



Employee's Handbook

Our purpose

As an Employee working for the Council, it is important that you understand our standards and why they exist.

What is this handbook for?

The aim of the Council is not to try to create a totally risk-free environment, but to strive to create one in which risk is properly assessed and managed, where awareness of the importance of safety, health and environment is high, and where there will be potential for a reduction in accidents, worked related ill-health and damage to property, equipment or the environment.

This handbook sets out minimum standards expected by the Council of its Employees, and self-employed trades.

However, where higher industry standards or practices exist these shall be adopted.

Your responsibilities

The following safety, health and environment rules ensure the safety of you and others. They apply to all the Council's premises and are to be observed at all times.

These rules are simple and easy to follow, and if you do not observe them, then disciplinary action may well be taken.

Do	Don't
✓ Carry out a risk assessment for the work activity or task which takes into account any Health and Safety information/requirement provided and give a copy to your site contact. ✓ Report to your supervisor any accident or injury, any defects in plant or equipment, and any hazards in your workplace. ✓ Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for the activity or task. ✓ Keep your workplace tidy. ✓ Obey all safety signs and instructions. ✓ Drive safely by observing speed limits and traffic signs. ✓ Use the eating, drinking and toilet facilities provided. ✓ Ensure you display appropriate safety signage for the tasks you are undertaking.	✗ Report for work under the influence of alcohol or drugs. ✗ Fool around at work. ✗ Use plant or equipment for which you have not been trained. ✗ Leave plant or equipment unless it is switched off and secure. ✗ Use plant and equipment that is not suitable for the task. ✗ Leave cables, hoses or items in walkways that could cause obstructions or trip hazards. ✗ Smoke or vape in Council Premises. ✗ Use Council equipment unless trained and authorised to do so.

Accident reporting and first aid

All injuries and near misses, however slight, must be reported to your supervisor and recorded on the Council's Accident Database.

If an accident happens, prompt action may save a life or at least reduce the suffering of the injured person. You can help by making sure that first aid assistance is called for immediately. Do not attempt to give first aid yourself unless you have been trained.

Before you start work you should establish what emergency arrangements will be in operation while work takes place.

When instant action is needed

- In assessing the situation do not put yourself in danger.
- Get someone to call a first aider and emergency services. If you are alone, call the emergency services.
- Make sure you know where to find the first aider(s) and the first aid boxes.

Welfare and hygiene

The Council will provide where possible suitable facilities should include toilets, washrooms and eating areas with drinking water provided. Please help by keeping these facilities clean and tidy. Good standards of personal hygiene will ensure that you stay fit and healthy.

Do	Don't
✓ Wash your hands after using the toilet and before eating. ✓ Wash thoroughly when you finish work – take a shower if necessary. ✓ Use appropriate gloves, as indicated by your risk assessment, when handling materials. ✓ Use suitable barrier creams when necessary. ✓ Dispose of rubbish in the appropriate bins or skips. ✓ Remove dirty clothing before using the eating facilities.	✗ Consume food or drinks in contaminated areas. ✗ Leave lunch boxes within the work area. ✗ Use petrol or degreasers to clean your skin. ✗ Forget to examine skin regularly for damage or infections. ✗ Wear contaminated clothing in the rest area.

Work area tidiness

Some accidents are caused by poor housekeeping. You can help by keeping your workplace clean and orderly.

Do	Don't
✓ Isolate the working area from others. ✓ Keep materials stacked safely. ✓ Use skips provided or collect waste together for clearing at the end of each working day. ✓ Ensure protruding nails are removed. ✓ Keep access and exit routes clear. ✓ Report any problems to your supervisor immediately.	✗ Walk by a mess – clear it or report it. ✗ Let others get away with leaving the workplace untidy. ✗ Leave tools or equipment in walkways. ✗ Leave rubbish or debris lying around.

Fire precautions

Fire prevention is much better than firefighting.

You should therefore be aware of the fire risks, particularly those associated with your own work and the Council's specific site requirements and evacuation procedures.

