
- know how to respond if they are concerned for the health and welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults who are their patients or clients, or if they hold concerns for children, young people or vulnerable adults who accompany patients or clients.

## Record Keeping

We will ensure that appropriate, accurate, legible and contemporaneous records of safeguarding concerns are made and stored securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

## Waste Management

The organisation will look to minimise the production of waste. Any waste that must be disposed of will be done so in a legally compliant and responsible manner and will be safely stored, handled and disposed of through an authorised person.



## Welfare facilities

Your employer will provide health, safety and welfare facilities including the provision of:

- appropriate ventilation, temperature control and lighting;
- suitable cleanliness and housekeeping standards;
- appropriate sanitary and washing facilities;
- separate toilet facilities for men and women;
- plentiful drinking water supply and cups;
- accommodation for keeping clothing clean and dry;
- facilities for changing, rest periods, hot drinks and meals preparation; and
- showering facilities if the nature of an employees work requires this



## Work Equipment

Your employer will ensure that all equipment provided for use at work is suitable for its intended use and maintained in a safe condition. You must only use work equipment for which you have received adequate information, instruction and training. Inspect equipment prior to use and report any defects to your manager. Any defective work equipment must be taken out of use and reported to Vicky Burston, Manager.