



Health & Safety Policy Statement and Strategy

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Introduction

In accordance with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work (N.I.) Order 1978 and associated legislation, the Housing Executive recognises and accepts its responsibility as an employer for providing a safe and healthy workplace and as far as is reasonably practicable, a risk free working environment for all its employees. It will conduct its activities so as to minimise and where possible, eliminate the risk to which others e.g. Visitors, Members of the Public, Contractors etc may be exposed as far as is reasonably practicable.

Employees are reminded of their own duties under Article 8 and 9 of the Order which requires that they take care of their own safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

These objectives will be achieved by:

- (a) Providing clear definition of the roles and ownership of health and safety responsibility for all management staff.
- (b) Developing and periodically reviewing a comprehensive Health and Safety Manual that is available to all staff.
- (c) Providing a comprehensive Health and Safety training programme
- (d) General Awareness training for all staff.
- (e) Undertaking on-going Health and Safety audits.
- (f) Implementing an Accident Prevention Programme.
- (g) Providing help, information and advice to all staff via the Health and Safety Advisor, the Portal and periodic Health and Safety bulletins.

Policy Statement

- 1.0 In keeping with its overall objectives and in accordance with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978 and associated legislation, the Housing Executive recognises and accepts its responsibility as an employer for providing a safe and healthy workplace and as far as is reasonably practicable, a risk free working environment for all its employees.
- 1.1 The Housing Executive will also conduct its activities so as to minimise, and where possible, eliminate the risk to which others may be exposed as far as is reasonably practicable.
- 1.2 The Housing Executive will take all reasonably practicable steps within its power to meet these responsibilities, in particular by risk assessment, paying particular attention to the provision and maintenance of:-
 - (i) Plant, equipment, and systems of work that are safe.
 - (ii) Safe arrangements for the use, handling, storage, transport and disposal of articles and substances.
 - (iii) Sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to enable all employees to avoid hazards and contribute positively to their own safety and health at work.
 - (iv) A safe place of work, safe access to, and egress from it.

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(v) A healthy working environment.

(vi) Adequate welfare facilities.

- 1.3 Without detracting from the primary responsibility of line managers and supervisors for ensuring safe conditions of work, the Housing Executive will provide competent technical advice on safety and health matters where this is necessary to assist line management in its task. Such technical advice will ensure that planning, organising and controlling of health and safety is monitored and reviewed.
- 1.4 No safety policy is likely to be successful unless it actively involves work people themselves. The Housing Executive will therefore co-operate fully in the appointment of safety representatives by recognised trade unions and will provide them where necessary with sufficient facilities to carry out their task together with adequate periods of paid leave for the purpose of receiving any safety representative training provided by Trade Unions. The Housing Executive will also co-operate in the setting up of a safety committee or committees as appropriate.
- 1.5 The Housing Executive's employees are reminded of their own responsibilities and of their own duties under articles 8 and 9 of the Health and Safety at Work Order which requires that they take care for their own safety and that of other workers and of other persons who may be affected by their (the employee's) acts or omissions at work. In addition, employees are encouraged to co-operate with the Housing Executive so as to enable it to discharge its responsibilities under the Order.
- 1.6 A copy of this statement will be issued to all employees. It will be reviewed, added to, or modified from time to time and may be supplemented in appropriate cases by further statements relating to the work of particular departments or groups of workers.

P McNytre

Chief Executive

B Rowntree

Chairman

Health & Safety Strategy

- 1 The organisation's Health and Safety strategy includes the following:
 - (a) The clear definition of the roles and ownership of health and safety responsibility for all management and staff. Line Managers will hold ownership of responsibility for all matters relating to the management of health and safety within their set area of accountability. Employees shall co-operate with the line manager in reporting any shortfall that may be identified in respect of the health and safety provisions in the workplace.
 - (b) The development and the keeping under review of a comprehensive Health and Safety Manual. This document will be available to all line managers.
 - (c) The development and delivery of a comprehensive health and safety training programme. Phase one of this programme comprises Health and Safety General Awareness Training for all Housing Executive staff.
 - (d) The introduction and development of an ongoing accident prevention programme tailored to suit the accident risk identified in the workplace.
 - (e) The undertaking of ongoing health and safety audits.
 - (f) The issuing from time to time of Health and Safety 'Bulletins' and 'News Sheets'.
 - (g) The introduction and targeting of campaigns to highlight particular aspects of health and safety awareness needs.
 - (h) The provision of help, information and advice through a professional health and safety back-up service for all line managers.
2. The encouragement of co-operation between the Housing Executive and its employees by instigating measures designed to promote their safety. This will be done through the Central Health and Safety Committee representing the interests of both management and the Trade Unions in addressing issues affecting health and safety in the Housing Executive.