Do	Don't
✓ Remove rubbish and waste at the end of each working day, do not allow it to accumulate at your workplace. ✓ Store flammable liquids correctly. ✓ Obey 'no smoking' signs. ✓ Know the location of fire extinguishers and fire exits. ✓ Know the suitability of fire extinguishers. ✓ If you see a fire, operate the nearest fire alarm and get someone to call the fire service immediately. ✓ Go to your identified assembly point. ✓ Get the supervisor to inform the fire service of any missing people, giving details of last known location. ✓ Obtain a Hot Work Permit before carrying out any activity that may generate a spark.	✗ Use or store flammable materials close to sources of ignition. ✗ Grind, weld or gas cut anything without getting approval from the Council. ✗ Use incorrect tools or equipment for tasks. ✗ Overload electrical sockets or supply leads. ✗ Leave electrical equipment switched on when not required. ✗ Obstruct firefighting equipment or escape routes. ✗ Stay in the building if the alarm is activated. ✗ Tackle the fire if you have not been trained to do so.

Manual handling

Many accidents are caused by mishandling loads.

With care, these accidents could be avoided all Employees should have received manual handling training.

Do	Don't
✓ Ask "do I need to lift this item"? ✓ Assess the load to be lifted and the route it is to be carried. ✓ Remember TILE – Task, Individual, Load and Environment. ✓ Use mechanical lifting devices where available and appropriate. ✓ If a load is greater than 20kg, see if it can be broken down into lighter loads. If not, get some help. ✓ Wear suitable gloves to protect your hands against sharp or rough edges. ✓ Wear safety footwear to guard against injuries caused by loads being dropped. ✓ Remember – get down to the load. Always bend your knees, not your back. ✓ Ensure you have a clear view of your route.	✗ Lift loads without assessing the load, route and environment. ✗ Struggle on your own to move an object. ✗ Team lift without identifying the person calling commands. ✗ Lift by bending your back. ✗ Twist when carrying a load.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

PPE is the equipment you wear to reduce exposure to hazards. It shouldn't be the only or first choice source of protection. It is the last line of defence after considering other options to eliminate or control the hazards at source wherever possible

Do	Don't
✓ Look after PPE issued to you, check for and report any defects or damage to your supervisor. ✓ Always inspect PPE before use. ✓ Keep PPE clean and use it properly. ✓ Understand how to use the equipment. ✓ Know you are responsible for wearing PPE for the task or activity requiring its use. ✓ Always wear the PPE that is identified by your risk assessment.	✗ Adapt or alter the PPE issued to you. ✗ Misuse PPE provided. ✗ Remove PPE during the activity/task. ✗ Use PPE that is defective.

Control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH)

The Council holds Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for materials used in its operational activities on its premises. Wherever possible the materials used should minimise the risks to individuals and the environment

Do	Don't
✓ Carry out a COSHH assessment of the material and task to be undertaken. ✓ Understand the health hazards that arise from the task or activity. ✓ Ensure you are trained in the safe use of the material. ✓ Ensure that hierarchies of control are used – elimination, substitution, change of methods, timed exposure, isolation, local exhaust ventilation (LEV), general ventilation. ✓ Use the material only for its intended purpose. ✓ Clear up spills using appropriate spill kits. ✓ Ensure there are sufficient first aid trained people when using hazardous materials. ✓ Store materials in correctly labelled containers. ✓ Notify your supervisor if you start to suffer from skin or breathing difficulties when working with materials. ✓ Notify your supervisor if you have any allergies before working with materials. ✓ Observe good hygiene when working with hazardous materials. ✓ Ensure all flammable substances are handled, stored and disposed of appropriately.	✗ Use materials or substances if you have not carried out a COSHH assessment. ✗ Leave spilled materials lying around. ✗ Decant liquids into unmarked containers. ✗ Leave materials out at the end of the shift or day if work has not finished. ✗ Consume foods or drinks around hazardous substances. ✗ Mix materials together if the effects are unknown. ✗ Use storage areas where damage to containers is possible. ✗ Change materials or methods without carrying out a new COSHH assessment

Hazardous materials

Asbestos

The Council carries out asbestos surveys on all its projects and can identify where asbestos is located. As a minimum all Employees should have received asbestos awareness training.

Do	Don't
✓ Ask for information about asbestos in the premises where you are working. ✓ Be aware of potential asbestos in the area you are working in. ✓ Stop working immediately and inform your supervisor if you encounter material that you suspect to be asbestos.	✗ Begin work without consulting the Council's asbestos register. ✗ Work in areas that you have not been briefed about. ✗ Continue work if you suspect asbestos material is present.

Lead

When work involves lead it is important that a safe system of work is established and followed.

Do	Don't
✓ Be aware of potential for lead in the area you are working in or the material you are working with. ✓ Inform your supervisor immediately if you encounter lead. They will inform the site contact, who will agree the steps that should be taken to ensure safe working. ✓ Follow regulatory guidelines for disposal.	✗ Cut, burn or agitate materials containing lead without having carried out a risk assessment. ✗ Work in areas that you have not been briefed about. ✗ Continue work if you suspect lead material to be present.

Working at height

Falls from height are the most common cause of serious injury. Working at height is safe, provided that you use the proper means of access and take the precautions necessary to prevent a fall. As a minimum all operatives are to work in pairs and have received working at height appropriate to the task.

Mobile tower scaffolds

Mobile tower scaffolds are useful for work at height that involves frequent moving, but they are often incorrectly erected or misused. Trained and competent personnel, in accordance with the supplier's instructions, must erect, inspect and dismantle this type of scaffold.

Do	Don't
✓ Only erect, inspect and dismantle if you are trained and competent to do so. ✓ Check the manufacturer's information when erecting the tower. ✓ Ensure guard rails and toe boards are fitted. ✓ Ensure working platforms are fully boarded. ✓ Ensure towers are moved only by pushing or pulling at base level. ✓ Ensure tower is inspected before use and that check is recorded. ✓ Report any damage to supervisor. ✓ Ensure nobody is on the platform when moving the tower. ✓ Ensure all wheel brakes are applied when the tower is stationary.	✗ Use the tower if it is damaged. ✗ Use if you have not been trained how to erect or use the tower. ✗ Climb up the outside of the tower. ✗ Use on uneven ground. ✗ Push when there are people or materials on the platform. ✗ Remove parts to carry out work. ✗ Climb on the tower unless the brakes are applied.

Ladders

The main purpose of ladders is access and exit, but they are sometimes used as a work platform. It is important that the risk assessment reviews all possible options before selecting the use of a ladder. If a ladder is to be used as a work platform, make sure it is the right equipment for the job. In most cases a mobile tower will be safer and more suitable.

Do	Don't
✓ Make sure the ladder is placed at a safe angle – 1m out for every 4m in height. ✓ Make sure it reaches at least five rungs above the landing place or above the highest rung on which you have to stand. ✓ Ensure that it is secured by the stiles to prevent slipping, and is footed by a second person. ✓ Keep clear of overhead electric cables. ✓ Keep the ladder in good condition – report any defects at once to your supervisor. ✓ Maintain three points of contact on the ladder. ✓ Use for short duration (15 minutes maximum) and light activities.	✗ Try to climb carrying any load. ✗ Attempt to overreach. ✗ Use a damaged ladder. ✗ Use an incorrect standard of ladder – you should use a professional standard EN 131.

Stepladders

A third of all reported falls from height incidents involve ladders and stepladders. Many of these injuries are caused by inappropriate or incorrect use of the equipment. Stepladders should only be used by trained people in accordance with a risk assessment which should justify their use.