Health & Safety Management Policy

I MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Northern Ireland Housing Executive will adopt an approach to Health and Safety Management which is pro-active in the identification, minimisation, and, in so far as is reasonably practicable, the elimination of risk to persons and property in all of its corporate business premises. It is the intention of the Housing Executive to manage risk by risk assessment and by the implementation of risk management/loss control systems with the aim of achieving a zero incident rate.

2 HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY FORMULATION

The Organisation will adopt and undertake all of its operations within the framework and provisions of the Health and Safety Policy as formulated by the Central Health and Safety Unit and approved by the Health and Safety Management Committee and the Board and incorporated in the Health and Safety Manual. This policy will be formulated, amended and reviewed as required.

3 HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT BEST PRACTICE

The Housing Executive, in implementing Health & Safety Management best practice will have regard to the Health and Safety Executive's Guidance on this subject and follow those principles of good safety management as outlined, particularly in the Health and Safety Executive's Guidance Document "Successful Health and Safety Management" H(G) 65, which provides for:

- (i) Policy Development
- (ii) Organisational Development
- (iii) Planning and Implementation of Policy
- (iv) Performance Measurement
- (v) Performance Review and
- (vi) Audit of all elements in the Management of Health and Safety

4 POLICY, PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE DOCUMENTS

All new operational draft documents which affect health and safety matters or issues, either in whole or in part, will be submitted to the Central Health and Safety Management Committee for consideration and recommendations for action as appropriate before being submitted to the Chief Executive's Management Committee and the Board for approval.

5 HEALTH AND SAFETY MANUAL

In pursuing these objectives the Housing Executive will issue and maintain a Health and Safety Manual to inform and instruct all levels of management throughout the organisation of the arrangements currently in place for compliance with legislative requirements and existing health and safety management best practice.

6 HEALTH AND SAFETY MANUAL DISTRIBUTION

The Director of Personnel and Management Services will be responsible for the publication, distribution, review and updating of the Health and Safety Manual via the Intranet with such frequency as is required to reflect changes in Legislation, Policy, Practice, and Procedures with regard to the management of health and safety throughout the organisation. This process will be co-ordinated by the Health and Safety Adviser on behalf of the Director and will incorporate policies from all Divisions.

7 HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

In addition to the other functions of the Health and Safety Committee all other matters which are considered by the Committee to have a bearing on existing Policy, Practice and Procedures shall be referred to the Health and Safety Adviser who may action such changes as may be necessary to immediately safeguard the safety of persons and property and, as appropriate, revise Policy, Practice, and Procedures to reflect the need for such change.

8 RISK ASSESSMENT IN THE MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Housing Executive, in implementing its Health and Safety Management Policy, will make adequate and sufficient risk assessments of its workplaces and work practices and in so far as is reasonably practicable, shall provide a safe and healthy working environment and develop safe working practices for the benefit of all its staff. (see Risk Assessment Policy, Practice and Procedure)

9 HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING IN THE MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Housing Executive recognises that a key component in minimising loss is the provision of adequate and appropriate health and safety training, both in terms of health and safety management and in relation to those processes and activities which are undertaken by its staff.

In this respect the Housing Executive will develop and deliver appropriate training programmes to meet its statutory obligations together with such other specialised training as may be required to minimise individual risk (see Health and Safety Training Policy, Practice and Procedure).

Health & Safety Manual

The full Health & Safety Manual is available on the intranet and comprises the following documents:

NIHE HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

- Policy Statement
- Strategy
- Management Policy

A GUIDE TO THE MANUAL

- Using the Manual
- Glossary of Words and Terms
- Summary of the main legislation

ORGANISATION OF HEALTH AND SAFETY

- The Management of Health and Safety
- Roles & Responsibilities

POLICY, PRACTICE AND PROCEDURES

- Accident Investigation
- Asbestos in the Workplace
- Asbestos in Housing Stock
- Car Users
- Contractors, Management and Control
- COSHH (Hazardous Substances)
- Display Screen Equipment
- Electricity
- External Workplaces
- Fire Risk Assessment and Emergency Evacuation and Drills
- First Aid
- Health and Safety Committee
- Homeless Accommodation
- Homeworkers
- Legionella Prevention
- Manual Handling

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- New and Expectant Mothers
- Noise
- Personal Protective Equipment
- RIDDOR (Reporting of Accidents)
- Risk Assessment
- Safe Systems of Work
- Safety Representatives
- Stress
- Temporary Workers
- Training, Health and Safety
- Violence at Work
- Visitors
- Work Equipment
- Workplace
- Workplace inspections