Do	Don't
✓ Ensure a risk assessment justifies the use of stepladders. ✓ Do use professional EN 131 stepladders for work. ✓ Do make sure you check the treads, stiles, hinges, restraining rope and locking devices are engaged before using a stepladder. ✓ Remove and isolate damaged stepladders if damaged and report all damage immediately. ✓ Check all four stepladder feet are in contact with the ground and the steps are level; ✓ Ensure steps are fully extended before you go up. ✓ Only carry light materials and tools; ✓ Try to position the stepladder to face the work activity and not side on. ✓ Try to avoid work that imposes a side loading, such as side-on drilling through solid materials (e.g. bricks or concrete); ✓ Maintain three points of contact at the working position. This means two feet and one hand, or when both hands need to be free for a brief period, two feet and the body supported by the stepladder.	✗ Stand and work on the top three steps (including a step forming the very top of the stepladder) unless there is a suitable handhold. ✗ Overreach. ✗ Use wooden steps. ✗ Use boards between the treads on steps to provide a working platform - they are not designed for this loading. ✗ Lean outwards or sideways from the steps ✗ Use the stepladder if it is damaged, either destroy or return to the supplier. ✗ Use where they will be struck by vehicles. ✗ Where they will not be pushed over by other hazards such as doors or windows. ✗ Use where the general public could be affected by walking underneath it or being at risk because they are too near.

Confined Spaces

Typical confined spaces are manholes, sewers, voids, tunnels, shafts, cellars and caissons (chambers used to work underwater).

Do	Don't
✓ Ask for information about confined space before planning works. ✓ Complete and record a risk assessment. ✓ Ensure you have been briefed and understand the nature of the confined space and the activity to be carried out. ✓ Ensure you have a Permit to Work (PTW). ✓ Ensure you have the right training and equipment. ✓ Ensure adequate edge protection is provided and maintained.	✗ Work in a confined space unless you are authorised to do so. ✗ Work in a confined space unless you are trained to do so. ✗ Attempt a rescue if someone collapses, unless you are trained to do so and have the appropriate rescue equipment in place.

Mechanical plant and equipment

Only trained and competent people may operate mechanical plant on Council sites. It is important to use only the appropriate plant and equipment for the activity.

Do	Don't
✓ Keep clear of mechanical equipment and watch out for drivers' signals. ✓ Report any defects in plant and equipment to your supervisor. ✓ Inspect the plant before using it and report any damage or defective safety systems. ✓ Only use the equipment if you are trained and competent. ✓ Use the tool strictly in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. ✓ Check any rotating machinery is correctly mounted and guarded. ✓ Ensure the material or equipment type is appropriate for the activity. ✓ Wear appropriate PPE for the tool and activity. ✓ Ensure any percussion equipment is de-energised before working on it. ✓ Use low-vibration and low-noise equipment.	✗ Operate any plant or equipment unless you have been authorised to do so. ✗ Ride as a passenger on any plant unless proper provision has been made. ✗ Use the plant if the safety systems are faulty. ✗ Leave cartridge tools or cartridges out after use.

Hand-arm vibration syndrome (HAVS)

HAVS is a disorder that affects the blood vessels, nerves, muscles and joints of the hand, wrist and arm. It can become severely disabling if ignored. The most well-known form is vibration white finger (VWF), which can be triggered by cold or wet weather and can cause severe pain in the affected fingers.

Signs to look out for

- Tingling and numbness in your fingers.
- In the cold and wet fingers go white, then blue, then red and are painful.
- Pain, tingling or numbness in your hands, wrists and arms.
- Loss of strength in your hands.

Do	Don't
✓ Ensure equipment used is low-vibration generating. ✓ Ensure equipment is maintained correctly. ✓ Ensure consumables are the correct type and are fitted correctly to the device. ✓ Take regular breaks from using vibrating and noisy equipment. ✓ Report any symptoms to your supervisor.	✗ Use damaged or defective equipment. ✗ Use equipment unless you are trained and competent to do so. ✗ Use equipment if you have symptoms.

POINT OF WORK RISK ASSESSMENT

Aspire to be 1% Safer	Date	Location
	Activity	
Access	Do I have safe access to my place of work?	Y/N
Safe workplace	Can the job be done safely without harming people, the works, or the environment?	Y/N
Protection	Do I have all the PPE required to protect me from the hazards I can see? Is adjacent property and the environment protected from damage?	Y/N
Information	Does everyone in the team understand all the health and safety information and can we comply with it?	Y/N
Right first time	Do I have sufficient resources to get the job done right first time?	Y/N
Everyone together	Can I carry out my work safely when considering other works in the vicinity?	Y/N
Any No's then review and propose a new control action <u>Communicate with Manager</u>		
Comments		
Signed and date		